

ROCK ART RECORDER

PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to provide the basic academic and field skills necessary to qualify the avocational archaeologist to be able to participate in rock art recording projects and to provide assistance to the professional community as may be requested.

OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course the student will:

1. Be familiar with the terminology and literature of the field of rock art.
2. Be aware of the obligations and law, relating to the protection and preservation of this cultural resource.
3. Be familiar with the various styles and types of rock art in the local area, and in other areas as presented.
4. Understand the limitations and current methods of rock art dating and interpretation.
5. Learn the basics of rock art recording, tools and techniques.
6. Gain confidence in the recording of rock art sites both as an archaeological manifestation, and as a rock art site.
7. Be able to record a site on his/her own, with supervision.
8. Be able to communicate with and assist others with these skills in Rock Art programs.

FORMAT

The student will receive a minimum of 20 hours of classroom instruction, coupled with 40 hours of actual field experience. Within the field work requirements, students (in teams of two or three) will record at least one small rock art site, and then proceed to larger sites again working in a team with at least one certified recorder to supervise.

All completed recordings will be turned over to the appropriate agency (permitting) and closest associated archiving institution in a format most useful to that institute. Additional copies of this information may be housed at other institutions depending upon agreements made at the beginning of the project.

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. Items need not be covered in the order presented, but it is mandatory that all items be covered by the end of the course.
2. Present recording techniques early in the course so that field work can begin as soon as possible.
3. Take a few field trips as orientation for those who have not seen much rock art. Choose a variety of sites stressing variation in elements, methods, style, time periods. Both petroglyph and pictograph sites should be examined, if possible.

GENERAL COMMENTS (continued)

4. Attempt to use all day sessions with morning lecture and afternoon recording or evening lectures and all day recording sessions.
5. Stress the importance of completing field work as soon as possible before the end of the course work.
6. Broaden the horizons with slides of glyphs from different areas: Mesoamerica, Australia, South Africa, Sahara, Europe, for a good general view. Have students bring examples from places they have visited. (Distribution, section D, page 4)
7. Stress the fact that rock art CAN be dealt with from a scientific and anthropological perspective. Assign outside reading, might even put in a test question.
8. Point out that rock art recording may require a variety of methods and techniques based on problem orientation. Recording a rock art site as an archaeological entity is one thing, but studying it is quite another. Offer different examples.
9. Conduct experimental manufacturing of glyphs using a variety of tools and different techniques. This should be done on pieces of commercial sandstone.

COURSE OUTLINE - 60 Hours

This course requires a minimum of 20 Class Hours plus 40 Hours of Field Work. This does not include field trips to view rock art sites.

A. Introduction: terminology and references

1. What is rock art?
2. What is art?
3. What is prehistoric art on rocks?
4. Where does it come from?
5. Terminology Examples:
 - a. Pictograph
 - b. Petroglyph
 - c. Geoglyph (Ground Figures)
 - d. Dent/dint
 - e. Pecking
 - Direct
 - Indirect
 - f. Style
 - g. Element
 - h. Design
 - i. Techniques
 - j. Ideographs
 - k. Meaning
 - l. Icon
 - m. Type vs. Style is often confused in literature and should not be.
 - n. Symbol (What is it?) Important for understanding rock art's significance.
 - o. Panel
6. References - via instructor presentation

Note: Whatever terminology is used in a project should be defined. A good glossary of terminology is the one by Robert G. Bednarik now in print.

B. Public awareness and preservation

1. Public programs:
 - a. Lectures
 - b. The Media
 - c. Amateur societies - certification
 - d. Professional societies (Please list others if you know of any.)
 - American Rock Art Research Association
 - International Federation of Rock Art Organization (IFRAO)
 - International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
 - International Committee on Rock Art
 - Eastern Rock Art Research Association (ERARA)
 - e. College courses examples:
 - Northern Arizona University
 - Arizona State University
 - Cochise College
 - University of California at Los Angeles
 - University of Nevada at Las Vegas
 - Earthwatch
 - Crow Canyon
 - f. Parks, forests and interpretive areas
2. Preservation Examples:
 - a. Natural destructive forces
 - Airborne abrasion
 - Animal (cattle, burros, birds)
 - Water percolation
 - Lichen
 - Flooding
 - Molecular breakdown (freezing, solar radiation)
 - Patina
 - Rock decay
 - Rock fall
 - Fire
 - b. Human destruction
 - Intentional (shooting, hatcheting, spray paint, graffiti, chalking, touching)
 - Unintentional
 - c. Pollution
 - d. Revitalization of glyph localities
 - e. Only a professional rock art Conservator should be used for any conservation effort.

B. Public awareness and preservation (continued)

3. Laws:
 - a. International
 - b. Federal
 - c. State
 - d. Tribal
 - e. Rock art records used to monitor or as a basis for the enforcement of the law.
4. Obtain Permission:
 - a. Obtain permission to work at sites from land owners, managers, and tribal groups which claim heritage of the site.

C. Classes

1. Historic, proto-historic and prehistoric
2. Pictographs
3. Petroglyphs
4. Geoglyphs (Earth Forms)
 - a. Intaglios
 - b. Rock Alignments
5. Spanish markings
6. Inscriptions
7. Graffiti

D. Distribution

1. Regional styles
2. Cultural styles
 - Are these styles different? How?
3. Individual glyph localities
4. Topological settings
5. Landscape

E. Construction

1. Surface used
 - a. Soft/hard
 - b. Porous vs. non-porous
 - c. Patinated vs. non-patinated
 - d. Facing what direction
 - e. Exposure to what elements
 - f. Types of rocks
2. Pecked
 - a. Dent size
 - b. Spacing
 - c. Depth
 - d. Angle of the blow
3. Incised (scratched, carved, abraded)
 - a. Groove shape
 - b. Groove depth
 - c. Quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, insects, aquatic

4. Botanical - domestic, wild, riverine, desert, mountain, plateau
5. Astronomical - sun, moon, stars, constellations, comets, meteors, eclipse, solstice, and equinox
6. Cupules
7. Subject - maps, trails - can be very interpretive
8. Others - hands, feet

G. Meaning

1. Relating as systems
 - a. Ideographic
 - b. Style groupings between areas
2. Special relationships
 - a. Superimposition
 - b. Depictions
3. How does it relate to prehistoric cultural systems and the religions and ideologies of those cultures?
4. What does it tell us that other cultural remains do not?
 - a. Define cultural regions
 - b. Inter-group contacts
 - c. Intra-group variations
 - d. Temporal variations
 - e. Communication networks
 - f. Social institutions (belief systems) Religious practices
 - g. World view
 - h. Meaning: How does art function in preliterate context?
 - How does rock art function in landscape?
 - Marking sacred spots and maintaining tradition.
 - The symbolic component of art and place
 - Consider the importance of location for understanding function.
 - i. Inside meaning of style: How it functions for the people who made it, means of identity, maintaining cultural identity.

H. Style

1. Cultural areas
2. Regional
3. Horizons - time and space considerations

I. Dating

1. Patination and desert varnish
2. Paint and binders
3. Lichen
4. Site association and cultural association
5. Style
 - a. early man
 - b. Archaic
 - c. Hohokam
 - d. Pueblo

I. Dating - 5. Style (continued)

- e. Historic
 - Native American, Indigenous Peoples
 - Spanish
 - Anglo
- 6. Superimposition
- 7. Redone pecking, painting

J. Recording Skills

1. Forms - Show the many examples. Explain one set and then use it to record a site.
2. Photography
 - a. Color- slides, color prints or digital and black/white
 - b. General environment of site
 - c. Data board (information board) in photos
 - d. Boulders, panels, clusters and individual elements
 - e. Scale and direction
 - f. Weathering
 - g. Vandalism
3. Sketches of the overall view of site
4. Scale drawings of panels using graph paper and string grids or just doing sketches
5. Drawings (If done from slides, not to be used without follow-up visit and correction in the field.)
6. Munsell Soil Color Chart - Use to stress color of pictographs or petroglyph elements where there are visible patination differences.
7. Geoglyphs (Ground Figures)
8. Computer use in recording
9. Unacceptable methods
 - a. rubbings
 - b. casts
 - c. chalking
 - d. aluminum powder paint
 - e. touching
 - f. painting
 - g. using a stick or object to point and touch image

K. Mapping a Site

1. Simple to complex methods
2. Compass use
3. Map reading
4. Locating the UTM of a site on a map
5. Locating sites and panels from existing maps
6. Use Global Positioning System (GPS) Geographic Information System (GIS) with the map. Use the GPS for datums and UTM s.
7. Use Laser Target Range Finder (Line of site, contour, etc.)

FIELD WORK - 40 hours

20 hours - Group recording with the class on several small sites or on one large site.

5 hours - Individual recording of a small site of less than 20 elements.

15 hours - Individual or group recording of a larger site of 75 or more elements.

Utilize the variety of techniques in section J and K of the outline.

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

See page 9. Also, use bibliography from course texts, instructor created, or suggested by the internet

SUGGESTIONS FOR ROCK ART RECORDING CLASSES AND CERTIFICATION

by Jane Kolber

1. Decide what the purpose of certification is. What do you want people to be able to do when they have completed it - how to accomplish that?
2. Recorders should competently be able to do ALL aspects of recording themselves:
 - Mapping - drawing both plain and measured maps.
 - Locating sites - should understand and be able to plot UTM's, not just be able to use a GPS.
 - Be a competent photographer with a film camera - not a point and shoot. Digital cameras should only be used as auxiliary and with at least a 3. MG resolution.
 - If a digital camera is used for main recording purposes, use only 5.MG cameras or better and make printouts, which should only be put onto archival paper and also produce a copy on CD. Do not project slides for any reason.
 - Be able to understand and use a compass fully.
 - Do a usable, comprehensible, accurate string grid drawing - not a piece of artwork.
 - Fill out all questions on a form unless they don't apply at that site.
 - Be able to fill out a useful, informative daily log.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ROCK ART RECORDING CLASSES (continued)

3. Instructors should:
 - Be able to do with excellence all the work required of the students.
 - Compose site specific forms. Make a CD of forms so you can add to them.
 - Accompany the students into the field for all learning sessions. Students cannot learn to record on their own without someone being with them and checking their work in the field. They should practice first. Work should be satisfactory before attempting an actual recording that will be archived.
 - Stress the importance of conservation. Never demonstrate or recommend the use of any kind of intrusive method, unless it is the only alternative to preservation.
 - Never attempt any form of conservation method without assistance of a rock art conservator.
4. Recording methods should be as non-interpretive as possible.
5. Very small sites should be worked on in classes as larger sites may not get completed, may be too difficult and not give students a sense of accomplishment.
6. Both petroglyph and pictograph sites should be worked on in each class unless they don't exist in the class region.
7. Excellence is stressed rather than quantity.
8. Students who are not competent should not be certified. A certificate of completion of the course could be issued to those not qualified to do good recording on their own. Many students have to repeat the course to be competent.
9. Recording methods should be as inexpensive as possible. A good used SLR camera and a good compass are the most expensive tools required.

BASIC ROCK ART REFERENCES

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