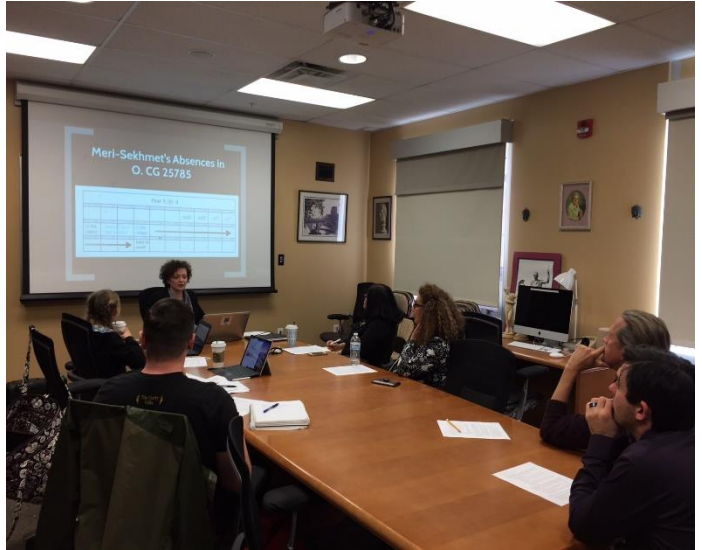


# Dr. Anne Austin on Ancient Egyptian Health-Care and Tattooing in Ancient Egypt

E.A. Pollard (Associate Professor of History and President, San Diego Society of the AIA)

On Friday, February 23, 2018, the History Department at SDSU welcomed anthropologist/Egyptologist Dr. Anne Austin (University of Missouri, St. Louis) to share both a mid-day master-class and an evening lecture.

Dr. Austin's mid-day master-class, entitled **"Reconstructing Health Care in the Distant Past --- Case Studies from New Kingdom Egypt (1550-1070 BCE)"** discussed the range of records for work-absences of those building the massive construction projects undertaken by ancient pharaohs. Attendees got a chance to grapple with the statistical data Dr. Austin has gathered for the sickness reported by these workers, as well as with the range of health-care remedies and strategies these workers deployed to address their illnesses. Particularly fascinating were the seasonal trends and infectious patterns in illness that Austin revealed and the various ancient papyri (with their unusual remedies) that Dr. Austin virtually unrolled and translated from the ancient hieratic writing. Socialized health care has a millennia-long past!!!



Dr. Austin's evening lecture, co-sponsored by the San Diego Society of the Archaeological Institute of America, investigated the topic **"Embodying the Goddess: Revealing the Practice of Tattooing in Ancient Egypt."** Seventy-five attendees, from SDSU and the wider San Diego community, assembled to hear Dr. Austin describe the process of finding this tattooed mummy, how she documented the find, and her efforts to make sense of the tattoos on this woman. After explaining how traditional scholarship has treated tattoos and the changing views about tattooing over the past 200 years, Dr. Austin showed the range of tattoos ---

including wadjet eyes, Thoth baboons, cattle of Hathor, and lotus blossoms --- that appear on this particular mummy. Dr. Austin explored several theoretical approaches for making sense of the tattoos: the body as material culture; the body as a canvas; and the body as a site of lived experience.

