

ANG 6196: ARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY

The graduate archaeological theory course covers the history and evolution of archaeology and its theoretical frameworks, current trends in science in general and in archaeology in particular, the newest controversies, and theoretical implications of the latest archaeological advances and hottest current research issues. In this seminar-style class the following archaeological approaches are explored:

- culture history
- cultural materialism and processual archaeology
- various post-processual/postmodern archaeologies, including critical, symbolic, structural, contextual, "reflexive," "interpretive," agency and practice theory
- marxist, feminist, and other viewpoints
- current cognitive-processual theory and practice and other syntheses of the 21st century
- humanism vs. science

Students consider the following topics in light of these various theoretical frameworks:

- * ecological archaeology and systems theory
- * middle-range theory/site formation processes, ethnographic analogy, ethnoarchaeology, experimental archaeology
- * research design and models in science and in archaeology
- * techno-environmental systems: subsistence, settlement, seasonality, economy, landscape archaeology
- * social and political systems, class, ethnicity, gender, power
- * ideological systems
- * archaeology and modern society, bias, politics, professionalism, public archaeology

Students learning in this course includes

- researching current theoretical trends in archaeological journals and other publications
- researching the lives of prominent archaeologists
- discussion of modeling the student's research questions and proposal writing
- practice in paper presentation, book reviewing, other professional activities
- understanding ethical issues, political concerns, and various biases in all archaeology
- understanding how all archaeology is public archaeology

This course is offered every year, in the fall, for second-year graduate students preparing to do their own thesis/dissertation research