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978-0-521-76772-9 - *Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways*

Joe Flatman

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Becoming an Archaeologist

Becoming an Archaeologist: A Guide to Professional Pathways is an engaging handbook on career paths in the area of archaeology. It outlines in straightforward fashion the entire process of getting a job in archaeology, including the various career options; the training required; and how to get positions in the academic, commercial, and government worlds. It also includes a discussion of careers in related heritage professions, such as museums and conservation societies. The book includes a series of interviews with real archaeologists, all young professionals who began their careers within the past ten years. These insider guides offer essential tips on how they got their first jobs and progressed in their careers. Written in an accessible style, the book is essential reading for anyone interested in the realities of archaeology in the twenty-first century.

Joe Flatman is the County Archaeologist of Surrey in southeast England and a senior lecturer at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. He has published widely on issues of archaeological practice, ethics, and law in archaeology. His most recent books include *Ships and Shipping in Medieval Manuscripts* and *Archaeology in Society: Its Relevance in the Modern World* (coedited with Marcy Rockman).

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*To my parents, Frances and Martin Flatman
With my love and thanks for providing a unique grounding in the pleasures
and perils of professional life
“Not all Greeks were Spartans”*

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A Guide to Professional Pathways

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Institute of Archaeology, University College London



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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521734691

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First published 2011

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Flatman, Joe.

Becoming an archaeologist : a guide to professional pathways / Joe Flatman.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-76772-9 (hardback) – ISBN 978-0-521-73469-1 (paperback)

I. Archaeology – Vocational guidance. I. Title.

CC107.F53 2911

930.10023-dc22 2011002261

ISBN 978-0-521-76772-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-73469-1 Paperback

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Preface and Acknowledgments

I wrote this book primarily to help prospective archaeologists (in particular, archaeology students) better plan their futures. However, this book is also borne of my frustration at the widespread misunderstanding of the practice of archaeology and lifestyle of archaeologists in the modern world. As a consequence, although I have tried to paint a balanced portrait of archaeology throughout the book, this is, inevitably and unashamedly, partly a personal perspective – one to which some readers may take exception. I make no apologies for that. One thing that I would emphasize in particular, however, is that although this book is about “professional” archaeology, it is absolutely not a call for a solely paid archaeological sector in which all voluntary/amateur/avocational/community/independent involvement has been driven out of existence. As a long-standing member of the UK’s Council for British Archaeology (dating back to my teenage membership in the Young Archaeologists Club), and lately and very proudly serving on that organization’s board of trustees, I would emphasize my belief in the key place of the independent individual or group in archaeology, and that archaeology – and wider society – are big enough places to see both paid and unpaid archaeologists working to the highest professional standards. I do not believe that these two ways of doing archaeology are mutually exclusive, as some commentators suggest. Nor do I believe that the improved living and working standards so many archaeologists urgently deserve can only and inevitably come through the loss of the volunteer. As I highlight repeatedly throughout this book, I sincerely believe that the single best thing that anyone can do to get involved in archaeology is to join his or her local archaeological or historical society.

In terms of acknowledgments, first and foremost I am extremely grateful to Beatrice Rehl at Cambridge University Press for seeing the potential of a book on this subject, commissioning it, and then editing it, as well as to her assistant Amanda Smith for much other hard work in bringing the book to fruition. Thanks also to James Dunn, Production Controller at Cambridge University Press, for keeping us all on track. Barbara Walthall, the Project Manager at Aptara responsible for this book, must then particularly be thanked for her exceptional work in preparing this book for publication; Deborah Wenger, who so diligently copyedited this work; as well as other – alas unnamed – production and proofreading staff are thanked. Similarly, I wish to give special thanks to my managers, Patricia Reynolds at Surrey

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County Council and Stephen Shennan at University College London, for providing the professional support and time to allow this book to be written. The anonymous peer reviewers of this book's proposal and draft also made a number of exceptionally useful comments, for which they should be thanked.

Dozens of friends and colleagues around the world have – often unknowingly – contributed to this book through conversations, conference papers, e-mails, Websites, and blogs. Many students whom I have taught in the UK and Australia also made passing comments that became the germs of issues explored here. Consequently, a full list of contributors is impossible to provide – too many issues that eventually made it into this book began life as random comments and fleeting moments. To anyone who reads this book and thinks that he or she may have been the first to mention an issue or idea to me – my apologies for not formally acknowledging you here: next time we meet, remind me of my failure and I shall attempt to make amends! In particular, however, I wish to thank my colleagues at Surrey County Council and University College London, especially Emily Brants, Giles Carey, Phil Cooper, Martin Higgins, Tony Howe, Gary Jackson, Sophie Unger, and David Williams at the former; and Cyprian Broodbank, Ian Carroll, Lisa Daniel, Charlotte Frearson, Andy Gardner, Sjoerd van der Linde, Kris Lockyear, Roger Matthews, Judy Medrington, Gustav Milne, Norah Moloney, Gabriel Moshenska, Kirsty Norman, Darryl Palmer, Dominic Perring, Matthew Pope, Andrew Reynolds, Bill Sillar, Kathryn Tubb, Tim Williams, and Sarah Wolferstan at the latter. I am in the uniquely privileged position of working across two employers in, and sectors of, archaeology, and there is simply no way that I could have written this book without the advice of such dedicated colleagues at these organizations.

Special thanks and acknowledgments should also be made in relation to the photos reproduced, including Jeremy Ashbee (Figure 26), Kath Buxton (Figure 27), Ian Carroll (Figures 2, 11, and 21), Leanne Chorekdjian (Figure 7), Nathalie Cohen (Figure 31), English Heritage (Figure 27), Brendan Foley (Figure 4), Charlotte Frearson (Figure 10), Andrew Gardner (Figures 20 and 32), Elizabeth Graham (Figures 6, 7, and 8), Tony Howe (Figures 23 and 24), David Jeffreys (Figure 21), Dominic Perring (Figures 5, 9, 13, 14, 15, and 16), Brett Seymour (Figures 28 and 29), Dean Sully (Figure 33), Chris Waite (Figure 32), and Lynley Wallis (Figures 17 and 18). In addition, thanks specifically to Archaeology South East, Nick Blows, Andres Diaz, Alice Gomer, Vanessa Saiz Gomez, Louise Holt, Amy Lindsay, the Marco Gonzalez Project, Danny Markey, the US National Park Service, the Petrie Museum, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, Stephen Quirk, Kyle Rice, Matt Russell, Elizabeth Saunders, Jane Siddell, Rachel Sparkes, the Thames Discovery Programme, UCL Institute of Archaeology, Jenny Walsh, Rachael Warren, and Andrew Wright.

An array of other individuals who have made a marked or formal contribution to this book must also then be thanked, including Jon Adams, Kenny Aitchison, Mark Beattie-Edwards, Paul Belford, Marc-André Bernier, Heather Burke, Dan Carsten, Martin Carver, Nathalie Cohen, Dave Conlin, Kara Cooney, Steve Cross, Ian Cundy, Dominique de Moulins, Sarah Dhanjal, Amanda Evans, Robert Epstein, Paul Everill, Hannah Fluck, Brendan Foley, David Gaimster, Alice Gorman,

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Erica Gittins, David Graham, Paul Graves-Brown, Lisa Gray, Lalage Grundy, Abby Guinness, Mary Harvey, Jon Henderson, Don Henson, Nigel Hetherington, Mike Heyworth, David Hinton, Peter Hinton, Fred Hocker, Tim Howard, Tom Irvin, Hilary Jackson, Peta Knott, Rebecca Lambert, Chris Loveluck, Colin Martin, Paula Martin, Miriam Miller, Chris “Bazooka” Morris, Tom Munnery, Courtney Nimura, Aidan O’Sullivan, Mike Page, Richard Perry, Cass Philippou, Julian Pooley, Rob Poulton, Nathan Richards, Isabel Rivera, Marcy Rockman, Blake Sawicky, Barney Sloane, Claire Smith, Mark Staniforth, Lynley Wallis, Gareth Watkins, Rebecca Weiss, Howard Williams, Michael Williams, and Elliot Wragg. Special thanks also to the members of the Kentish Town Yacht Club for moral support and worldly advice, in particular to its founder members Geoffrey Craig, Bethan Crockett, Joanne Gillis, Mark Gillis, Kyra Larkin, Ali Naftalin, and Matt O’Neill.

Last but not least, thanks to my wife, Jennifer Young, for all her support, encouragement, and constructive criticism. It was once said: I thank you for bringing me here.