

ANTH 449

Archaeology of the Northwest Coast

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Quentin Mackie

Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to important current issues in the archaeology of Northwestern North America, particularly the coastal and island areas. This part of the world has a very rich and exciting archaeological record spanning almost 14,000 years. Topics may include the post-glacial occupation of the coast, household archaeology, social complexity, lithic analysis, ground stone technology, faunal analysis, spatial analysis, change and continuity in the archaeological record, ethical considerations in BC archaeology, and Indigenous Archaeologies. The focus will be on thematic questions of how archaeologists gain knowledge (or think they do!) rather than exactly “what happened when and where” in a strict cultural history sense. These thematic topics will involve readings and exercises focused on topics of methodological and theoretical interest. Cultural history and integration of method and theory will be explored through individual research essays. An introductory course in archaeological method and theory is required, normally ANTH 240, while ANTH 340 (Archaeology of BC) is desirable. The format of the class, which meets in a three hour time block, will include lectures, structured class discussions, guest lectures, and student presentations. We will work with some original archaeological material, transforming it from things in bags to useful data. We will also do some structured exercises in artifact replication in this class. Some optional field trips will be scheduled on weekends later in the term. There will be no exams in this course.

Skills Development

Students will improve their critical reading and thinking skills through advanced readings from the professional literature, presentations, structured discussions and exercises, and debate. There will be explicit instruction and feedback on giving short, effective presentations. Students will work with original archaeological materials and experience the process of sorting, classifying and measuring specimens, and analysing the resultant data. Some applied qualitative and quantitative research skills we be attained.