

THE PREHISTORY OF THE SOUTHWEST

ANTHROPOLOGY 3318 SPRING 2007

LECTURE: FONDREN SCIENCE BUILDING 155
TUES., THURS. 3:30 – 4:50 PM

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: PROF. SUNDAY EISELT
SEISELT@SMU.EDU
ROOM 419 HEROY HALL
OFFICE PHONE (DAY): 768-2915

OFFICE HOURS: T, W, TH 2:00 TO 3:00 PM, AND BY APPT.

This course provides an introduction to the archaeology of the American Southwest and provides Anthropology majors and graduate students with essential background knowledge of an important cultural region along with an opportunity to begin working with the professional literature. We will begin by examining the initial settlement of the Southwestern United States by Paleo-Indian hunter-gatherers nearly 12,000 years ago, as well as early cultural developments such as pottery manufacture. We will then examine the unique cultural trajectories of specific areas, focusing on the Phoenix and Tucson basins, the Mimbres Valley, Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, and the Little Colorado and Rio Grande valleys. As we discuss culture history, we will touch on topics that include settlement pattern, demography, aggregation, abandonment, subsistence, technology, and ritual. Capitalizing on our detailed knowledge of the archaeological record, we will then consider each area in the broader context of contemporaneous developments in the Southwest and Mesoamerica, where we will devote attention to current research issues that require consideration of multiple regions through time.

COURSE WEBSITE

Information about this course including the syllabus, guidelines, and project descriptions may be found on the web at:

anth3318.googlepages.com

PDF files of all assigned readings and articles will be placed on this website for downloading. You are required to download and print all assigned articles, read them before class, and come to lecture with the hard copies for discussion.

PDF files of my lectures also will be placed on the web site as they are completed. These can be downloaded and printed to prepare for course quizzes.

GENERAL STRUCTURE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The general structure of the class will be approximately 50 to 60 minutes of lecture followed by around 30 minutes of discussion of the articles and topics covered in the lecture. Periodic quizzes, discussion of readings, assignments, and a final project round out course participation.

Quizzes:

There **are no exams** as part of this class. Instead, ten quizzes are distributed throughout the semester to cover one or more of the previous lectures and discussions. Quizzes are **not** cumulative. Each one only covers the topics since the previous quiz and may include slide identifications in addition to multiple choice, T/F, or short answer questions on lectures and readings. There will be anywhere from 5 to 10 questions per quiz and quizzes account for 10% of your final grade.

Readings and Discussion:

Most of your readings for this class were written for the general public and/or for students. However, several are from the professional literature. To help guide you through these articles, they will be discussed in class. To prepare for the discussion, you should read the article carefully and, if there are parts you do not understand, develop questions that, if answered, will help you to better understand it. Guidelines for reading and preparing discussion for articles are provided below.

It is your responsibility to obtain and read all assigned materials and to prepare for weekly discussion. Thoughtful participation in class discussions is required for all students. Thoughtful participation entails critical discussion—evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of an argument and the data used to support it—of theoretical and methodological issues as well as empirical data. Thoughtful participation also will occasionally entail reading or research beyond the assigned text, for example, to look up a source or term mentioned but not fully explained in the reading. Please be aware that some of the issues we will discuss are controversial. Disagreements are not only normal, but also expected; however, please keep discussion civil. I expect everyone to behave respectfully and to work to create a constructive atmosphere for productive communication and effective learning. Reading and discussion account for 10% of your final grade.

Assignments and Final Project:

The final project for the class will be the creation of a web site dealing with a particular Southwestern rock art style and how it fits into regional culture histories and artistic expressions. This project is cumulative. We will complete the different components of the web site as the semester progresses, and these completed components constitute graded class assignments that are due on specific dates as per the syllabus schedule. Each assignment will be an individual web page in your final project that must be posted on-line by the due date. A total of nine assignments (pages) are scheduled and we will cover the requirements for each in detail prior to the due date. I will review and edit your pages the week following the due date and these edits must be included in your final web site. Periodic assignments will be worth 20 points a piece. **Two points will be taken off of the total for each day that the assignment is late without prior approval.** Assignments constitute 20% of your final grade.

You will present your final web site during the scheduled final exam period on **Saturday May 5th from 11:30 to 2:30**. This presentation takes the place of a final exam. The instructions for the final project are detailed below. The completed web site accounts for 40% of your final grade.

Attendance:

Much of your grade is based on in-class assignments, discussion, and quizzes. Attendance therefore is critical to the successful completion of this class. If extraordinary personal circumstances affect your academic performance or make it impossible for you to attend a class, you must contact me with written documentation of the circumstance at the time the problem arises, as per SMU policy, in order to make alternative arrangements. For excused absences, you will be required to set up an appointment with me (preferably during my office hours) to take any missed quizzes and go over any missed lectures and complete class discussions. Make-up appointments must be completed within a week of the missed class barring any pre-arranged extenuating circumstances. Attendance accounts for 20% of your grade

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Quizzes (10): 10% of grade
Assignments (9): 20% of grade
Attendance: 20% of grade
Discussion: 10% of grade
Final Project: 40% of grade

A = 100% to 95% A- = 94% to 90%

B+ = 89% to 88% B = 87% to 84% B- = 83% to 80%

C+ = 79% to 78% C = 77% to 74% C- = 73% to 70%

D+ = 69% to 68% D = 67% to 64% D- = 63% to 60%

F = 59% and lower

READINGS AND DISCUSSION

The primary texts for the course are *Ancient Peoples of the American Southwest* (1997) by Stephen Plog. Additional readings, listed in the bibliography and available on the course web site at **anth3318.googlepages.com**, will be assigned each week. These readings will be discussed in class. You must do the readings prior to the class period that they are assigned and you should come to class with several questions, critiques, or points of comparison based on these readings using the guidelines below.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4557) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)










Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of the work of another as your own and is a serious infraction of the University Honor Code. Instances of plagiarism or any other cheating will be reported to the University Honor Council, and will at the very least result in failure of this course. The University policy on plagiarism may be found at: http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_05_HC.asp and in the Student Handbook at: http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PDF/SMU_Student_Handbook_06-07.pdf

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Quiz	Lecture	Readings Discussion	Due
1	16 Jan		Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course		
	18 Jan		Lecture 2: Archaeological Methods and Theories	Thomas 24-47 - Rock Art Discussion	
2	23 Jan		Lecture 3: The Social and Natural Landscapes of the American Southwest	Plog 7-36 - Rock Art Discussion	Post Google Frontpage with chosen style and title, email your web address to me prior to class
	25 Jan		Lecture 4: The Land of Poco Tiempo: History of Archeological Research and Archaeotourism	Cordell 1997:153-186, Archaeology Southwest 16:4	
3	30 Jan	Lectures 2-4	Lecture 5: Early Hunter-Gatherers: The Paleo-Indian and Archaic Periods	Plog 37-55; Archaeology Southwest 14:2	
	1 Feb		Lecture 6: The Rise of Village Life and the Origins of Agriculture	Plog 56-70; Archaeology Southwest 13:1	
4	6 Feb		Lecture 7: Ancestral Pueblo: Culture History	Plog 71-72, 78-81, 93-111	Rock art Defined: Page due
	8 Feb	Lectures 5-7 plus readings	Lecture 8: The Chaco Phenomenon: Archeoastronomy, Roads, and Social Complexity. Film: The Mystery of Chaco Canyon	Malville 2006; Archaeology Southwest 14:1	
5	13 Feb		Lecture 9: The Mesa Verde World	Ortman 2006; Nordby 2006; Hurst and Till 2006; Lang 2006	
	15 Feb	No Class			
6	20 Feb		Lecture 10: Mogollon: Culture History	Plog 76-78, 87-93, 172-177	
	22 Feb		Lecture 11: Mimbres Religious Ideology and Mortuary Practice	Plog 118-134; Archaeology Southwest 17:4	Subject Rock Art: Page 1 due
7	27 Feb		Lecture 12: Hohokam: Culture History	Plog 73-75, 81-87, 134-146, 178-179	
	1 March	Lectures 9-12 plus readings	Lecture 13: Salado Irrigation and the Hydrolic Hypothesis	Hunt et al (2005); Archaeology Southwest 14:3	
8	6 March		Lecture 14: Perceptions of Southwest Aggregation and Abandonment	Plog 151-158; Nelson and Hegmon (2001)	Subject Rock Art: Page 2 due
	8 March		Lecture 15: Thinking About Migration, Movement, and Societies in Action	Naranjo 2006; Cameron 2006; Bernardini 2005	
9	13 March	Spring Break			
	15 March	Spring Break			
10	20 March		Lecture 16: Deadly Landscapes: The Archaeology of Cannibals, Conflict, and Warfare	Plog 146-151, 158-160; Archaeology Southwest 13:2; Rice 2001	Subject Rock Art: Page 3 due
	22 March		Lecture 17: The Katchina Cult in Art, Architecture, and Dance	Plog 160-172; Schafsmma and Schafsmma 1974	
11	27 March		Lecture 18: Excavating Gender	Mobley-Tanaka 1997; Munson 2000	
	29 March		Lecture 19: In Pursuit of the Elite and Their Works	Kintigh 2000, Robins 2002	
12	3 April		Lecture 20: Interregional Trade and Trail Systems	Darling 2006	Subject Rock Art: Page 4 due
	5 April		Lecture 21: Transitions to History and the Elusive Proto-historic	Plog 181-193; Spielmann 1994	
13	10 April		Lecture 22: Athapaskan Wisdom: Athapaskan Land	Basso 1996	
	12 April		Lecture 23: Barter, Gift, or Violence in the Northern Rio Grande	Spielman 1983	
14	17 April		Lecture 24: Spaniards and Horses	Archaeology Southwest 19:1; Hester n.d.	Subject Rock Art: Page 5 due
	19 April	No Class			
15	24 April		Lecture 25: The Archaeologies of the Pueblo Revolt and other Splits	Ferguson (2002); Dongoske and Dongoske (2002)	
	26 April		Lecture 26: The Past is a Foreign Country: Sharing and Preserving for the Future	Archaeology Southwest 15:3	Subject Rock Art: Page 6 due
16	1 May	No Class: Follows Monday Schedule			
	3 May	No Class: Study Days			
Finals Week	5 May	Final Presentations	11:30 - 2:30		Complete web site due (include Frontpage, bibliography, gallery, all edits)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archaeology Southwest: A Publication of the Center for Desert Archaeology (<http://www.cdarc.org/>)

- 16:4 - Journeys to Places of the Past  (.pdf format, 528.79 KB)
- 14:2 - Rethinking the Peopling of the Americas  (.pdf format, 2.17 MB)
- 13:1 - Early Maize in the Greater Southwest  (.pdf format, 2.03 MB)
- 14:1 - Ancient Chaco's New History  (.pdf format, 3.61 MB)
- 17:4 - The Archaeology and Meaning of Mimbres  (.pdf format, 1.44 MB)
- 14:3 - Rewriting Prehistory in the Hohokam Heartland  (.pdf format, 3.87 MB)
- 13:2 - Southwestern Warfare: Reality and Consequences  (.pdf format, 1.51 MB)
- 19:1 - The Quest for Coronado  (.pdf format, 1.15 MB)
- 15:3 - Threats to the Past  (.pdf format, 792.3 KB)

Articles

Basso, Keith H.

Wisdom Sits in Places: Notes on a Western Apache Landscape. In, *Senses of Place* (1996), pp. 53-90, edited by Steven Feld and Keith Basso. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Bernardini, Wesley

Reconsidering Spatial and Temporal Aspects of Prehistoric Cultural Identity: A Case Study from the American Southwest. *American Antiquity* Vol. 70, No. 1 (Jan 2005): pp 31-55

Cameron, Catherine

Leaving Mesa Verde. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 139-148. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Cordell, Linda

Archaeology of the Southwest, 2nd Edition (1997). Academic Press, San Diego, California

Darling, James A.

Pima Song and the Archaeology of Space (2006). Gila River Indian Community, Cultural Resource Management Project, Sacaton, Arizona

Dongoske, Kurt E. and Cindy K. Dongoske

History in Stone: Evaluating Spanish Conversion Efforts Through Hopi Rock Art. In, *Archaeologies of the Pueblo Revolt: Identity, Meaning, and Renewal in the Pueblo World*, edited by Robert Preucel (2002), pp. 114-131. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque

Ferguson, T. J.

Dowa Yalanne: The Architecture of Zuni Resistance and Social Change During the Pueblo Revolt. In, *Archaeologies of the Pueblo Revolt: Identity, Meaning, and Renewal in the Pueblo World*, edited by Robert Preucel (2002), pp. 33-44. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque

Hester, Thomas R.

Artifacts, Archaeology, and Cabeza de Vaca in Southern Texas and Northeastern New Mexico (n.d.)

Hunt, Robert C., David Guillet, David R. Abbott, James Bayman, Paul Fish, Suzanne Fish, Keith Kintigh and James A. Neely . Plausible ethnographic analogies for the social organization of Hohokam canal irrigation. *American Antiquity* 70.3 (July 2005): p433(24).

Hurst, Winston and Jonathan Till

Mesa Verdean Sacred Landscapes. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 75-84. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Kintigh, Keith

Leadership Strategies in Protohistoric Zuni Towns. In *Alternative Leadership Strategies in the Greater Southwest* (2000), pp. 95-116, edited by B. J. Mills. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Lang, Richard W.

Craft Arts of the Mesa Verde. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 59-65. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Malville, J. McKim

The Cosmic and the Sacred at Yellow Jacket Pueblo and Mesa Verde. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 85-92. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Mobley-Tanaka, Jeannette L.

Gender and Ritual Space during the Pithouse to Pueblo Transition: Subterranean Mealing Rooms in the North American Southwest. *American Antiquity*, Vol. 62, No. 3. (Jul., 1997), pp. 437-448.

Munson, Marit

Sex, Gender, and Status: Human Images from the Classic Mimbres. *American Antiquity*, Vol. 65, No. 1. (Jan., 2000), pp. 127-143.

Naranjo, Tessie

We Came from the South, We Came from the North: Some Tewa Origin Stories. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 49-58. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Nelson, Margaret C. and Michelle Hegmon

Abandonment Is Not as It Seems: An Approach to the Relationship between Site and Regional Abandonment. *American Antiquity*, Vol. 66, No. 2. (Apr., 2001), pp. 213-235.

Nordby, Larry V.

Understanding Mesa Verde's Cliff Dwelling Architecture. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 111-118. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Ortman, Scott

Ancient Pottery of the Mesa Verde Country: How Ancestral Pueblo People Made It, Used It, and Thought About It. In, *The Mesa Verde World: Explorations in Ancestral Pueblo Archaeology*, edited by D. G. Noble (2006), pp. 101-110. School of American Research, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Rice, Glen, E.

Warfare and Massing in the Salt and Gila Gasins of Central Arizona. In, *Deadly Landscapes: Case Studies in Prehistoric Southwestern Warfare*, edited by Glen E. Rice and Steven A. LeBlanc (2001), pp. 289-230. The University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Robbins, Michael R.

Status and Social Power: Rock Art as Prestige Technology Among the San Juan Basketmakers of Southeast Utah. In, *Traditions, Transitions, and Technologies: Themes in Southwestern Archaeology*, edited by Sarah Schlanger, (2002), pp. 386-400. University Press of Colorado, Boulder

Schaafsma, Polly; Curtis F. Schaafsma

Evidence for the Origins of the Pueblo Katchina Cult as Suggested by Southwestern Rock Art. *American Antiquity*, Vol. 39, No. 4. (Oct., 1974), pp. 535-545.

Spielmann, Katherine

Late Prehistoric Exchange Between the Southwest and Southern Plains (1983). *Plains Anthropologist* Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 257-272

Spielmann, Katherine

Clustered Confederacies: Socio-Political Organization in the Protohistoric Rio Grande. In, *The Ancient Southwestern Community: Models and Methods for the study of Prehistoric Social Organization*, edited by Wirt Wills, and Robert Leonard (1994), pp. 45-54

Thomas, David Hurst and Robert Kelly

Archaeology: Down to Earth (2007) Thompson Learning

ROCK ART PROJECT CONTENT AND INSTRUCTIONS

For the final project in this course, you will produce a comprehensive web site dealing with a particular rock art style of the Southwest (see sidebar options). The primary goal of this project is to increase your understanding of regional prehistories through rock art research and creative web design. A key component of this project is to introduce you to the basics of library research and writing for a public audience.

Several introductory books on Southwest rock art have been placed on reserve in the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man (ISEM) reading room located on the first floor (Room 129) of the N.L. Heroy Building. Most if not all of these books may be checked out for 2-4 hours for the purpose of scanning or reading. You also can read in the library reading room. These are general readings. In most cases you will have to go beyond the references in the reading room to fill out your bibliography.

For the hours and location of the ISEM reading room, go to: <http://smu.edu/cul/isemrr/>

Your web site will consist of several nested pages linked to a frontpage. Use the outline below to structure the text for each page. General page length guidelines are provided for each page in the sections that follow. These sections provide a general outline for the web site.

You must include 2-3 images on each page that help to illustrate the text. Images need to have a caption and citation and the full reference for the citation should be included at the footnotes section (bottom) of each page in a section titled "Photo Credits". Images may be scanned from books, captured from PDF files, or from the web. If using a web image, include the photographer and the web site in the footer

Citations: Use the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines, which can be found at: <http://www.douglas.bc.ca/library/apa.html>

A complete bibliography of all the cited references used in your text should be placed in a separate bibliography page, or your citations may be placed in the footnote section (bottom) of the page in which they appear

As stated above, every photo placed on your website needs to have a caption including a short description of the photo and the reference for the image. The full citation for the reference should be placed in the footnotes of the page under the heading of "Photo Credits".

Web Page Structure

Intro/Front Page

- Your name and class information (Title Section)
- Introduction to chosen rock art style (1/2 to 1 pg single space)
- Name
- Culture area/region
- Environmental setting
- Dates
- 3-4 most distinguishing characteristics
- Links to internal pages (sidebar)

Secondary Pages

Rock Art defined (1/2 to 1 pg single space)

- What is rock art and what are petroglyphs - geoglyphs
- What are some of the general archaeological theories used in their interpretation (e.g. hunting magic, entopic visions, gender, etc.)
- What are the techniques and methods of creating rock art
- Extra Credit (2 pts): Useful links to rock art web pages (sidebar)

Subject Rock Art Page (5 ½ to 11 pgs total)

1. Describe the rock art style, its distribution, dates, and how it relates to the archaeology of the region. Also include the occurrence of the style in other artistic expressions (e.g. pottery, textiles, murals, etc) associated with archaeological phases. (1-2 pgs single space)
2. If the specific style represents a variant in a regional style, then describe the regional style and how the specific style relates to it. Include the distribution and timing of the regional style. (1/2 to 1 pgs).
3. Discuss the archaeological record associated with the rock art style as well as the social organization, technology, and material culture of the proposed group(s) who made it (1-2 pgs single space)
4. Describe 1-2 spectacular or notable sites that provide excellent examples of the style. Where are they? How many panels and elements? Etc. (1-2 pgs single space)

5. Discuss archaeological interpretations of rock art and how archaeologists have developed their interpretations (e.g. contextual relationships, associations with specific environmental settings, ethnographic information, general theories of rock art) (1-2 pgs single space)
6. Descendant communities and preservation (1/2 to 2 pgs)
 - Who claims cultural affiliation
 - Are they involved in preservation/management efforts
 - How do they interpret the subject rock art – or what meaning to they attach to the rock art
 - What are the preservation threats to the rock art in the subject area/region
 - Are archaeologists and native communities working together in preservation efforts
7. Bibliography

Extra Credit: Gallery of Images page with appropriate citations for each image included in the gallery (minimum of 10 images) (10 pts)

LIST OF ROCK ART STYLES

Athapaskan

Navajo
Apache

Mogollon

Jornada
Reserve
Chihuahuan Polychrome Abstract
Desert Abstract
Mogollon Red

Anasazi (pre A.D. 1300)

San Juan Anthropomorphic
Chinle Representational
Rosa Representational
Cave Valley Representational

The Rio Grande Style

Northern Rio Grande
Pecos
Galisteo Basin
Bandelier Natl. Monument
Chama Valley

Hohokam

Phoenix Basin
Tucson Basin

Hispanic Rock Art

Northern Rio Grande
Texas

Pima/Papago Rock Art of Arizona

Yuman Geoglyphs and Intaglios

Ute Rock Art

Zuni Rock Art

Hopi Rock Art

COPING WITH THE PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE

One of the goals of this class is to help undergraduate students begin to use literature that is written for professionals. In this case, the literature is written primarily by professional archaeologists and addressed to other archaeologists or advanced students, but the skills you will develop in reading this archaeological literature should be applicable in many disciplines.

Most students who have difficulty reading the professional literature experience at least two particular problems. First, students don't understand an article on first reading, so they give up. A partial solution to this problem is obvious: read it again. A good strategy is to begin by skimming the article, then read it carefully all the way through, and finally read it yet again and take notes. An additional solution to this problem involves pinpointing exactly what it is that you don't understand and then investigating further (e.g., ask your professor a specific question). I expect that when you read an article, you will not understand everything. But if you tell me you don't understand it, I will want you also to tell me exactly what it is that you are having trouble understanding. This kind of pinpointing takes some work, but once you locate a problem, it is often easy to solve it.

The second problem is figuring out how all the information in an article fits together and generally answering the question (which professors often refuse to answer) "What do I have to know?" Many articles involve some background information, a core argument, and the presentation of data that support that argument. What you have to do to make sense out of all of this is identify the core argument, and consider how and to what extent the data support that argument.

Some Hints and Guidelines for Discussing Articles

Topic: What is the subject matter, issue or problem with which the article engages. Examples may be a particular body of visual or archaeological material (e.g. rock art images or settlement patterns), a method of interpretation (e.g. stylistic analysis; settlement survey), a theoretical framework (e.g. culture history, constructivism), etc.

Antithesis: what is argued against? What are other authors' takes on the same issue? These may be overtly discussed and reasons for disagreeing presented, or they may be just understood from the stand that the article takes on the issue. Some archaeological reports do not involve argument against an antithesis.

Thesis: what is argued for? What is the author(s)' take on the issue? The thesis is often stated explicitly at the conclusion to the article's introduction. Often it is introduced with the phrase "I will argue that...." It is then often repeated in different wording in the conclusion. In some cases, it is only stated in the conclusion. Also, the article may have more than one thesis.

Assumptions. These are necessary foundations of the thesis but for which no evidence is provided. They may be taken to be self-evident, as with the assumption that figurines are exclusively for ritual use or buildings on pyramids must be temples. Often the conclusion to arguments presented in a previous paper are merely mentioned as a starting point, and thus constitute an assumption in the present paper. If evidence is provided to support a point, then it is an argument rather than an assumption. Understanding the level of assumptions can help you judge the firmness of the foundation on which the argument is based.

Methodology. Each framework or discourse carries with it a set of appropriate methodologies. For example, the evolutionary framework involves a methodology of cross-cultural comparison: comparing unrelated societies presumed to be at the same "evolutionary level." In dealing with visual imagery, the culture-historical framework usually involves methodologies of iconographic analysis which may be contextual or a decontextualized ("daisy picking") comparison.

Gaps and absences. Can you think of kinds of evidence, arguments, or interpretations that seem missing or even avoided? How might this selection enhance the authority of the argument or simplify the construction of ancient society?

Authority. Do the authors explore alternative possibilities and leave open spaces for other avenues of interpretation that stimulate further debate and analysis? Or do they provide a seamless narrative that is to be accepted as a truth and may thus tend to close down debate. In the first case, you may find that an issue presented as a "major" debate actually presents a very narrow range of opinion within a restricted discourse. In the second case, the intent may be in part to police the boundaries of the discourse, textually "disciplining" those who stray from accepted views or who ask questions considered inappropriate.

Relation to descendant communities. One can ask to what extent members of descendant communities were invited to collaborate in the project: were they consulted in relation to the project and resulting interpretations? Are Indigenous voices heard in the argument? In most cases the answers will be negative, but one may still hypothesize whether the argument and conclusions appear respectful or disrespectful of descendant communities, and why.

Contradictions. Some arguments rely on a great deal of imagination to link fragments into a seamless narrative, treating limited evidence as if it were the whole picture. In such cases, the very artificiality of the project often shows through in the contradictions which the author cannot control, and these can be brought out to destabilize the authority with which it is presented. See what contradictions you can identify.