
It is always a joy to see new titles fully devoted to public archaeology. Even though the literature on this topic is consistently increasing year by year, there are still many issues to address and many publics to engage (within archaeology). *Key concepts in public archaeology* offers a useful compilation of themes and has the advantage of being freely available on the publisher’s platform, giving access to a needed resource in a context where most contents are locked away behind a paywall or expensive purchase prices. If we claim for an open archaeology as one of the usual forms of practice that Moshenska displayed on his famous chart at the elevator of the Institute of Archaeology some years ago (reproduced in the volume under review, p.6), this is a positive point. It is paradoxical that most of its reviews – including this one – will not be in open access journals.

The book has been edited by a University College London lecturer, with the contributions of many UCL academics (past and present) and published by UCL Press. Therefore, the reader will have a good insight of the teaching of public archaeology at UCL. I would argue it could be seen as a handbook for those who are going to start the MA program there and need some background. However, it is far more than that, and for any archaeologist who wants a glimpse of current practices in the topics covered, it provides a good (and sometimes deep) starting point: “The aim of this book is to give the reader an overview of study and practice in the field of public archaeology” (p. 2). Not in vain, UCL has been the spearhead of public archaeology in Europe, with a clear line of teaching and research since the late nineties (p. 4-5). The editor defines it as the ‘London school’ of public archaeology and its diaspora to which, after all, I belong too and, therefore, I cannot disagree with.

This so-called ‘London school’ is in some way a progressive approach to public archaeology that embraces the most political side of the discipline. Chapter 7 (Samuel Hardy) is a good example, exploring how human rights intertwine with archaeology in its best and worst scenarios. Through a series of themes around the topic, the author gives us a glimpse of what is happening around the world when we make archaeology happen. From my perspective it is maybe the most interesting topic in the book, and forms an interesting counterpoint to other chapters on community archaeology, economics in public archaeology, or even alternative archaeologies. After all, public archaeology is about politics and politics encompass every aspect of our lives.

A second ‘must’ of this book is chapter 4, on archaeology and education. Don Henson provides a fresh review of the situation in the UK and the possibilities of archaeology in formal education. His chapter presents a clear case for making archaeology a valuable part of our (educational) lives, reasoning what the discipline has to offer and how it can be beneficial both for individuals and the collective. It will probably be difficult to achieve such goals, but the reality is that archaeology could be a vehicular tool for learning. This does not only apply to the UK and, for example, when I designed extracurricular activities for schools in Spain the programme was able to cover the 100% of the curriculum using archaeology. This is a territory worth exploring, but it should be borne in mind that archaeologists are not always primed as educators and need further training to become such.
Chapter 2 (Community archaeology – Suzie Thomas) and chapter 6 (Presenting archaeological sites to the public – Reuben Grima) complete the educational mix, providing a lucid overview of each topic. When reading about (and listening to) public archaeology, there is often a blurry scenario where education, outreach and interpretation are misunderstood. These three chapters offer a clear scenario of practice, explaining how each one works. Thomas’ chapter on community archaeology is a new contribution to the most controversial definition within the field, but has the benefit of being clear and committed. Grima’s chapter delves into the challenges of archaeological heritage interpretation, offering a toolset of ideas to approach them.

For me, chapter 3 (Economics in public archaeology – Paul Burtenshaw) is partly disappointing, as even though it delves into some of the main concepts and debates over value, which is important but still has a long, there are issues pertaining to public archaeology that are not critiqued or even go unmentioned. For example, the direct impact of archaeological work in local economies (even inflation processes), especially during academic interventions in rural areas or foreign missions; the commodification of archaeological practice, especially within academic publishing and project management; international aid programmes, etc. Those present, from my perspective, the real focus of public archaeology in economy beyond tourism or associated costs. Also, a paragraph that shocked me in some way (p. 41), proposed branding as an opportunity, when in most cases the use of archaeological icons in advertising is not regulated or enforced. Being the solution sponsorship (as Italians recently implemented), the pay of a levy (rights), or any other way, this is another use of archaeology in popular culture that needs more analysis and implication from our side.

It is also disappointing having for the thousandth time a chapter on the Portable Antiquities Scheme (Chapter 8 – Bland, et al.), which only represents a minor and not fully successful model for dealing with metal detecting. This activity represents a problem in many areas of the world, and it should have been approached from a more international scope where this model was just part of a broader reality. After all, recent studies question the effectiveness of this model compared with more restrictive ones (Hardy, 2017) and we cannot keep showing that this should be the solution everywhere, being the legal frameworks deeply different in other countries, and the situation still conflictive and problematic.

Alternative archaeologies is one of my favourite topics, and Moshenska’s approach offers a good overview of the most uncanny side of it. I would have preferred a little bit more on the political side of the topic, which is discussed in a couple of statements only, but overall it satisfies the basics the book is looking for. I have left Chapter 5 (Digital media in public archaeology – Chiara Bonacchi) for the end, not for any special reason, but only because the discourse brought me this way. Within the digital revolution of the last decade, public archaeology has not been alien to the new ways of communication and participation and this topic was a must for the times we are in. The author has been one of the most engaged professionals in the sector and offers a good overview of the current situation of digital media and public archaeology, as well as its challenges, opportunities and limitations. We really need more work on method and theory within this context.

In sum: nine chapters, an extensive overview of public archaeology in its current state, a refreshed approach that moves on from Merriman’s (2004) *Public Archaeology or The Oxford Handbook of Public Archaeology* that really did not offer
anything new (Skeates, et al., 2012). It misses the global approach Matsuda and Okamura offered in *New Perspectives in Global Public Archaeology* in 2011, but it is still valuable (especially being offered in open access), mostly for those who want to have a first understanding of what public archaeology is and does.

To finish, I will go back to the beginning (Chapter 1) and the future of public archaeology. Interdisciplinarity and data are the two main concerns for the editor. I fully agree with him, as those represent the major areas to continue developing on a stronger basis, along with the continuing outreach of other archaeological communities (after all we need each other). In this sense, there are some growing now outside UCL and the Anglophone world. Maybe from the seed of the diaspora, but with their (our) own identity. South America, Africa, Asia, and Southern and Eastern Europe, have not been alien to the research on topics related to public archaeology, and are now embracing the concept too in a common way to the future of the discipline.

This book offers a range of topics we can delve into, and this is in some way the exploratory role of public archaeology. If we pull the thread, the skein is infinite. The growth is tangible and the future promising, so as the editor concludes: Long may it continue.

**Bibliography**


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This book provides a broad overview of the key concepts in public archaeology, a research field that examines the relationship between archaeology and the public, in both theoretical and practical terms. While based on the long-standing programme of undergraduate and graduate teaching in public archaeology at UCL’s ren. The book is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to public archaeology, but it does an excellent job in capturing diverse interfaces between archaeology and the public. Historical Archaeology. Gabriel Moshenska is Lecturer in Public Archaeology at UCL. See details and exclusions - KEY CONCEPTS IN PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY. See all 7 brand new listings. Buy it now. Archaeology Paperback History & Military Non-Fiction Books. This item doesn't belong on this page. Cancel. Thanks, we'll look into this. Key Concepts in Public Archaeology by UCL Press (Paperback, 2017). Be the first to write a review. About this product. Brand new: lowest price. Editorial Reviews. About the Author. Gabriel Moshenska is a senior lecturer in public archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL. Product details. Publisher: UCL Press; 1st edition (April 15, 2018). Instead, our system considers things like how recent a review is and if the reviewer bought the item on Amazon. It also analyzes reviews to verify trustworthiness. No customer reviews. Phenomenological archaeology Post-processual and interpretive archaeology Processual archaeology Public archaeology/museology/conservation/heritage Simulation Site catchment analysis Social archaeology Theory of social practice Principles of stratigraphic succession Survey Symbolic and structuralist archaeology Systems thinking The Three Ages Concepts of time Uniformitarianism. As a work dealing with key concepts, this book does not set out to be a manual of archaeological method, nor an introduction to the application of scientific techniques in archaeology. But the editors are clearly aware that theory and method cannot be separated: they feed upon each other (Renfrew and Bahn 2004).