

Dr Simon Underdown, PhD (*Cantab*), CSciTeach, FSA, FRSB, SFHEA
Reader in Biological Anthropology

Director: Centre for Environment and Society

Human Origins and Palæo-Environments Research Group

Department of Social Sciences

Oxford Brookes University

Headington Campus

Oxford OX3 0BP

sunderdown@brookes.ac.uk

+44 (0)7967 647253

Appointments

2019 - Director, Centre for Environment and Society, Oxford Brookes University
2018 - Reader in Biological Anthropology, Oxford Brookes University
2013-2015 Programme Lead, Anthropology and Geography, Oxford Brookes University
2005-2018 Senior Lecturer in Biological Anthropology, Oxford Brookes University
2004-2005 Lecturer in Biological Anthropology, Oxford Brookes University

Qualifications

2016 Chartered Science Teacher (CSciTeach)
2004-2005 Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching Higher Education, Oxford Brookes University
2000-2004 PhD Biological Anthropology, University of Cambridge
1997-2000 BSc (Hons) Archaeology, University of Leicester

Visiting Fellowships

2018-2023 Honorary Research Fellow, Centre for Microbial Ecology & Genomics, University of Pretoria
2016-2017 Visiting Fellow, Leverhulme Centre for Human Evolutionary Studies, University of Cambridge
2009 - Research Associate School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford

External Examining

2019-2022 External Examiner for Biological Anthropology, University of Cambridge
2018-2021 External Examiner for Archaeology, Anglia Ruskin University
2015-2019 External Examiner for Human Biology, Loughborough University

Editorships

2019 - Associate Editor (Biological Anthropology), Wiley-Blackwell International Encyclopaedia of Anthropology
2013-2016 Associate Editor (Biological Anthropology), Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

Leadership Roles in Professional Associations

2017-2022	Chair of the Royal Anthropological Institute Education Committee
2014-2017	Chair of the Society for the Study of Human Biology
2012-2015	Vice President of the Royal Anthropological Institute
2010-2012 & 2016-2019	Council member of the Royal Anthropological Institute
2008-2014 & 2018-2021	Committee Member Society Study of Human Biology
2015-2022	Trustee of the Horniman Fund (Archaeological & Anthropological Research Fund)
2019-2021	Project mentor for the RAI-Leach Fellowship in the Public Understanding of Anthropology
2014-	QAA Anthropology Benchmark Review Panel member

Membership of Professional Associations

Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London
Fellow of the Royal Society of Biology
Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society
Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute
Fellow of the Cambridge Philosophical Society
Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy
Member of International Association for the Study of Arabia
Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars
Member of the Anglo-Omani Society
Member of the Science Media Centre Advisory Network

Books

Human Evolution & Ancient DNA (2020)
Charlotte Houldcroft & Simon Underdown
Routledge

30 Second Anthropology: The 50 Most Important Ideas in the Study of Being Human (2017)
Edited by Simon Underdown
Ivy Press

Anthropology: A Beginner's Guide (2013)
Joy Hendry and Simon Underdown
One World Books

Introductory Readings in Anthropology (2013)
Edited by Hilary Callan, Brian Street and Simon Underdown
Berghahn Books

REF 2021 Cycle Publications

Underdown, S.J. and Foley, R.A. (Ed) (2021).

Archaeology, Anthropology and Phylogenetics

Special Issue of the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

Underdown, S., Rifkin, R., Parton, A., Parker, A., Kira Raith, Christiana Scheib, C., Bretzke, K. (In Prep for June 2020).

Ancient DNA from Jebel Faya: Reconstructing ancient life in the Arabian Peninsula
Science

Underdown, S. & Smith, S. (In prep for May 2020)

What do the origins of human behavioural modernity look like?

Trends in Cognitive Science

Underdown, S.J. and Freedman J.

New Dates suggest an early Holocene refugia population of Cave Hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*) from the Cattedown Cave System, Plymouth, United Kingdom.

Frontiers in Ecology & Evolution (Submitted)

Rifkin, R.F., Ramond, J.-B., Vikram, S., Underdown, S.J., Rey-Iglesia, A., Brand, T.B., Porraz, G., Val, A., Cowan, D.A., Willerslev, E., Hansen, A.J.

Inferring hunter-gatherer ecology and disease from Pleistocene South African sedimentary ancient DNA. Nature Communications (Submitted)

Rifkin, R., Vikram, S., Ramond, J.B, Rey-Iglesia, A. Brand, T.B., Porraz, G. Val, A., Hall, G., Woodborne, S., Le Bailly, M., Potgieter, M., Underdown, S., Koopman, J., Cowan, D., Van de Peer, Y., Willerslev, E., Hansen, A.

Multi-proxy analyses of a mid-15th century 'Middle Iron Age' Bantu-speaker palaeo-faecal specimen elucidates the configuration of the 'ancestral' sub-Saharan African intestinal microbiome.

Microbiome (In Press)

Houldcroft, C.J., Rifkin, R.F. & Underdown, S.J. (2019)

Human Biology and Ancient DNA: Exploring Disease, Domestication and Movement

Annals of Human Biology, Volume 46, No. 2, pp95-98.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03014460.2019.1629536>

Ham, E., Underdown, S.J. & Houldcroft, C.J. (2019)

The relative roles of maternal survival and inter-personal violence as selection pressures on the persistence of Neanderthal hypercoagulability alleles in modern Europeans

Annals of Human Biology, Volume 46, No. 2, pp99-108.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03014460.2019.1622038>

Pimenoff, V.N., Houldcroft, C.J., Rifkin, R.F. and Underdown, S.J. (2018)

The Role of aDNA in Understanding the Coevolutionary Patterns of Human Sexually Transmitted Infections. Genes 2018, 9(7), 317; doi:10.3390/genes9070317

Underdown, S.J. and Smith, S.J. (2018)

Lifting the Gloomy Curtain of Time Past: Tracing the Identity of the First Cognitively Modern Hominin in Deep History.

Royal Anthropological Institute Monograph: Dunbar's Number edited by Dunbar, R. & Shankland, D.

Underdown, S.J. (2018)
Biological & Evolutionary Anthropology.
The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology, Wiley Blackwell

Underdown, S.J., Kumar, K. & Houldcroft, C.J. (2017)
Network analysis of the hominin origin of Herpes Simplex virus 2 from fossil data
Virus Evolution, Volume 3, Issue 2, 1 July 2017, vex026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ve/vex026>

Underdown, S.J. (2017)
Invited OUP Blog on HSV2 paper: <https://blog.oup.com/2017/11/herpes-human-evolution/>

The Lancet's report on HSV2 paper: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(17\)30591-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(17)30591-1)

Velduis, D. & Underdown, S.J. (2017)
Human Biology of Migration
Annals of Human Biology Volume 44, No. 5, pp393-396.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03014460.2017.1325186>

Houldcroft, C.J., Rifkin, R., Ramond, J.B. & Underdown, S.J. (2017)
Migrating microbes: What pathogens can tell us about population movements and human evolution
Annals of Human Biology Volume 44 No. 5, pp397-407.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03014460.2017.1325515>

Houldcroft, C.J. & Underdown, S.J. (2016)
Neanderthal Genomics Suggests a Pleistocene Time Frame for the First Epidemiologic Transition
American Journal of Physical Anthropology
Volume 160, Issue 3. pp379-388.

Underdown, S.J. & Oppenheimer, S. (2015)
Do Patterns of Covariation between human pelvis shape, stature, and head size alleviate the
obstetric dilemma?
PNAS 2016 113 (3) E258

Underdown, S.J. (Editor) (2014)
Biological Anthropology in the JRAI, then and now
Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Special Issue. November 2014.
[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-9655/homepage/VirtualIssuesPage.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-9655/homepage/VirtualIssuesPage.html)

Selected Other Papers:

Underdown, S.J. (2012). Fitzroy's Fighting Fuegians: Comparison of Palaeopathological and
Ethnographic Indications of Fighting Behaviour in an Extinct Human Population. *International Journal
of Osteoarchaeology*, 22:3, pp373-378.

Priston, N.E.C. & Underdown, S.J. (2009). A Simple Method for Calculating the Likelihood Crop
Damage by Primates: An Epidemiological Approach. *International Journal of Pest Management*, 55
(1), pp 51-56.

Underdown, S.J. (2008). A Potential Role for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies in Neanderthal Extinction. *Medical Hypotheses*, 71, pp 4-7.

Underdown, S.J. (2006). How the word 'hominid' evolved to include hominin. *Nature* 444, 680, 07 Dec 2006.

Underdown, S. J. (2006). A comparative approach to understanding Neanderthal trauma. *Periodicum Biologorum*, 108 (4) August 2006, pp 485-493.

Davies, R. & Underdown, S. J. (2006). The Neanderthals: a social synthesis. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 16 (2):June 2006, pp 145-164.

Authored Newspaper Articles for The Guardian:

Teach the bigger story of science 17/02/10

The misuses of Darwin 12/11/09

The evolution will be televised 08/10/08

Evolving a belief in God 09/06/08

Race against time 12/12/07

An evolving tale 03/04/07

Dem bones 07/03/07

Survival of the thickest 24/01/07

Selected Book Reviews:

From Anthropology to Social Theory: Rethinking the Social Sciences, by Arpad Szakolczai and Bjørn Thomassen. *Times Higher Education*, 28/02/19

Studies in Forensic Biohistory: Anthropological Perspectives. Edited by Christopher M. Stojanowski and William N. Duncan. *Folia Primatologica* , 2019;90:137-137.

A Taste for the Beautiful: The Evolution of Attraction, by Michael J. Ryan. *Times Higher Education*, 08/02/18

Think Like an Anthropologist, by Matthew Engelke. *Times Higher Education*, 31/08/17

Darwin and the Making of Sexual Selection, by Evelleen Richards. *Times Higher Education, Book of the Week*, 23/02/17

The Rhinoceros and the Megatherium: An Essay in Natural History, by Juan Pimentel. *Times Higher Education, Book of the Week*, 09/02/17

Plus 20 other reviews for the *Times Higher Education* 2008-2016

Selected Conferences as Organiser

- 2020 *SAFA 2020: Organising Committee and Convener of African Biomolecules Panel with Dr Cristian Capelli (Oxford)*
- 2018 *The Human Biology of Ancient DNA: at Oxford Brookes, organised with Dr Charlotte Houldcroft (Cambridge) and Dr Riaan Rifkin (Pretoria), and co-edited special issue of Annals of Human Biology*
- 2018 *Still Another Unique Species: at King's College, Cambridge, organised with Professor Kate Robson-Brown (Bristol) & Professor Marta Lahr (Cambridge).*
- 2017-20 *Human Adaptation and Diversity: at Oxford University Museum of Natural History, organised with Dr Alex Alvergne (Oxford).*
- 2016 *Human Biology of Migration: at Aarhus University, organised with Dr Djuke Veldhuis (Monash), and co-edited special issue of Annals of Human Biology.*

Selected Conference and Seminar Papers

- July 2020 Conference Paper: Seminar for Arabian Studies, Cordoba.
- Feb 2020 Seminar: RLAHA Martin Aitken Seminar Series, Oxford
- Nov 2019 Seminar: Department of Archaeology, Cambridge
- Nov 2019 Conference Paper: UCL African Archaeology Day
- Nov 2019 Conference Paper: Human Evolution Conference, Wellcome Genome Campus
- Nov 2018 Seminar: Research Laboratory for Archaeology & Art History, University of Oxford
- Sep 2018 Keynote Lecture: British Association of Biological Anthropology & Osteoarchaeology's 20th Anniversary Conference, Cranfield University
- May 2018 Invited Talk: South West Wilts Virus Group, Oxford Brookes
- Mar2018 Invited Public Lecture: Institute of Prehistory, Tautavel, France
- Nov 2017 Conference Paper: Human Evolution: Fossils, Ancient & Modern Genomes Conference, Wellcome Genome Campus
- Nov 2017 Invited Speaker: EvoBugs Workshop, University of Oxford
- Nov 2017 Invited Talk: Annual Meeting of Minds 2017 Cambridge Infectious Diseases, University of Cambridge.
- July 2017 Co-chaired Bioarchaeology conference session: ASAPA, University of Pretoria
- July 2017 Conference Paper: ASAPA, University of Pretoria

- June 2017 Seminar: Centre for Microbial Ecology & Genomics, University of Pretoria
- May 2017 Seminar: Research Laboratory for Archaeology & Art History, University of Oxford
- April 2017 Conference: Microbiology Society Annual Conference, University of Edinburgh. -
- April 2017 Seminar: Royal Society of Biology
- Feb 2017 Seminar: Cambridge Infectious Disease Group, University of Cambridge.
- June 2016 Seminar: Centre for the Archaeology of Human Origins, University of Southampton
- June 2016 Seminar: Palae-Meso Seminar Series, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford
- Dec 2015 Seminar: Royal Anthropological Institute Research Seminar
- Nov 2015 Conference Paper: The 'Dunbar Number', Evolution and Cognition, UCL – *How Many Homo Heidelbergensis does it take to hunt a lightbulb? Group size, co-operative hunting, and the evolution of modern intelligence*
- Nov 2015 Seminar: Department of Biological Anthropology, University of Cambridge.
- Nov 2015 Invited Discussant: Human Evolutionary Biology Discussion Group, University of Cambridge.
- Oct 2015 Conference Poster: Royal Society Meeting: Major transitions in human evolution
- Sep 2015 Conference Paper: European Society for the study Human Evolution

Selected Media Work

Film

Qui a tué Néandertal? (Who killed Neanderthal?) (2018)
Bonne Pioche

Television

BBC Newsnight
BBC Breakfast News (BBC1)
BBC News
ITV News
Sky News
'Doctors' (BBC1 – script advice)

Radio

The Today Programme (BBC Radio 4)
BBC Radio Oxford
The Chris Evans Show (BBC Radio 2)
BBC Radio 5
Fox FM

BBC Radio London
BBC Radio Scotland
RTÉ Radio 1 (Ireland)

Print/Digital Media

Authored or contributed to over 75 articles in more than 20 international media outlets including the *New Scientist*, *the Guardian*, *the Daily Mail*, *CNN*, *Reuters*, *the Discovery Channel* and *the Washington Post*.