Public Archaeology

Arts of Engagement

edited by

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Access Archaeology

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From *Archaeo-Engage* to *Arts of Engagement*: Conference to Publication

Howard Williams

with Rachel Alexander, Robyn Bursnell, Jack Cave, Aaron Clarke, Afnan Ezzeldin,
Jonathan Felgate, Bryony Fisher, Bethan Humphries, Shaun Parry, Hannah Proctor,
Mona Rajput, Calum Richardson and Becky Swift

The chapter outlines the rationale for the 2nd University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference – Archaeo-Engage: Engaging Communities in Archaeology. It serves as a companion chapter to this book's Introduction. It reviews and contextualises the student presentations and keynote talks in relation to key current debates in public archaeology, and explains the journey towards publication incorporating student contributions and those by heritage professionals and academics. In doing so, the chapter provides a practical reflection on how undergraduate student work can contribute to current public archaeological investigations and debates.

Introduction

Incorporating student learning and endeavour into academic investigations is a relatively new dimension of archaeological teaching and research (recently reviewed by Croucher 2019; Lewis 2019). This publication project in public archaeology developed from the 2nd University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference entitled *Archaeo-Engage: Engaging Communities in Archaeology*. This was a one-day free conference organised by final-year single honours archaeology students at the University of Chester as part of module 'HI6001 Archaeology and Contemporary Society'. The event was hosted by the Grosvenor Museum, Chester (part of Cheshire West and Cheshire Museums) and took place on 5th April 2017 (Figure 1).

Exploring real-world and digital mechanisms for public participation and investigation in public archaeological research, the student speakers adopted a range of strategies for delivery: from short talks supported by PowerPoint through to vlogs and art installations. Two keynote speakers delivered presentations on the day: Dr Lorna Richardson (formerly a postdoctoral researcher based at Umeå University, now Lecturer in Digital Humanities at the University of East Anglia) and Dr Mike Heyworth (Director of the Council for British Archaeology). The entire event was recorded by the University of Chester and can be viewed on Vimeo.¹ This edited collection comprises the select proceedings of the student conference, combining contributions from students who presented at the conference, as well as range of papers commissioned subsequently and authored by students, heritage professionals and academics. While the collection incorporates chapters that contend with public archaeological research and community engagement from a range of perspectives, a specific theme emerged from the conference and was enhanced by the additional contributions: the theme of art/archaeology interactions in public archaeology, including interfaces between art as subject, method and media. Hence, the book has adopted a revised title: *Public Archaeology: Arts of Engagement*.

Archaeo-Engage – engaging communities in archaeology

In 2016, the well-established Level 6 (final-year) undergraduate module 'HI6001 Archaeology and Contemporary Society' was adapted to integrate a new pedagogic experiment: to incorporate the organisation and presentation at a student-run public day conference as an integral formative element. The module is a core module for single honours Archaeology students, and focuses on the many intersections between archaeological theory, method and practice, and the contemporary world.

Figure 1: The poster designed by students to promote the conference, featuring the logo by Jonathan Felgate

Following on from the successful first conference, which tackled the intersections between public archaeology and mortuary archaeology (Giles and Williams 2016; Williams 2018; 2019), the aim was to repeat the experiment in 2017 on a different theme in public archaeology. Discussions between Caroline Pudney and Howard Williams (hereafter HW) inspired the focus on community engagement: a long-standing theme of both their research interests (e.g. Williams and Williams 2007; Simpson and Williams 2008; Tong *et al.* 2015; Pudney 2017a and 2017b). We had both considered public archaeology as an integral aspect of all our academic research and our roles as public intellectuals and practitioners, rather than as a subcategory of specialist practitioner or theoretical expertise, and we wanted to foster this sense in our students (see Almansa Sánchez 2018; Flatman 2012; Grima 2016; Richardson and Almansa Sánchez 2015; Svanberg 2013; Tarlow and Nilsson Stutz 2013). Hence, the conference titled selected for students was relatively fluid: offering them the opportunity to explore a range of themes and debates

about the intersections between contemporary society and archaeology (Figure 1). As an environment to critically explore different dimensions and debates in public archaeology, we hoped the conference and its subsequent assignments by students would explore new strategies for engaging communities in archaeological practices and ideas in both real-world and digital environments.

Themes in the public archaeology and politics of archaeology, as well as heritage conservation, management and interpretation, are integral parts of Chester's Archaeology degree programmes. The first half of the module HI6001 provided an exploration of a range of critical themes in public archaeology and the politics of archaeology. These were followed by five two-hour sessions that prepared the students for the formative conference and were supported by Brian Costello and Abigail Górkiewicz Downer. These sessions prepared the students for the summative written assignment: 'Critically appraise your presentation and contribution to the conference addressing the question: "What is the future of community engagement in archaeology?"' (See Appendix 1).

This exercise, while guided and supported, was intended to enhance in-depth and critical engagement, as well as critical self-reflection, on the students' work. It aspired to afford the students new skills and experiences in researching and communicating public archaeology, as well as creating for them a more accurate estimation of future career scenarios for archaeological and heritage research and its dissemination.

Reviewing Archaeo-Engage

The day conference was delivered efficiently by the students, assisted by Chester postgraduate researcher Gary Duckers. The conference was free and open to the public and was attended by c. 40 individuals including the students themselves, staff and other students of the University of Chester, Cheshire West and Chester council staff, heritage professionals, and members of the public. The students acted as greeters, chairs for their sessions and the keynote speakers, and contributed to the questions-and-answers for each presentation. In addition to the 13 student presentations and two guest speakers, there were further discussions over lunch and at the end of the conference itself.

The modes of delivery varied considerably and this was a distinctive aspect of the day. Eight students gave talks supported by PowerPoint, one presented a poster and explained its contents, another presented a vlog, and one a podcast. There were also two students presenting via installations: one created drawings of archaeological contexts, one creating a Playmobil museum.

When compared against the potential range topics for investigation, as characterised by the rich and varied contents of the journals *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology*, *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage* and *Public Archaeology*, or indeed, the contents of the recent *Key Concepts in Public Archaeology* (Moshenska 2017a), students avoided tackling some key topics. Among the omissions were liaison with metal-detectorists (Thomas 2016); archaeology and popular culture; the threat to people, sites and research by the antiquities trade (Gill 2017); how to navigate alternative archaeologies (pseudoarchaeology) (see Moshenska 2017b), and the intersections between nationalism and archaeology (Sommer 2017). Still, students responded to the question set by exploring three important themes, attributing a session to each: public engagement and community archaeology; art and public archaeology; and digital public archaeology. Let us review each in turn, although it should be noted that, thanks to the University of Chester's learning technologists, the entire event can be viewed on Vimeo.²

Not just a hobby: community archaeologies

The first session was chaired by Afnan Ezzeldin and focused on both traditional and new ways of engagement with the public, specifically on 'community archaeology' and its perceived social impact (Figure 2).

Shaun Parry delivered the first paper: 'Archaeology for Community and Social Benefit'. He proposed a bold new initiative to engage a wider range of people in archaeological practice through integration of

² <https://vimeo.com/showcase/4579092>

Figure 2: Chairing the first session: Afnan (Amiko) Ezzeldin

archaeological training within the benefit system. This proposal would require centralised government funding and support, and risks being perceived as exploiting unemployed people by utilising their unpaid work. Still, Parry identified the potential benefits could include: greater overall investment in supporting and sustaining the heritage sector; disseminating training and knowledge; and fostering wider inclusion (see Parry this volume).

‘Engage Thy Neighbour’ by Bethany Humphries evaluated the range of ways that archaeology can foster community engagements with local archaeological and heritage sites, monuments, built environments and landscapes in order to promote social inclusion and a sense of community (see also Belford 2011; 2014; Thomas 2017). She emphasised the wide range of potential practices that need to be considered beyond just ‘digging’ – surveying, excavation, post-excavation work, conservation work and oral history research (see also Ainsworth 2015). Reviewing the variety of community archaeology projects and practices currently operating in the UK, she focuses on one case study of good practice, the Dig York Stadium project by the York Archaeological Trust with the City of York Council (2014–15). The diverse activities and active social media presence of the project revealed an effective and flexible community project supported by professional archaeologists. Humphries thus encouraged a multi-dimensional approach to community archaeology (see Humphries this volume).

Bryony Fisher (Figure 3) presented ‘The Archaeology of Life on the Streets’, using a vlog rather than a PowerPoint presentation. She identified the benefits and challenges of incorporating homeless people in archaeological projects (see Fisher this volume). Like Parry and Humphries, Fisher explored how archaeological projects can become increasingly inclusive and target specific groups traditionally excluded from archaeological endeavours and knowledge (see also Kiddey 2017). In this light, homeless groups are just one group among many potential specific sections of society for whom archaeologists

Figure 3: Bryony Fisher's video presentation, with other speakers (left to right): Rachel Alexander, Shaun Perry and Bethan Humphries

might foster bespoke engagement activities and projects. Fisher passionately emphasised the need to build sustainability in public archaeology projects aiming to do this (see Fisher this volume).

The final talk in this first session was by Rachel Alexander who evaluated the British Archaeological Award-winning Operation Nightingale, focusing on its role as therapeutic practice for military personnel, but addressing also its wider facets of community engagement. Among the many dimensions of Operation Nightingale, she focused on the under-threat monument on Salisbury Plain: Barrow Clump, Figheldean. The dig there has produced Neolithic finds, a Bronze Age burial mound with associated mortuary deposits, and an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery. Operation Nightingale is considered by Alexander as an important case study of targeted public engagement, focusing on specific groups with particular physical and mental disabilities. She also considered how Operation Florence, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, worked alongside Operation Nightingale to include the community through a range of activities and events. Despite its many successes, Alexander identified the potential challenges of the project's activities and broader public profile, including tensions and ethical debates regarding the relationship between archaeologists and the military, especially when dealing with the sensitive topic of human remains (see Brown 2016; Hamilakis 2009). Meanwhile, she flagged up the potentially upsetting nature for veterans and others, as well as the broader ethical challenges involved in, discovering and handling human remains (see Brown 2016; Williams 2019; Williams and Alexander this volume).

In addition to these four talks, there was a constructive and far-ranging discussion in the question-and-answer section. While unlikely to transpire in the current climate, the need for extended state-funding at national, regional and local levels to support high-quality public engagement and community projects was emphasised. As well as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, crowd-sourcing and other mechanisms,

Figure 4: Mona Rajput chairing the second session and introducing Aaron Clarke

state funds remain an important dimension of ensuring a real social impact on the lives of specific groups, as well as to foster research, conservation and management of heritage resources on the medium to long term (Sayer 2014). It was argued that this is particularly the case for school participation in heritage and archaeology projects (see Ancarno *et al.* 2015; Lewis 2014).

The importance of sustainability was repeated by students as key to their vision of community participation in archaeological research, and an important marker for the success of any community archaeology projects (Belford 2014; Carman 2011). The students accepted that this need not mean projects persisting in perpetuity at the same locations: projects might shift between areas and foci. Combined with this, the discussion perceived the diversity of activities involved in projects as a further key dimension in the efficacy and sustainability of public archaeological endeavours. The flexibility of what constitutes a 'community' in terms of geographical focus and demographic was also raised, and how all 'communities' can be exclusive as much as inclusive, depending on the parameters identified (see also Belford 2011; 2014).

A further important point raised was the lack of information about failures, and learning from failures, in community archaeology projects, whether in terms of self-criticisms in order to build and adapt in future, or in terms of existing frameworks for critical evaluations of other projects (but see Simpson and Williams 2008). The challenge of dealing with rural communities is a further area of concern: although the potential of community foci of pubs and shops was raised as one solution, especially given that many of the more successful published case studies are urban (e.g. Garner and Wilmott 2015; Nevell 2015). Finally, the possibility was raised of setting up partnerships with specialists to work with disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, rather than trying to be social workers ourselves, as a further area requiring attention if initiatives hope to be scaled up in their character and reach.

To the people: art and social media

The second *Archaeo-Engage* conference session was chaired by Mona Rajput and opened by Aaron Clarke's presentation reflecting on a Playmobil museum installation he had created (Figure 4). Entitled 'Playful Encounters – Engaging Children in Public Archaeology', Clarke focused on playful encounters as a medium for engaging audiences in museums (Clarke this volume). Clarke's review mirrors recent discussions by Copplestone and Dunne (2017) in relation to the interactive elements of the new Moesgård Museum. In discussion, he reflected how this might operate differently between museum and home environments, and perhaps even in school contexts for learning about the past and the process of its interpretation, thus as an interesting initiative for the theme of archaeology and education (Henson 2017).

Figure 5: Becky Swift evaluates TV documentaries about archaeology

Television and film are important media for the public to encounter and engage with archaeology. Moving images disseminate archaeology across varied formats, from movies (Hall 2004; Holtorf 2007a: 118) and documentaries (Bonacchi 2013; Holtorf 2007a: 52–54; Kulik 2006) to an ever-increasing range of archaeological films of different kinds and contexts (Morgan 2014; Tong *et al.* 2015; Perry 2017). Television documentaries are an important environment for reaching mass audiences and engaging them in archaeological ideas, methods and discoveries and both humanising the past and creating powerful informative and emotionally and intellectually stimulating shows with a 'good story' dominating over finds and methods (Devenney *et al.* 2018; Schablitsky and Hetherington 2012). However, the media retain and perpetuate out-moded stereotypes of both archaeology and archaeologists, including the purveying of nationalist sentiments and supernatural 'fringe' musings (Ascherson 2004), while the public and potential students can be misled regarding what constitutes most archaeological work (Schablitsky and Hetherington 2012: 144). There remains an inherent mistrust of the media among many

archaeologists (see Brittain and Clack 2007: 24–26), but its potential for stimulating critical thinking and vibrant engagements with the past have been repeatedly championed (e.g. Piccini 2007; Taylor 2007).

It was within this context that Becky Swift evaluated the hugely important medium of television for promoting public engagement in archaeology via her paper: ‘Engaging the public through the television: the future of public engagement with archaeology from television media’ (Figure 5). Focusing on how archaeologists themselves are portrayed in shows such as *Time Team*, *Meet the Ancestors*, and *Two Men in a Trench*, and *Digging for Britain* (see also Ascherson 2004; Holtorf 2007a: 62–100; Bonacchi 2013; Moshenska 2017c), she pointed out that archaeologists themselves are increasingly media-aware and effective as on-screen practitioners and communicators (see also Ascherson 2004: 145; Schablitsky and Hetherington 2012: 148). Swift identified the stereotypes of how archaeologists dress (see Holtorf 2007b); she noted that they still rarely serve as the main presenters of the programmes themselves, bar from a few ‘usual suspects’ (Brittain and Clack 2007: 16–17; Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass is one example: Schablitsky and Hetherington 2012: 150). Also, she points out the dubious credibility of programmes like *Ancient Aliens* and observes that there remain limitations to our understanding of the impact and interactions of mainstream archaeological stories with the vastly popular and problematic shows promoting pseudoarchaeology (see Schadla-Hall 2004). Producers might not deliberately set out to misrepresent the views of contributing archaeologists or mislead their audiences. Still, their focus is upon entertainment, even if doing so might have the incidental or supplementary benefits of informing and empowering their audiences (Schablitsky and Hetherington 2012: 145; see also Brittain and Clack 2007: 28–30; Piccini 2007).

In discussion, Swift also argued that we need to speak up as a discipline via television against pseudoarchaeology, challenging its damaging narratives, often built on deeply rooted sexist and racist narratives (e.g. Anderson 2018, but see also Holtorf 2005; Thomas 2015 for different perspectives on approaches to media archaeology). Perhaps programmes crafted by archaeologists themselves will increasingly come to the fore in the future to compete against pseudoarchaeological narratives which dominate TV (Anderson 2018; Devenney *et al.* 2018), operating alongside vlogs, podcasts and blogs as new media by which archaeological narratives can circumvent mainstream producers (Boyle 2017). Archaeoduck (Duckworth this volume) and Archaeosoup productions (Barkman-Astles, this volume) are good examples of the power of archaeological vlogs to communicate a wide range of archaeological themes, theories, debates and methods.

Artist’s reconstructions are another focus of critical evaluation, operating as a well-established and important medium for public archaeological engagement, and frequently featuring mortuary contexts (e.g. Ambrus 2006, Ambrus and Aston 2001). Recent studies have explored the power of art in archaeological communication and public engagement, including new reflections on the challenges and potential of envisioning death rituals in multiple stages and perspectives (Gardela 2019; Giles 2016; Swogger 2010; Watson and Williams 2019; Williams 2009). ‘Drawing death: issues with reconstructing the dead for the public’ by Hannah Proctor focused on the 7th-century AD high-status female bed-burial from Swallowcliffe Down, Wiltshire (Speake 1989), one of a series of well-known wealthy ‘conversion period’ graves of high-status females. This rich yet disturbed burial context was effectively deployed to discuss the use of art to display mortuary contexts in museum exhibits and other public venues. Proctor created an art installation, showing some options for how we might visualise the disturbed grave (Figure 6). She argued that artist’s reconstructions communicate archaeological discoveries to the public and even humanise the dead with an immediate impact on viewers (Figure 7). However, the decisions behind the art’s creation are rarely explained in a clear fashion to audiences (see also Giles 2016). In addition, the art can become rapidly dated and is expensive to replace, so they can endure and lag behind shifting archaeological interpretations. Moreover, artworks have had a tendency to be biased towards wealthy graves, male-gendered graves and male participants. Funerary scenes are limited in a further way: they often only show a single moment in time and rarely explore mortuary processes. They rely on a large number of choices and it is often difficult to discern which elements are drawn on archaeological data and which are artistic additions. Proctor specifically criticises the danger of the authority of artists in fixing an interpretation, and specifically, the ‘living dead’ approach: presuming that grave-goods belonged to a single individual, using the Amesbury Archer’s reconstruction as a famous example. As

best practice in the future, Proctor focused on the need for combining multiple media to allow viewers to discern discoveries from burial contexts from more speculative inferences. She proposed layering of images to discern between what was found and what was inferred: a technique adopted by Victor Ambrus for *Time Team* programmes (Ambrus 2006; see discussion in Williams 2009).

Figure 6: Hannah Proctor's art, illustrating different strategies for illustrating furnished early medieval inhumation graves

The final presentation took us into the field of digital archaeology which deserves further introduction. With the growth in Internet use, the potential to engage audiences in archaeology via digital media has grown exponentially, and with it the potential to facilitate new and diverse audiences and fostering digital communities both with and without geographical moorings (see Bonacchi 2017; Bonacchi *et al.* 2019; Cook 2018; McDavid 2002; 2004; Richardson 2013) and both during and between fieldwork (Williams and Atkin 2015; Garner and Wilmott 2015; Laracuent 2012; Ulguim 2018). We should not only explore the potentials and challenges of using social media for public engagement (e.g. Perry and Beale 2015; Richardson 2015). In addition, we need to further understand how it is changing the epistemological and ontological character of the discipline (Perry and Beale 2015). Equally, we need to explore further how archaeological knowledge is being deployed by the public via social media (Bonacchi and Moshenska 2015; Bonacchi *et al.* 2018), including contributions to debates far beyond the traditional restrictions of peer-reviewed academic publications as public intellectuals (Brophy 2018). There still remain a series of ethical challenges, however, with our digital practice that mirror and extend upon real-world public archaeology ethics (Perry and Beale 2015; Richardson 2018). Within the vast range of ways that digital media are being deployed by archaeologists, including social media such as vlogs (Tong *et al.* 2015), and the practice and ethics of digital archaeology are a growing concern (Richardson and Lindgren 2017).

Addressing aspects of this key topic, Robyn Bursnell composed a poster entitled: #PublicEngagementWithSocialMedia. She explored digital engagement with archaeology via Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress and Instagram in relation to conferences to suggest the potential, but also the difficulties, of considering social media a mechanism for public engagement in specialist academic debates (see Laracuent 2012). Bursnell evaluated the *ArchaeoEngage* conference's own social media activity, as

well as reflecting on the social media activities associated with the CAA (Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods) conference. She made the point that ‘views’/‘hits’ might not indicate reads or even proper ‘glances’ at pages and therefore are misleading indicators of public engagement. Moreover, Bursnell notes that while social media has been considered an open platform to communicate and discuss academic topics, potentially extending the audience far beyond those attending and those in the academy, there remain issues of accessibility and the lack of archiving (see also Richardson 2013). After a short time, very little can be discovered of the many thousands of tweets and other social media posts, and there is no often archived resource for the activity. Hence, Bursnell argues that the information is ‘buried in continuous data-creation’. As well as the importance of archiving this social media activity for longer-term use, Bursnell makes the point that social media is not fully democratic and fully accessible, so there are significant limitations to those able to interact with archaeology via social media (see also Richardson 2013; 2015). In discussion, the concern was raised regarding the ethics of extracting information from personal accounts in our public engagement and analyses of public perceptions (see also Richardson 2018).

Figure 7: Hannah Proctor discussing archaeological visualisations of funerals and burial contexts, with other speakers in the session. (left to right: Robyn Bursnell, Becky Swift and Aaron Clarke)

To boldly go: digital archaeology

Building on Bursnell’s consideration of social media at conferences, the third and final *Archaeo-Engage* conference session addressed other dimensions of digital archaeology. Chaired by Bryony Fisher, the first presentation was by Mona Rajput, entitled ‘The Rise of the Armchair Archaeologists: Encouraging Community Engagement through Technological Methods’ (Figure 8). Rajput reiterates the importance of community archaeology, reinforcing senses of identity and place. She made the argument for digitization and the ways in which a range of new projects are participating to transformation digital engagement in archaeological research. Heritage Together (Griffiths *et al.* 2015) and MicroPasts (Bonacchi and Moshenska 2015; Bonacchi *et al.* 2019) were used as case studies of how one can participate, as well as GoogleEarth, as used by the Stonehenge Riverside Project (Welham *et al.* 2015). She noted that there

is often little way to contribute information without specialist knowledge. Rajput also highlighted the potential dangers of these technological methods for increasing looting, but also considered how Global Explorer uses satellite images to identify looting via ‘space archaeology’. She also identified a range of apps that can help engage people with heritage destinations, in the context of which we might mention the Welsh digital historic environments records: *Archwilio*.³

Figure 8: Mona Rajput discusses digital engagement and participation in archaeological research, with the other speakers of the third session. (left to right: Jonathan Felgate, Calum Richardson, Afnan Ezzeldin and Jack Cave)

Building on Rajput’s review, Jonathan Felgate took a similar tack but contextualised these archaeological initiatives with his paper ‘What Can You Do For Us? Citizen Science in Archaeology’. He outlined how the specialisation and professionalisation of archaeology had restricted amateur participation. Felgate identified the potential of working with digitising finds and landscapes to allow amateurs to participate in archaeological research from their own homes. Examples might include the *Megalithic Portal*, and the aforementioned *Thames Discovery Programme* (Bonacchi and Moshenska 2015) as well as the ACCORD (Archaeology Community Co-Production of Research Data) project in which communities create 3D digital visualisations of heritage sites (Maxwell 2017). A further case study of ‘citizen science’ is the *Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland*.⁴

Jack Cave then explored virtual reality technology’s potential for engaging communities and tourists in heritage sites in ‘Virtual Reality: Engaging with the Archaeological in the Reconstructed World’. It allows complex three-dimensional spaces to be mediated, including built environments within museums and learning spaces. Cave suggested how VR waypoints might enhance visitor experiences and allow visitors to engage with past vistas as well as the contemporary appearance, of heritage environments. In discussion, the expense of the technology and its durability were raised as potential challenges of such technologies. Multi-sensorial dimensions have long been experimented with in museum environments.

Yet Eve (2017) has recently taken forward this approach in relation to digital archaeology, exploring the potentials of multi-sensorial experiences with archaeological data *in situ* by creating Mixed Reality virtual environments which connect real-worlds to interpretative computer-generated visual and other sensorial media. These ‘embodied GIS’ applications afford different perspectives on archaeological sites, monuments and landscapes, including prehistoric settlements on Bodmin Moor, the soundscapes of York Cemetery and smellscape at the Moesgård Archaeological Trail, Denmark. In discussion at the conference, it was emphasized how these technologies should make use of the widest available mechanisms, namely mobile phone applications, rather than expensive installations.

Figure 9: Calum Richardson discussing the value of Minecraft for public engagement

Interactive technologies provide not only new environments for public engagements, but new narrative structures in virtual environments through active media (Myers Emery and Reinhard 2015; Copplestone and Dunne 2017; Mol *et al.* 2017; Reinhard 2018). Afnan Ezzeldin’s talk was titled ‘The Incorporation of Archaeology in Modern Games’. She explored the burgeoning field of ‘archaeogaming’, building on important early work by Watrall (2002) and Gardner (2007) and now the subject of multiple new surveys and evaluations (e.g. Mol *et al.* 2017; Nicholson 2019). She queried to what extent gamers are engaging with the archaeological past. Using *Sid Meiers Civilisation V* as her first case study, she identified key tropes through which archaeology and cultures are represented and suggests there are simple but positive potential in the game for learning about the human past (cf. Reinhard 2018: 191). However, despite seemingly set in the Mesolithic era, *Far Cry: Primal* was heavily criticised for multiple inaccuracies. Despite attempts to create linguistic structures for the societies in the game, the scenarios involving material culture and societies conflate and confuse different periods and practices. Most problematically, the game celebrates the violence of Stone Age societies. Ezzeldin posed the question: does one learn about the human past whilst gaming? She is sceptical, especially regarding *Far Cry: Primal*.

To improve the situation for this global potential market for archaeological ideas about the human past, she identifies the importance of including archaeologists in the creation and playing of games set in archaeological time periods (see also Ezzeldin this volume).

Finally, Calum Richardson presented 'Pixel Pickaxes: The Use of Minecraft as a Medium for Community Engagement in Archaeology' via a podcast. Richardson identified *Minecraft* one of the most popular video games of all time and how the University of Southampton attempted to draw on this popularity to develop a modified version of *Minecraft* for an archaeology open day in 2016 (Gutteridge 2016). Richardson suggests it has significant benefits for community archaeology. It might particularly be useful for those who physically cannot excavate and allows complete freedom for choices to be made. *Minecraft* reconstructions of actual historical sites can allow explorations of sites that cannot be readily accessed, and of interest to adults as well as children (Figure 9).

In discussion, the issue of authenticity was raised for various digital reconstructions. In response, it was argued that concepts of authenticity are variable across different parts of the globe. Yet the ability of digital overlays through digital art and VR technologies enables a conversation to be had with the users about how heritage sites and monuments look now, and how they might have looked at different stages in their life-histories, fostering discussions of the processes involved in heritage interpretation. Moreover, it was argued that the gaming and digital interactives are potential ways for encouraging a broader sense of archaeological practice and interpretation beyond traditional stereotypes. Yet the digital selling of 'the past' via games and other digital products incorporates ideologies regarding how societies work past and present, and we must openly question and critique their contemporary underpinnings rather than simply adopting these metanarratives implicitly in our public engagement.

What do UK archaeologists think of the public?

Supporting and extending the themes addressed by the student presentations, *Archaeo-Engage* was enriched by the two keynote talks which offered new original insights and contextual overviews of public archaeology. Dr Lorna-Jane Richardson, introduced by Jonathan Felgate, presented some results of her 'Archaeological Audiences' project in a talk entitled: 'What do UK Archaeologists Think of the Public?' Outlining the different types of public archaeology currently practiced in the UK, and how community archaeology is but one aspect of public engagement with archaeology, Richardson reflected on how we have limited data to understand how archaeologists themselves perceive public engagement and who the public are and why they are interested in the past. The results of a survey revealed character and significance of public engagement for their discipline at present, the results of which were subsequently published (Richardson *et al.* 2018; see also Rocks-McQueen 2012).

Richardson highlighted the rapidly increasing roles of digital tools in public engagement, but the lack of detailed attention by professionals to the different publics out there who might have very different demands and interests in their work. The survey identified the challenge of online abuse affecting professionals, the lack of perceived recognition for public engagement activities, and the potential of new initiatives of more democratic digital engagement through Wikipedia which is heavily under-used by archaeologists despite it being top of almost every Google-search. She posed the challenging question: do we want the public to simply appreciate and understand our work, or do we seriously aspire towards productive co-creation with non-professionals?

Delivering archaeology for all

The second keynote was by Dr Mike Heyworth, Director of the CBA (Council for British Archaeology), presenting the talk: 'Delivering Archaeology for All'. Heyworth surveyed and reflected on the current challenges facing the CBA's role in engaging the public in the UK and beyond with archaeological research and ideas. He began by outlining the foundation of the Council for British Archaeology in 1944 and its development in the post-war years to encourage popular participation and engagement with Britain's past (Heyworth 2016a) before reviewing current areas of CBA engagement. He noted

how excavation remains fundamental to how archaeology is perceived and promoted (see also Sayer 2015) and there is an enduring challenge to promote and perpetuate engagement with other aspects of the archaeological process including non-invasive fieldwork and post-excavation (see also Ainsworth 2015). The challenges of engaging volunteers with post-fieldwork elements was argued to be one of the reasons why many community archaeology projects are not published (see Hedge and Nash 2016; Humphries this volume). In this regard, Heyworth made the important point that not everyone wants to dig, and a shift away from excavation can only enhance the ability of archaeology to be accessible to volunteers and professionals with mental and physical health issues. In this regard, Heyworth identified the key challenge of how we replicate and scale-up such unique initiatives involving work with small groups of young offenders (Pudney 2017a and 2017b), homeless people (Kiddey 2017) or those with mental health issues (e.g. Grimsditch and Hawes 2015), to make a significant nationwide impact. In this context, Heyworth reflected on the legacy of the Manpower Services Commission during the mid-late 1970s and early-mid-1980s, where many unemployed people participated in archaeological labour but were not afforded training linked to archaeology as a potential career trajectory (see also Parry this volume). The CBA has endeavoured to extend and support best practice in community archaeology through the liaison of experts with local groups (e.g. Thomas 2014).

While many feel excluded, Heyworth advocated local societies as crucial for the long-term role of working with amateurs in UK archaeology, from liaising with metal-detectorists through to combatting looting and wanton development. Likewise, he discussed the CBA's and the Portable Antiquities Scheme's long-term roles in liaising between metal-detectorists and archaeologists (see Bland 2004; Bland *et al.* 2017), but also how local groups can be fostered as advocates and stewards for local heritage within the planning process and of the built environment as well as below-ground archaeology. The CBA's role in helping lobby politicians via the All Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group was also addressed, both in terms of threats to the historic environment but also the nature and future of the profession (see Heyworth 2016b; 2017a; 2018). Heyworth also promoted the CBA's annual Festival of Archaeology to connect these groups and promote the subject in all senses.

The CBA's role in archaeological publishing was then addressed by Heyworth, and he offered encouragement for archaeologists to write more for broader audiences as well as specialist academic and technical studies. A good example of a synthesis drawing on co-created research through public archaeology is the Thames Riverside project's *A River's Tale* (Cohen and Wragg 2017). Meanwhile, the county series of '50 Finds from...' published by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, offers a successful illustration of how metal-detected finds can be disseminated following dating and identification to wide audiences (e.g. Oakden 2015). Open-access initiatives were also promoted, including the journal *Internet Archaeology*⁵ and the valuable role of the Archaeological Data Service⁶ in archiving publications and other resources, including grey literature reports, and making them freely available for specialist and public readers.

Heyworth identified the value of engaging with the media, and via social media, to promote archaeology. Within this spectrum, we might add podcasts, vlogging and blogging which have grown as significant fields of digital debate and engagement in archaeological theory and practice (see Rocks-McQueen and Webster 2014; Tong *et al.* 2015; Bonacchi 2017; Boyle 2017; Amundsen and Belmonte 2018). The digital role of public participation via citizen science projects was duly recognised and promoted by Heyworth using the example of MicroPasts (Bonacchi *et al.* 2019). What of education? For children, the role of the Young Archaeologists Club was advocated, and with the loss of GCSE and now A level in archaeology – it constitutes one of even fewer opportunities pre-University to study archaeology directly (see also Henson 2017).

In summary, Heyworth presented an optimistic perspective of the future of archaeology, and its ability to use the long-term and complex story of the human past to address key questions about the present and our future in the context of the UK. Heyworth brought up the challenges to the profession and the

⁵ <http://intarch.ac.uk/>

⁶ <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>

landscape of Brexit (Heyworth 2017a and b; see also Gardner 2017; Belford 2018; Bonacchi 2018; Brophy 2018), and the contribution of archaeology to understandings of the environment and population growth (for the former, see Rockman 2012). One might add that contemporary society not only draws on archaeological knowledge and archaeologists' expertise to study societal problems today, but has the ability to critically evaluate and problematize these issues (Almansa Sánchez 2018; Nilsson Stutz 2018).

In the discussion, many key issues were raised, including how to define social benefit and whether archaeologists should attempt to be social workers, or work *with* social works (see also Pudney 2017a and b). The lack of clear policy and guidance on public archaeology activity was discussed: as noted by Almansa Sánchez (2018: 201), not only is the theoretical framework of public archaeology still weak, but we have fluid methodologies that are rarely replicated. Heyworth also iterated the need for examples of good and bad, effective and unsuccessful, public archaeology to be published (see Simpson and Williams 2008), so we can learn not simply about impact and successful social transformations, but failures and limitations to our work that will inform refinements to our future endeavours.

From conference to publication

The students' participation in the organisation of, and presentation at, the conference was a valuable and original pedagogical experience integrated into the final year of their single honours Archaeology honours degrees. It extended both their archaeological and transferable research and communications skills; of potential benefit to them if they wished to pursue an academic or heritage career or apply their degrees to other fields and directions. Simultaneously, the public event and their summative written assignment served to enhance their critical engagement and appreciation of the roles of archaeologists as both researchers and public debaters/intellectuals (Tarlow and Nilsson Stutz 2013).

The fresh perspectives offered by many of the student talks, and the enthusiasm of both the keynote speakers and the audience members, encouraged us to take this further towards publication. In doing so, this would extend the opportunity for those students willing to participate beyond the module itself, affording them with their first engagement with an experience of the complex multi-staged process of academic publishing. Such a precedent had already been set with the first University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference in 2016, from which the book entitled *The Public Archaeology of Death* (Williams *et al.* 2009) emerged. For this book, one of the student group volunteered to participate in an editorial capacity to gain valuable experience and work on the project alongside her MA Archaeology of Death and Memory during 2017–2018 (Afnan Ezzeldin).

The select proceedings of the student's research is the inspiration for this collection and six of the student group agreed to contribute their work and ideas to the development of chapters: Rachel Alexander; Aaron Clarke; Afnan Ezzeldin, Bryony Fisher; Bethan Humphries; and Shaun Parry. These were subject to peer-review and revised by the editors, and joined by a range of commissioned papers by students, academics and researchers from elsewhere during the course of 2018 and early 2019. Together, the resulting book comprises of more than a student conference proceedings, and more than a standard structured academic edited collection. Instead, we offer fresh ideas and case studies in UK public archaeology which both challenge current practice and point multiple directions towards the public archaeology of the future.

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Appendix 1 – Review of the *Archaeo-Engage* conference formative and summative assessment

Students were expected to include in their assignment:

1. an expansion and refinement of their presentation, including a critical discussion addressing how the conference has developed your knowledge and thinking on the issue;
2. a copy of their presentation as an appendix.

Therefore, rather than a two-stage process of researching and then writing their assignments, this was a more multi-staged assignment guided by postgraduate researchers employed as assistants, and the module tutor (HW):

1. Based on preliminary reading and class-based discussions, students were invited to select and evaluate a specific topic in public archaeology or the politics of the past relating to the question: ‘what is the future of community engagement in archaeology?’ The students might deploy an original case study or appraise recent published research. A deadline was set for submitting a proposed title and abstract for their topic of up to 100 words;
2. Two computer lab sessions were held in which postgraduate researcher Brian Costello assisted HW in guiding students on how to organise and deliver an academic conference, preparing them for the organisation of *Archaeo-Engage*. The students had to then agree set tasks and work as a team to promote, organise and run the free and public day conference at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester. The students were guided in promoting the conference via social media with a Twitter account and a WordPress site, designing their own logo, as well as promoting the conference around the University and city, organising the room and liaising with the venue. The students also liaised with the two guest keynote speakers, who brought contrasting but valuable expertise on archaeological engagement with contemporary society;
3. Two computer lab-based sessions then guided students with how to identify and develop their research topic independently. A deadline was set for students to pitch their preliminary title and abstracts. Students verbally presented their preliminary ideas and gained peer-feedback, as well as written feedback from HW and the opportunity to attend tutorials with HW. Postgraduate researcher Abigail Downer assisted in these sessions by discussing how students should select and develop their chosen topics, conduct their research and present at an academic conference;
4. Students were then invited to present their research at the student conference as a formative exercise (i.e. not assessed in itself) via one of four options (to provide the students with options depending on their personal level of comfort at public speaking and to give them versatility in the technology and style of presentation):
 - i. 10-minute presentation equivalent to no more than 1,000 words supported by PowerPoint or Prezi;
 - ii. 5-minute video or podcast equivalent to no more than 500 words plus 5-minute verbal commentary equivalent to no more than 500 words;
 - iii. Blog entry equivalent to no more than 500 words plus 5-minute verbal commentary equivalent to no more than 500 words;
 - iv. Poster, artwork, comic strip or installation equivalent to no more than 500 words plus 5-minute verbal commentary equivalent to no more than 500 words.

Before the conference, there was a rehearsal session for the benefit of those requiring feedback on their presentation ahead of the conference;

5. The students were expected to actively engage in the conference question-and-answer sessions, take notes, and after their presentations and those of others, to contribute to the general discussion at the end of the conference. This also afforded them the opportunity to gain feedback from audience members (including amateur and professional archaeologists, heritage specialists and fellow students, as well as members of the public) as well as written feedback from the tutor (HW);
6. A post-conference debrief session and tutorials were available to help guide students in the transition from the formative conference to completing the summative assignment;
7. Students then submitted their summative assignment, with their presentations included as an appendix to show the basis upon which their assignment was written. Students were encouraged to self-evaluate and develop their ideas beyond their formative presentation.