

ANTH 392 A02

Conflict Archaeology and the Legacy of Battles

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Terence Christian

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Course Description:

This course examines the concepts, theories, and practical methods of Conflict Archaeology through a thematic approach. Not confined to battles alone, conflict archaeology examines the various manifestations of strife including but not limited to physical and symbolic conflict, technological revolutions, historical interpretation and memorialization, material culture, and mobility and internment. The period of study will begin with the rise of organized conflict in the prehistoric and will chart its change through the classical, medieval, early modern, and present eras. In parallel, the course will assess present social, ethical, and practical issues to examining conflict in the archaeological record. Applicable to a wide range of heritage-focused subjects, students will obtain practical training in the assessment and synthesis of both the historical and the archaeological records.

Course Objectives:

This course will introduce students to the sub-discipline of Conflict Archaeology. The course will largely focus on the origins, development, cultural variations, and technological revolutions of human conflict. Through a longitudinal study of human conflict with parallel study of specific archaeological type sites, students will be introduced to the methods, theories, ethical and legal debates, and current practice within Conflict Archaeology. In addition, the course will provide complementary training on writing historical and archaeological research designs, conducting desk-based historical and archaeological research, developing and supporting data-derived conclusions, reporting results in both written and oral formats.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify and explain the origins, cultural variations, and major technological developments of human conflict from pre-history to present.
- Identify and critically assess the core theoretical frameworks of Conflict Archaeology citing archaeological sources and mobilizing well-formed logical arguments for support.
- Understand and evaluate the ethical and legal issues affecting Conflict Archaeology including human remains, nationalism, repatriation, colonialism/imperialism, the antiquities trade (illicit and legal), museology and interpretation of the past, experimental archaeology, and the effects of research design.
- Design a research plan, carry out independent research focused on a specific battlefield, and report results obtained via a written report and presentation.