

Site Methods

Why Archaeology?

- Objects from past
 - Understand lives from the past
- Look at:
 - Distribution of sites
 - Distribution within sites
- Depends on the goal of the research

Methods

- How do we find the data necessary to make confident inferences about the past?
 - CONTEXT
 - Four phases
 - Survey
 - Testing
 - Excavation/recovery
 - Analysis

Types of Archaeology

- 'Traditional' Archaeology
- Underwater Archaeology

Site preservation

- Causes bias
 - Not everything preserves
 - Post depositional processes
- Once on/in earth natural processes occur
 - Volcanic ash, silt, avalanche

What preserves?

- Stone tools
- Pottery
- Building and parts of buildings
- Organic remains

Site formation

- Combination of:
 - Geological deposits
 - Sterile layers
 - (soil)
 - Anthropogenic deposits
 - Look for anthropogenic
 - Depositional units
 - Areas where things are piled together
 - Middens (trash)

What to look for:

- Features:
 - o An immovable structure or layer in the ground of significance
- Primary refuse:
 - o Items left exactly where they fell by ancient people
- Secondary refuse:
 - o Items placed in a location which removed them from vicinity of living quarters
 - o Trash heap (midden)

Survey

- Map physical remains of human activity
- Site survey
 - o Surface survey
 - o Global positioning system (GPS)
 - o Geophysical techniques
 - Ground-penetrating radar
 - o Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
 - Consolidates geographical images
 - Need points of reference (total station)
 - Overlay images
 - o The point
 - Patterns in the area