Keeping Up with the "Archaeo-Influencers": Exploratory Research on New Methods of Archaeological Science Communication on Social Media.

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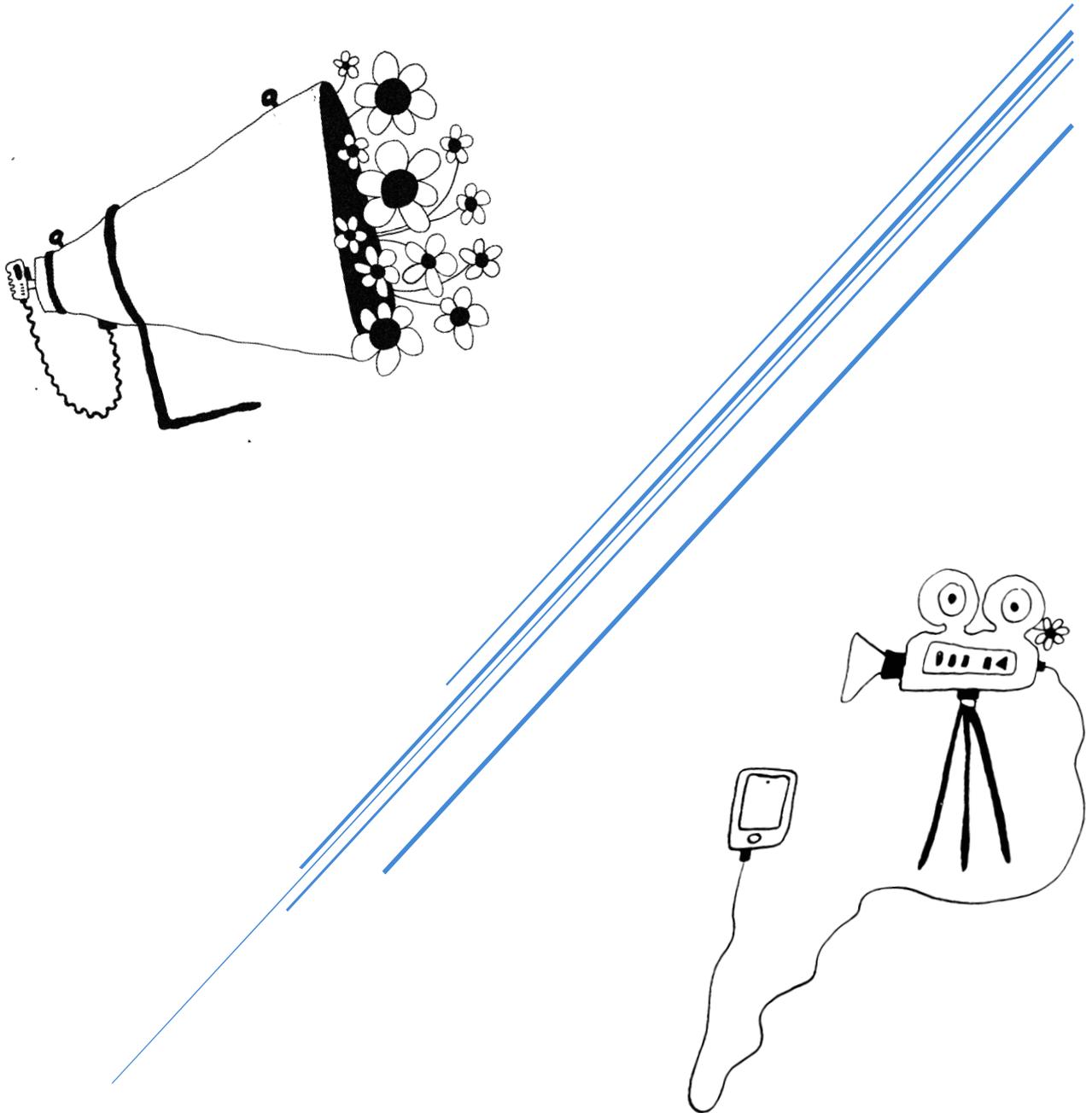Exploratory Research on New Methods of Archaeological Science Communication on Social Media.

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Abstract

Social media have become one of the main places for the share of scientific information. Archaeology is increasingly present on these platforms, in the form of educational content, entertainment, and misinformation. Because of this, there is a pressing need of more expert voices online. This thesis aims to investigate innovative methods of online archaeological science communication. In particular, I analyze how some archaeologists communicate through practices typical of social media influencers, and the impact that these have on the effectiveness, credibility, and ethics of archaeological science communication. As part of my thesis scope, I label these new figures as "archaeo-influencers".

The theoretical frameworks used here combine science communication models, research on the use of narratives and emotional engagement, social media marketing and social media influencers studies, and public archaeology. On the base of this, I carry a mixed-method, exploratory study to analyze five selected case studies. My methodology integrates both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Instagram profiles of the archaeo-influencers, combined with semi-structured interviews to understand their goals, strategies, constraints, and overall personal experiences on social media. With this, I contribute to document a phenomenon that has received little to no attention in academic literature.

The results show that influencer-style practices in archaeological science communication do not follow a rigid model, but they rather form a wide spectrum of communication styles and strategies. Quantitative metrics suggest that these have a substantial effect on the visibility and engagement of archaeological knowledge, although making it difficult to pinpoint the actual quality of this communication with the public. Credibility is found to be something built over time through authenticity and consistency. Finally, ethical tensions arise from certain practices and over the use of the term "influencer" and the use of its communication practices and social media in general, opening a bigger moral debate on the participation in market logics that interest the world of research and academia.

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1. Introduction

The way science is shared and discussed has dramatically changed in the last two decades. Online social networks, or social media, have made the sharing of information faster and easier; at the same time, the spread of misinformation has scaled up substantially. In a media landscape ever-more filled with fake news, AI-made content, and anti-intellectualism, pseudo-science is widespread (Aïmeur et al., 2023, pp. 1–2). These dynamics might be read as evidence of a crisis of trust in science. However, Cologna and colleagues (2025) published a recent survey on public trust in science in 68 countries, which tells us that trust in science is still moderately high across the globe. This result is comforting, but it does not imply that current science communication efforts are sufficient. In fact, one of the other main findings of this survey is that 83% of people think that scientists should communicate more, or be more proactive regarding science communication.

In 2025, it is evident more than ever that social media, in their many different shapes and forms, are effective communication platforms. The use of these online social networks has become more influential during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns, and it is now an integral part of our everyday life (Govindankutty & Gopalan, 2024, p. 1). Social media offer different advantages to science communication, including quick, far-reaching connections and free, democratic access by the public. Still, these same qualities can amplify risks.
Social media can then be a powerful communication tool for archaeologists too, to address what found out by Cologna et al. (2025), and therefore improve the communication of their work: not just to fight back all the detractors that promote false narratives about the past, which can undermine scientific credibility and public trust in archaeology, but also to raise awareness about its importance (Fender, 2022; Hoopes et al., 2023; Schofield, 2025).

In recent years, the changing political environment of Western countries has been severely affecting the world of research and academia. In many different states, the education sector has been targeted with heavy budget cuts which pose a serious risk to research and tuition. For instance, in the Netherlands, in 2024, substantial budget cuts have been announced by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, affecting education programmes in universities, but also starter grants and other research funds (Bongers, 2024; University of Amsterdam, n.d.). This is not an isolated case, as we can see similar situations in other European countries like the United Kingdom, Italy, and France (Adams, 2025; Capozucca & Giardini, 2024; Pain, 2024; Shaw, 2021; Suman, 2025).
In the United States, many research departments have been affected by these funding cuts, including archaeology. This threat to U.S. archaeology affects research, preservation, and the training of future professionals (Lidz, 2025; Mitchell Brown, 2025).
These dynamics present a set of new challenges to researchers and universities. This could result in increasing competition regarding the application for grants, adding up to researchers' workload (Matthews, 2024). It is therefore becoming more imperative in this sector to put effort in making your own work visible and worthy of funding. While the reasons for budget cuts can be varied, from fixing public debt to investing in defense, the fact that sectors like education and research are always the first to be targeted can be a sign that they are not deemed valuable enough (Shiffman, 2025, p. 220).

All of these considerations add up to a growing need for researchers to have a more visible presence to the public, openly sharing their work and showing the value of science. To achieve these goals,

social media can offer a modern alternative to traditional science communication platforms (e.g, print media, TV, and radio).

In the metaphor of "bridging the gap" between research and the public, the bridge already exists. The challenge is no longer about building it, but rather coming down the ivory tower and crossing it.

There are several examples of researchers that have been using social media for science communication. Specific to our case, there are also examples of archaeologists who have done so (see Chapter 2, Chapter 5). However, the modalities in which this can happen can be varied, with different effects.

In my opinion, the potential of social media for archaeological science communication remains largely unused. This raises an interesting question: what would happen if researchers and institutions were to use these platforms to their fullest capacity?

1.1. Aims and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the relatively recent field of study of online archaeological science communication, particularly on social media. To do so, I take inspiration from social media marketing (SMM). All kinds of businesses and personalities have been using SMM to advertise and popularise their "brand", often through the strategic use of social media influencers (SMIs; see Chapter 2).

My research is motivated by the need to address both a theoretical and an empirical gap. The former is due to the lack of theoretical frameworks that connect public archaeology with SMM and SMIs studies, the latter is tied to the absence of a systematic analysis of SMIs and their communication modes regarding archaeology, how this interplays with SMM, and its implications for the world of academia, which has yet to be discussed in an academic paper.

Thus, this research aims to document the type of content produced, the platforms used, the communication style adopted, and the resemblance of actual SMIs' practices by archaeologists. Secondly, I analyze the effectiveness of these practices, in terms of visibility and public engagement. This can often be a difficult task in public archaeology (Walker, 2014, p. 226), therefore using tools from similar marketing research can be a viable option (see Chapter 4). Another goal is to reflect on the implications that can arise from such communication strategies, regarding ethics, trust and credibility. Finally, by evaluating how science communication theory intersects with SMM within the context of archaeology, I aim to produce practical insights for archaeologists who seek a modern and alternative way of conducting archaeological science communication.

My study is designed as a mixed-methods, exploratory research, combining quantitative and qualitative data to address the gaps and aims presented above (see Chapter 4).

The main research question is then defined as follows:

- *What impact does "influencer-style" social media communication practices have on the effectiveness, credibility, and ethics of archaeological science communication performed by archaeologists?*

In order to better answer the research question, a number of sub-questions need to be asked:

- *What are the positive aspects of adopting social media in archaeological science communication, and what are its negative aspects?*

- *What are the advantages of archaeologists engaging directly with the public on social media, and what are their challenges?*

- *What are the "influencer-style" communication practices that characterise archaeological science communication on social media?*

1.2. Thesis outline

This thesis is organized as follows. In the second chapter I present the necessary background to understand the wider context of this study. I will talk about science communication theory, SMM and SMIs, the interrelations of social media, science communication and academia, and the case for archaeology.

In the third chapter, I further discuss these topics and present the theoretical framework used in my analysis.

In the fourth chapter I explain the methodology used in order to gather the data that will be used to answer the research question and its sub-questions.

The fifth chapter is dedicated to the analysis of several case studies, which will prove crucial to my research.

In the sixth chapter, I discuss the patterns and the issues that emerged from the analysis of the case studies, through the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3. From this, I present my reflections on the effectiveness of influencer-style communication practices in archaeological science communication, their impact on archaeologists' credibility and their ethical implications, and on the lessons that academics can learn from this research.

The seventh and last chapter is dedicated to answering the main research question and the different sub-questions, concluding with several suggestions for further research.

2. Background

In this chapter I provide the relevant background information on science communication and its adaptation to new media, followed by an overview of social media and its marketing component, and how these intersect with online scientific outreach. Finally, I discuss how archaeology is situated within these topics.

2.1. Science communication

What is science communication? As we will see, several terms and definitions have been proposed and used by different researchers of this discipline. Therefore, the various meanings of the term "science communication" can be quite confusing if not properly addressed.

A classic definition that is often cited is the one by Burns et al. (2003), who define science communication as "the use of appropriate skills, media, activities, and dialogue to produce one or more of the following personal responses to science" (p. 191). These responses are presented with "the label AEIOU (the vowel analogy): **A**wareness of science; **E**njoyment or other affective responses to science; **I**nterest in science; the forming, reforming or confirming of science-related **O**pinions (or attitudes); and **U**nderstanding of science" (Burns et al., 2003, p. 190).

Another classic term used to describe this discipline is *public communication of science and technology* (PCST). However, Bucchi and Trench (2021) point to the fact that, similarly to the others mentioned above, this name does not include non-public communication (for example, communication between scientists), thus indicating science communication as a better choice of word due to its variety and diversity (p. 6).

The same authors propose a definition that I find particularly suggestive: "science communication is the social conversation around science" (Bucchi & Trench, 2021, p. 8). This short sentence encapsulates different aspects that characterize science communication. Not only does it reflect its impactful role in society, but it also points to a research perspective of this field that values ethics, inclusion and dialogue as central to understanding and evaluating it (Bucchi & Trench, 2021, p. 10).

2.2. The "science" in science communication

Before moving further, it is worth discussing an issue encountered while reviewing the literature on this topic: the fact that the name "science communication" is often associated with *STEM* disciplines (science, technology, engineering, mathematics).

Linguistically speaking, the issue arises from the fact that in the English-speaking world, the word "science" is usually strongly associated with the natural sciences (Cassidy, 2021, pp. 198, 200). The German language, on the contrary, offers an interesting perspective. Its equivalent for science is *wissenschaft*, which literally translates to *knowledgeship*, and defined as "the systematic research of a subject area and the knowledge about it" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

A question might then arise regarding what is really referred to by science communication.

Cassidy (2021) offers an interesting discussion on the communication of the humanities and social sciences. These disciplines are usually considered to "have a lower epistemic status than STEM" (Cassidy, 2021, p. 206). We can see how the meaning and use of the word "science" affects the status and popular visibility of some disciplines over others (Cassidy, 2021, p. 200, 206). Cassidy (2021) notes that these dynamics also influence archaeology, which she situates within the social sciences (although the classification of our subject is debated and varies across different countries; Earley-Spadoni & Harrower, 2020). In this thesis, the term "science communication" is used in a broad, interdisciplinary sense that reflects archaeology's connections with the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. Although more inclusive terms have been proposed (e.g., "research communication"; Cassidy, 2021, p. 208), I will maintain the use of "science communication" (and "archaeological science communication") to remain consistent with the established homonymous research field.

2.3. New environments for science communication

The evolution of science communication has moved alongside that of the media, offering new environments for the transmission of knowledge. In particular, the internet and digital media have been increasingly re-shaping the way science communication is performed and researched, providing new spaces, opportunities and challenges (Brossard & Scheufele, 2013; Bubela et al., 2009; Krause et al., 2025).

In the wake of the global-scale survey on public trust in science published this year (Cologna et al., 2025; see Chapter 1), Mede and his team (2025) looked at how people across the world are exposed to and interact with scientific knowledge in their everyday lives. One of the main results of the survey was that, in most countries (especially those located in the Global South), social media are the primary source of scientific information (Mede et al., 2025, pp. 16, 25). Although in north-western European countries there is still a tendency to consume more traditional media, we cannot ignore the constantly growing relevance of social media as an alternative space for scientific outreach (Krause et al., 2025; Mede et al., 2025, pp. 25–26).

Science communication on social media is a progressively developing and expanding research field, reflecting the continual evolution of media ecosystems described by Krause et al. (2025, pp. 1–2). On top of this, there are still some challenges that affect this research area, such as gaps in theory and limited access to data (Krause et al., 2025, p. 1).

2.4. Social media, marketing, and influencers

Social media require little introduction in 2025; this year, the total number of active users reached 5.24 billion, increasing by 4.1 percent over last year (Kemp, 2025).

Social media have been evolving since the 1990s, passing from simple networking sites to complex online platforms where all kinds of information is created, shared and consumed in many different ways (Carr & Hayes, 2015; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Treem et al., 2016).

Carr and Hayes (2015) summarise social media as "Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both

broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others" (p. 50).

Part of the evolution of social media has taken place within the field of marketing (hence the term *social media marketing*; SMM). The platforms themselves (and their parent companies) have enabled this by monetizing content and offering advertising services (Appel et al., 2020, p. 80; Enke & Borchers, 2019, p. 273). Businesses have been using them to build and increase their brand visibility and to affect consumer behaviour and decision-making (Rosário & Raimundo, 2021, p. 3013). By analyzing demographic information from social media, marketers can design targeted advertising and develop products that reflect consumer needs and interests.

Central to marketing (and SMM alike) is the concept of *branding*: associating a set of qualities or ideas to a product, often by instilling it with a personality, therefore making it more "human" and relatable to the consumer (Khamis et al., 2017, p. 192).

This concept can extend beyond corporations to individuals, giving rise to *self-branding*, which can be described as "developing a distinctive public image for commercial gain and/or cultural capital" (Khamis et al., 2017, p. 191). Once mainly associated with traditional celebrities (e.g., sport, music), self-branding is nowadays achievable by "virtually" everybody (Appel et al., 2020, pp. 82–83; Khamis et al., 2017, pp. 193–195). Social media makes it possible to do so by providing the means and the space to become visible and grow a following, gaining the status of micro-celebrity (Enke & Borchers, 2019, p. 273; Khamis et al., 2017, pp. 194–198).

A prime example of online micro-celebrities are the so-called *social media influencers* (SMIs, or simply influencers; in this thesis I use *content creator* or just creator as a synonym, while recognising that not all content creators are micro-celebrities), defined by Hearn and Schoenhoff (2015) as working "to generate a form of 'celebrity' capital by cultivating as much attention as possible and crafting an authentic 'personal brand' via social networks, which can subsequently be used by companies and advertisers for consumer outreach" (p. 194). The two aspects that appear to be fundamental for the success of SMIs are their promise of authenticity and their connection with the audience (Appel et al., 2020, p. 83; Khamis et al., 2017, p. 202).

Enke and Borchers (2019) provide a definition of SMIs from the perspective of their role in strategic communication:

> [...] we define social media influencers as third-party actors that have established a significant number of relevant relationships with a specific quality to and influence on organizational stakeholders through content production, content distribution, interaction, and personal appearance on the social web. (p.267)

Practically speaking, the communication style of SMIs is based on short-form videos (called "TikToks" on TikTok, "Reels" on Instagram and Facebook, and "Shorts" on YouTube) especially suited for mobile users on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, which despite the short duration (ranging from 5 seconds to 5 minutes) they can be dense in content (Chen & Ren, 2022; May & Siddoo, 2024).

2.5. SMIs and science communication

In a letter published in *Science*, Galetti and Costa-Pereira (2017) discuss the possibility of engaging with SMIs for public outreach purposes. The authors argue that SMIs (specifically celebrities) can have more political and social relevance than scientists and researchers, and that the latter should partner up with influencers to disseminate scientific information (Galetti & Costa-Pereira, 2017, pp. 880–881).

Mojarad (2017) answers to the two scientists disagreeing with their claim. She indicates that often celebrity influencers lack the adequate background to discuss certain topics, resulting in spreading misinformation (Mojarad, 2017, p. 1362). What is really needed, she argues, is an increased presence of scientists on social media, who are properly trained on how to use these tools (Mojarad, 2017, p. 1363).

After evaluating this debate, Zhang and Lu (2023) identify three core points that have been expressed by both parts: that social media have become crucial spaces for science communication; that scientists should take an active role on these platforms "in some way"; and that the extensive reach of influencers can both enhance or hinder science communication efforts, remaining however effective in connecting with audiences that would be otherwise difficult to reach by scientists (p. 1).

2.6. Archaeology in contemporary science communication

When science communication is discussed in the context of archaeology, it is usually considered as part of the broader field of *public archaeology* (Moshenska, 2017).

Public interest in archaeology started growing alongside general interest in science in Europe and the United States at the beginning of the 19th century (Moshenska, 2024, p. 454). A century later, in the 1930s, archaeologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler is one of the firsts to open an excavation to the public (Maiden Castle, U.K.), with the aims of promoting archaeological knowledge and partially fund his work (Moshenska, 2024, pp. 451–452). To gain even more attention on his project, he demonstrated great communication skills, with the optimal use of the media (newspapers and television) and of narratives to capture people's interest in the past (Moshenska, 2024, pp. 452–453). Already in his time, Wheeler supported the importance of sharing scientific research with the public, and recognised the responsibility of archaeologists in doing so (Moshenska, 2017, p. 2).

A modern definition of public archaeology is difficult to pinpoint, due to its broad character, and differs across regions and experiences (Moshenska, 2017, pp. 3–4). The one that I find relevant to this thesis is provided by Moshenska (2017), who describes public archaeology as "practice and scholarship where archaeology meets the world" (p. 3).
Moshenska (2017) explains how this definition shows the "hybridity" of the field, merging academic research with the practical work of communicating and applying archaeological knowledge in society, hence echoing and combining science studies and science communication (p. 4).

Public archaeology is an ever growing discipline, evolving and differentiating its research and practice in distinct ways (Moshenska, 2017, p. 11). Similarly for what we have seen for science communication, public archaeology has also adapted to "new digital media" (Bonacchi, 2017, p. 60).

Already at the turn of this century, some archaeologists started realising the potential of the internet as a place where the public could be easily involved and share different perspectives (Walker, 2014, p. 218). As the web evolved, archaeology found new ways to be conducted, allowing for more participatory research projects implementing crowdsourcing (involving citizens in collecting and processing archaeological data), easily accessible open data, interactive websites and crowdfunding platforms for community projects (Bonacchi, 2017, pp. 68–70). At the same time, the way archaeology is communicated has also transformed. Already in the early 2000s, archaeological research can be found on blogs, used "as an alternative to formal academic publication" (Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, p. 277).

However, the real revolution came with the development of social media.
Walker (2014) separates internal and external archaeological communication on these platforms. Many archaeologists are present on social media, using them as a space for networking with peers, staying updated with the latest developments in the field, and finding professional opportunities like calls for papers (Walker, 2014, pp. 218, 225). However, several potentials of the use of social media for archaeology lie in its external outputs. A first and evident effect is the public's easy and direct access to archaeological research and the knowledge it produces (Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, p. 279). Yet, this is only the surface of the matter. The traditional authority of archaeologists as knowledge gate-keepers is being decentered, as social media provide an alternative space to discussions that have been solely happening within academic circles (Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, p. 279; Walker, 2014, p. 226). In this way, groups whose perspectives have been traditionally marginalised in society (post-colonial, decolonial, indigenous, queer, feminist) can find a place where not only is easy to express their voices, but also gain a following (Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, pp. 278–279). Joining in discussions is, however, not the only way to actively participate on social networks. A core element of these platforms is, after all, the creation of personal content, in the form of text, pictures, audio, or video. This provides users with a higher level of agency, as groups like non-experts and independent researchers can "produce their own content on their own terms" (Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, p. 278).

While these aspects are key to multivocality and accessibility in archaeology, they also present a series of issues.
The ease with which one can participate in discussions and disseminate information opens up the doors to fake news and pseudoarchaeological theories, as already noticed as a general trend for social media in general (Aïmeur et al., 2023; Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, p. 278; Nugroho, 2022; Richardson & Reinhard, 2024, p. 2). Social media make it easier for these individuals to not only spread false information, but also to directly attack archaeologists with hate speech, undermining their safety and expertise (Fender, 2022, p. 39; Richardson, 2018, pp. 66–67). At the same time, the mainstream representation of archaeology in the media often offers a distorted image of our profession, reinforcing stereotypes and sensationalized theories (Fender, 2022; Richardson & Reinhard, 2024, pp. 1–2).
Other problems deriving from the use of social media can be of logistical nature. This has to do with the fact that there are communities and demographic groups (e.g. the elderly) with limited access to the internet and social networks (Maint-Melville, 2018, p. 6; Walker, 2014, p. 227). Moreover, managing a social media page, from audience interactions to content production, can be time-consuming and labor-intensive (Collins et al., 2016; Maint-Melville, 2018, p. 6). Finally, there are some ethical considerations to be made. Not everything can be shared online in the same way, for

example sensitive data such as information on a site at risk of looting or human remains (Fitzpatrick & Boyle, 2024, p. 281). On a more general note, ethical concerns may arise from the very use of social media. As briefly mentioned before, these platforms and their parent companies have evolved in function of businesses and the market, with their revenue being dependent on their users. Monitoring the latter's personal data is common practices of companies like Meta (owner of Facebook and Instagram) and ByteDance (owner of TikTok), often ending in major privacy scandals (Canales & Meisenzahl, 2021; Hern & Adu, 2023; Reed, 2023; Richardson, 2018, p. 66).

Notwithstanding these limitations, social media platforms keep functioning as effective communication tools when it comes to public outreach, with a wide variety of actors sharing archaeological knowledge online.
For the purpose of this thesis, I will be focusing on communication directly performed by archaeologists. I distinguish this between research projects carrying out outreach and single archaeologists sharing their experiences and/or general archaeological knowledge.
There are plenty of archaeological projects (often excavations) who use social media platforms to share general information and updates on the work being done, but their presence in academic literature is scarce and mostly recent (see Ardis et al., 2023; Caldarola et al., 2020; Coltofean-Arizancu et al., 2022; De Felicibus, 2023; De Giuseppe, 2025; Gruber, 2017; Kelpšienė, 2019; Wakefield, 2020; Williams & Atkin, 2015). Even more lacking in publications is the reflection of personal experiences of archaeologists that have experimented with archaeological communication on social media on their own (see Barkman-Astles, 2019; Caspari, 2022; Duckworth, 2019; Howe, 2023).

Echoing what proposed by Galetti and Costa-Pereira (2017), Fonseca and colleagues (2024) present one of the first mentions of a possible collaboration with SMIs for archaeological communication (p. 10), but in the same way Mojarad (2017) did, the authors also recognise the issues that can arise from this. To my knowledge, such collaboration has not been achieved yet. What has happened instead in recent years, is that an increasing number of archaeologists have begun to perform science communication on social networks, demonstrating great capacity of reaching a vast audience and achieving considerable fame, often reflecting many characteristics of SMIs and their communication style. Within the framework of this thesis, I define this kind of online personality as "archaeo-influencer" (following the term "archaeo-influencing" coined by Marten Jesse Pot, communications advisor of Leiden University's Faculty of Archaeology; M. J. Pot, personal communication, February, 2024). I will return to this definition in Chapter 6.

3. Theoretical frameworks

This chapter presents the theoretical perspectives that characterise my analysis of archaeological science communication on social media. It builds on the background illustrated in Chapter 2, and is constituted by four main groups: models of science communication and the roles of publics and actors; narrative and emotional framing; SMI-based practices in science communication; and the reflection of these points on archaeological science communication. Together, these perspectives provide the analytical framework through which I interpret the analysis of the case studies in Chapter 5, as part of my methodology as explained in Chapter 4.

3.1. Science communication models, publics and actors

The way in which science communication has been practiced for a long time in the past is associated with what is called the *deficit model* (Dijkstra et al., 2020, pp. 23–24). This communication mode involves a one-way approach, in which information is simply delivered from the communicator to the receiver (Dijkstra et al., 2020, p. 24; Trench, 2008, p. 119). The word "deficit" in this case represents the knowledge that the public lacks, which is then provided by science and its practitioners (Burns et al., 2003, p. 189).

Over time, more attention has been dedicated to involving people in public discussions about science, thus paving the way for what is now referred to as the *dialogue model* (Dijkstra et al., 2020, p. 24; Trench, 2008, p. 120).

Trench (2008) offers a summary of the existing communication models adding a third and last one, the *participation model*, which addresses the nuances and constraints of the dialogue one by posing the importance on the shared contribution that diverse groups can make to science communication and on the stake that they have in its outcomes (pp. 130–132). While the deficit and dialogue models are linear, this last one is "multidirectional: communication takes place back and forth between experts and publics and between publics and publics" (Trench, 2008, p. 132). The author then stresses that his characterization of the models does not entail a hierarchical or evolutionary aspect, as all 3 can find their utility depending on the situation (Trench, 2008, p. 132).

Science communication is characterized by an intricate interplay of different actors and publics. While the word *public* used in public outreach or PCST is usually understood as the laypersons, Burns and colleagues (2003) define it as "every person in society" (p. 184). They further identify two general groups of "publics": the lay public, composed of non-specialist individuals in a specific field (so including scientists), and the science community (Burns et al., 2003, p. 184).

Weingart and Guenther (2016) provide us with a brief overview of which actors perform science communication and why they do so: governments and politicians aim to promote science through events and campaigns to gain public support and legitimacy (p.3); press officers and public relations (PR) specialists manage science communication for institutions where scholars cannot or do not want to perform public outreach, often blending this with "institutional propaganda" (p. 4); Scientists aim to share their research and establish credibility, although this can be affected by external factors (e.g., competition for funding application) or personal interests (e.g., "self-promotion"; p. 4); science journalists partly share the same aims and issues of scientists, generally regarded as an unbiased, trustworthy source that lately has been bending to the pressure of the market to "'sell' stories" (pp.

5–6); finally, bloggers have no specific aim per se, since they could be scientists, journalists or even regular people, resulting in uncertainty about the reliability of their communication (p. 6).

When discussing the diverse actors and publics involved in science communication, it is important to consider the meaning behind their interactions. As Burns and colleagues (2003) state, "All science practitioners are challenged to be science communicators and to enter into dialogue with their peers, with the public, and with mediators" (p. 195). This echoes and reinforces the concept of "science communication as the social conversation around science" by Bucchi and Trench (2021). Adding to this, Burns et al. (2003) bring attention to the idea of *meaning making*, which involves interpreting and contextualising scientific facts within social, cultural, and political frameworks (p. 196). This underlines again the personal and social significance of science and science communication, moving away from its simple aspect of information broadcasting; as the authors observe, "Science facts, without social significance are essentially meaningless and useless to society. It is therefore critical to actively involve all participants in science communication and to frame their interactions in a meaningful context" (Burns et al., 2003, p. 196)

These models and the definition of actors and publics will help to conceptualise how archaeologists and the public interact on social media, and identify where do archaeo-influencers sit in relation to more traditional communicators.

3.2. Framing science communication: narratives and emotions

When discussing the diverse actors and publics involved in science communication, it is important to consider the meaning behind their interactions. As Burns and colleagues (2003) state, "All science practitioners are challenged to be science communicators and to enter into dialogue with their peers, with the public, and with mediators" (p. 195). This echoes and reinforces the concept of "science communication as the social conversation around science" by Bucchi and Trench (2021). Adding to this, Burns et al. (2003) bring attention to the idea of *meaning making*, which involves interpreting and contextualising scientific facts within social, cultural, and political frameworks (p. 196). This underlines again the personal and social significance of science and science communication, moving away from its simple aspect of information broadcasting; as the authors observe, "Science facts, without social significance are essentially meaningless and useless to society. It is therefore critical to actively involve all participants in science communication and to frame their interactions in a meaningful context" (Burns et al., 2003, p. 196)

Central to meaning making in science communication is how information is framed. Bubela and colleagues (2009) discuss frames as "interpretative packages and storylines" used to convey and discuss information (p. 515). In this way, it is possible to shape how knowledge is perceived and understood by different audiences. For the authors, "Framing is an unavoidable reality of the science communication process" (Bubela et al., 2009, p. 515), but the ways in which this can happen can take different forms.

Anderson et al. (2025) propose that scientific communication should be narrative-driven. By this, they mean that there is a need to present actual stories about science: "The best arguments in the world won't change a person's mind. The only thing that can do that is a good story" (Powers, 2019, p. 607, as cited in Anderson et al., 2025, p. 1261). While the authors focus on finding new ways to

communicate climate science in the wake of the climate crisis (specifically discussing text-writing), I find their insights and arguments applicable to science in general, and archaeology in particular.

The use of narratives in science communication doesn't just provide entertainment, but ensures an emotional and cognitive connection with what is being communicated, resulting in a form of engagement referred to as "narrative transport" (Hsu, 2008, as cited in Anderson et al., 2025, p. 1259). Emotions can be central to how scientific information is presented, processed and received, influencing both content framing and audience engagement (Taddicken & Reif, 2020).

Examples of emotional connection with scientific research are offered by some researchers in the natural sciences field who use metaphors to explain the natural world and our relationship with it (e.g., by anthropomorphizing living organisms; Anderson et al., 2025, p. 1262). When it comes to climate change communication, the use of emotional language have usually positive outcomes on the perception of this issue by the public, although it has been shown how the audience's own emotions highly affect the way the message resonates (Arikan et al., 2022; Gregersen & Bye, 2023; Salama & Aboukoura, 2018).

Another way of evoking emotions is making use of humor. Several studies have explored the positive effects of implementing humor in science communication, which result in an increased perception of warmth, relatability and even expertise of scientists (Cacciatore et al., 2020; Yeo et al., 2020; Yeo et al., 2022). Consequently, these outcomes prove beneficial in building and strengthening trust in science and its communicators (Yeo and McKasy, 2021).

Finally, Anderson and colleagues (2025), as part of their idea of narrative-driven science communication, point to the importance of "exposing the human side of science" (p. 1263). This not only can help supporting the emotional connection discussed above, but can also aid establishing and fostering a trust relationship with the public, by illustrating how science its done rather than just asserting results and facts (what I would describe as "showing the behind-the-scenes"), and by being open about uncertainty and showing intellectual humility (Anderson et al., 2025; Dries et al., 2024; Intermann, 2023; Rios et al., 2025). Not all scholars agree on this though; for example, John (2018) explains how he is "against transparency, openness, sincerity and honesty", as these principles can result in misunderstandings and backfire effects on public trust in science. I must note that John's (2018) critique arises from a few examples where transparency revealed cases of scientific malpractice; therefore, I argue that his claim reflects the consequences of misconduct, rather than the act of honesty itself.

3.3. Influencers as scientists, scientists as influencers

As outlined in Chapter 2, there is a debate whether scientists should collaborate with SMIs or rather become more active on social media themselves (Galetti & Costa-Pereira, 2017; Mojarad, 2017). This debate highlights both the communicative reach of influencers and the risks of misinformation when scientific topics are handled without expertise.

In their paper, Zhang and Lu (2023) studied the way people react to scientific communication on social media, particularly on Twitter (now known as X). They compared reactions to posts about environmental and health issues made by scientists and the ones made by influencers, in order to understand how different communication styles (combined with other factors) affect the public. The results showed that scientists were perceived as more authentic and with higher expertise than

influencers, which elicited stronger *parasocial interactions* (PSI: the perceived feeling of a direct relationship with the information source) and *information-seeking intentions* (the motivation to look for more information) (Zhang & Lu, 2023, pp. 4, 9). On the other hand, influencers encouraged more *prosocial intentions* (the motivation to benefit others or society in general) (Zhang & Lu, 2023, p. 11). Another finding relates to the effects of self-disclosure: regardless of the source, the accounts with *professional self-disclosure* (PFSD) were perceived as having higher expertise, and induced more information-seeking intentions (Zhang & Lu, 2023, p. 12). The accounts with *personal self-disclosure* (PSD), instead, saw decreased perceptions of expertise, but spurred further PSI, contributing to a higher sense of authenticity (Zhang & Lu, 2023, pp. 6, 8). Lastly, the overall results show the importance of the authenticity factor; regardless of the source identity, perceived authenticity leads to increased PSI, ensuring trust and a deeper connection with the public (Zhang & Lu, 2023, p. 8–9).

Zhang and Lu (2023) point to some limitations that might hinder the generalizability of their research, such as the participants being U.S. Prolific (an online research platform) users with higher educational levels than the average citizen, and the use of fictional accounts, which may not fully replicate real PSI (pp. 12–13). In my perspective, another important limitation is the scientific context of the study, which might have influenced the participants in viewing the information sources that used PSD as less expert, as it might have seemed inconsistent with the overall scientific tone (Zhang & Lu, 2023, p. 10). This does not take into account the broader context of social media, where users share a wide variety of content.

Nevertheless, the results obtained from this study present important implications for science communication. Scientists can draw lessons from the strategies influencers use to engage their audiences, by observing how SMIs convey authenticity and build PSI, and to compensate what they are lacking in communication skills and to address diverse publics (Zhang & Lu, 2023, p. 12).

Some ethical issues might arise, as Zhang and Lu (2023) ask themselves if the adoption of such communication style might "be at odds with the deliberative ideals and fundamental norms of science and science communication" (p. 12).

Zhang (2025) further research how scientists manage self-presentation on social media between audience expectations and societal pressures. One of the results from interviews to 24 scientists active on TikTok, Instagram, and X, point to authenticity as a key factor in establishing trust and credibility, expressed through transparency, storytelling, humor, and PSD (Zhang, 2025, p. 14). These are counterbalanced by micro-celebrity dynamics, which makes scientists feel like they are performing authenticity (Zhang, 2025, p. 15). Other common themes of the interviews regard how imagined audiences shape choices on communication practices (e.g., jargon, tone, PSD), an overall academic discredit towards scientists communicating on social media, and risks of harassment towards women and minority groups derived from higher visibility, that can lead to decreased PSI (Zhang, 2025, pp. 14–16).

3.4. Archaeology, communication models, narrative and emotions

As introduced in Chapter 2, the communication aspect of archaeology is usually discussed under the broader field of public archaeology. In this section, I develop the conceptual aspects of public archaeology that are the most relevant for my research.

The definition by Moshenska (2017) provided in Chapter 2 ("archaeology as practice and scholarship where archaeology meets the world") is still very broad, but this allows it to include different aspects that characterise this discipline. For this reason, Moshenska (2017) presents seven types of public archaeology (p. 6; see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Types of public archaeology. (Moshenska, 2017, p. 6, Figure 1.1).

The ones that better represent the science communication aspect of public archaeology and therefore apply to the context of my thesis are number four, five, and six. Additionally, I would argue that number one and two should also be included, if understood outside the context of archaeological excavations.

Number four reflects the educational aspect of archaeological science communication; this means that the same communication models and the history of their evolution apply here. The deficit one has also been the standard in archaeology (referred to as the *education model*; Holtorf, 2007), recently approached by scholars like Holtorf (2000) and Merriman (2004) that recognised the existence of "multiple perspectives", with the dialogue and participation models both represented in the *democratic model* by Holtorf (2007). Interestingly, Holtorf (2007) includes an additional model, called *public relations model*, in which "archaeologists are not only seeking to transmit information and knowledge to their audiences but to a significant extent they are also marketing archaeological values, products and services" (p. 155).

Number five is represented by the openness of archaeology, which tends to be a relatively accessible and easy to understand subject when compared to other disciplines, making public archaeology stand out within science communication (Moshenska, 2017, p. 9). The ways of making archaeology "open" and visible vary from guided field visits to the use of digital platforms (Bonacchi & Moshenska, 2015, p. 4).

Number six has to do with the popularization of archaeology. Also termed *media archaeology* or *popular culture archaeology*, it deals with "the communication of archaeological research to the public through accessible and user-friendly media, rather than the more serious and detailed educational means described above" (Moshenska, 2017, p. 9). I must note, however, that the previous types of public archaeology can also find an outlet through user-friendly media (as we will see later) thanks to modern social media platforms.

I mentioned above how I would also consider number one and two as relevant within the context thesis, if considered outside the scope of archaeological fieldwork. As it will be more clear in the paragraphs below, digital tools such as social media can be a way for archaeologists to work with the public, and at the same time a way for the public to get involved in our field.

These types are discussed here to better situate archaeological science communication on social media within the broader field of public archaeology, and not strictly applied as interpretative theoretical frameworks.

The increased use of social media for science communication and the emergence of archaeo-influencers reflects deeper transformations in how archaeology is marketed and consumed. As we have seen with Holtorf (2007) and the public relations model, archaeological communication can be performed in the sense of marketing outreach. According to the author, this view of archaeology as a business "must be seen as complementing rather than contradicting the academic perspective" (Holtorf, 2007, p. 155). With this in mind, it is easy to understand how "branding" and "advertising" archaeology can turn beneficial for the survival of our discipline in the current political and societal landscape, by showing the public (in this case, governments and their taxpaying citizens) its relevance in an engaging and "pop" way (Holtorf, 2007, pp. 155–156).

This communication model has been supported by various archaeologists and institutions (Holtorf, 2007, p. 155) and actually put into practice by a few research projects adopting an actual marketing strategy for their public outreach, with varying results (Coltofean-Arizancu et al., 2022; De Felicibus, 2023; Wakefield, 2020; I include the latter because, even though it does not discuss a marketing strategy per se, it adopts an "engagement strategy").

Depending on the communication style adopted, it is possible to get past a simple model of information sharing, and deeply connect public and research through engagement (Bonacchi, 2017, p. 61).

We have seen earlier how engagement through the use of narratives and emotive communication is used in other disciplines. This is nothing new to archaeology. As Tilley (1989) suggests, interpretation of data, such as excavated materials, is inherently narrative, shaped by choices and creative interpretations, ultimately transforming finds into stories about the past (p. 278). Narrative as an intrinsic characteristic of archaeology was supported in the same journal issue by Hodder (1989), who advocated for the use of narrative elements in archaeological reports to make them more transparent, engaging and relatable. Despite there being possible ethical concerns (e.g., sensationalism, simplification or persuasion), narrative expression in archaeology remains "a

communication method that not only reaches audiences but moves them to reflect and act" (Kristensen et al., 2020, p. 4).

As previously mentioned, a crucial characteristic of storytelling is its capacity in evoking emotions. Emotions have been recognized by archaeologists as a fundamental part in human experiences, and therefore deemed important for the interpretation of material remains and analysis of ancient societies in general (Harris & Sørensen, 2010; Tarlow, 2012).

As will be explored in the following chapters, the use of narratives and emotions can play an important role in archaeological science communication on social media.

3.5. Summary and conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the main theoretical frameworks that inform my analysis. These include the three science communication models, science communication actors and their motivations, narrative and emotional framing, perceived expertise and authenticity, PSI, self-disclosure, and archaeology's public relations model. These perspectives constitute an integral part of my methodology, which is outlined in the next chapter, shaping how I approach the case studies in Chapter 5. Moreover, they provide the base on which I structure my discussion in Chapter 6, together with the results of the analysis of the case studies.

4. Methodology

This chapter is intended to provide a methodology suitable to observe the phenomenon of the archaeo-influencers and analyse their characteristics. Here I describe my methodology structure, the selection of the case studies, the methods used for data collection and analysis, together with a series of considerations and limitations.

4.1. Structure

My methodology is structured as follows. As a first step, I provided a background and a theoretical framework to understand the wider context of this study. This is followed by a quantitative and qualitative analysis of archeo-influencers' social media pages selected as case studies, based on the work from De Giuseppe (2025, pp. 79–81). To add on the qualitative aspect of this research, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with the selected archeo-influencers, in order to gain in-depth insights into the strategies used and the issues encountered that would not be otherwise observable by the sole examination of the social media pages.

4.2. Case studies selection

The selection of the case studies has been done following a series of criteria. Given the scope of my research, I took into consideration content creators that actively communicate about archaeological topics, who are either active archaeologists in the commercial sector or in academia, or have been academically trained as such.

Taking as an example the methodology from Zhang (2025), I decided to include accounts with 10,000 followers or more, as this is usually an indication of a broad outreach that interests different publics. The selected case studies fall into two influencer categories, which are defined in SMM and SMI research as micro-influencers (1,000–100,000 followers) and macro-influencers (100,000–1,000,000 followers) (Conde & Casais, 2023, p. 2). The third category, that of mega-influencers (more than 1,000,000 followers), is not considered here, as they are difficult to reach.

Although the selected case studies are active on multiple platforms, I applied the 10,000 followers benchmark specifically to Instagram. I chose this platform as the focus of my analysis because it is the one with which I am most familiar, and because it is the only one that is used evenly between the case studies (see Chapter 5).

Only English-speaking individuals were included in the selection to ensure coherence and accessibility for their content analysis.

The case studies are grouped in the table below, arranged by follower count in ascending order, with their full name, username (or "handle"), and number of followers (see Table 1).

Table 1. List of case studies. The follower count refers to the last registered number for each case study, as reported in Chapter 5. (Table by D.M.R. Mitrotta).

Full name	Instagram handle	Follower count
Natasha Billson	@tash_archaeo	43,100
Raven Todd DaSilva	@digitwithraven	44,600
Annelise Baer	@annelisethearchaeologist	58,600
Tenninger Kellenbarger	@dirtdiaries_	144,000
David Ian Howe	@ethnocynology	154,000

4.3. Data collection

The data has been collected using two analysis sheets adapted from De Giuseppe (2025, pp. 93–96), one for quantitative data of Instagram accounts, and one for quantitative and qualitative data derived from posts (see Appendix A).

Apart from the general metrics related to the account (e.g., total number of posts and followers), the analysis sheets used take into consideration data coming from 15 posts. In contrast to De Giuseppe (2025), I selected the posts based on content relevance rather than recency alone. In this way, following the aims of my thesis, I focus on the analysis of the last 15 posts whose content is related to archaeology (including humoristic content such as memes). This excludes posts about other topics, personal updates and event announcements.

The mean engagement rate ($\overline{ER}$; expressed in percentage) reflects the mean value derived from the chosen 15 posts, obtained with the formula:

$$\overline{ER} = \frac{1}{5}\sum_{i=1}^{15} ER_i$$

where the engagement rate (ER) for each single post has been calculated using the formula:

$$ER = \left(\frac{L_i + C_i}{F}\right) \times 100$$

where L_i is the number of likes on one post, C_i is the number of comments on one post, and F is the total number of followers of the account.

As a general point of reference, industry standards suggest that an average good engagement rate ranges between 1% and 5% (Newberry, 2025). MacKay and colleagues (2022) point to an average engagement rate of 2.87% for science communicators, although this data is context-specific to research on online communication about Covid-19 (p. 6).

In addition to this, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with the selected case studies. This modality was chosen to avoid following a rigid structure, leaving the possibility to steer the conversation on other topics if needed. Each individual has been contacted via email and Instagram direct message, to maximise the chances of contact. The interviews have been carried out using Microsoft Teams, and have been recorded and automatically transcribed with the same tool (see Appendix D).

All participants have received a consent form to sign for the purposes of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR; European Commission, 2018), and the list of questions (see Appendix C) beforehand. Questions number 9, 11 (a, b, c), 12 (a), and 16 are based on Zhang (2025).

4.4. Data analysis

The data has been analysed with the following approaches. First, I evaluated the information retrieved using the aforementioned analysis sheets from each case study.

Then, I present the results of the interviews by comparing the different answers to my questions, organized by theme (background, platforms and content, branding and identity, audience and engagement, credibility, trust and ethics, and concluding points on the future of archaeology on social media).

Finally, the data collected from the analysis sheets has been compared with the themes observed from the interviews, in order to strengthen the validity of the findings.

4.5. Limitations and further considerations

This methodology presents a series of limitations. The number of case studies is limited to a handful of accounts, given the fact that this practice is not very widespread among archaeologists, especially considering the ones that pass the threshold of 10,000 followers. Moreover, I was also limited by the amount of responses I received when contacting the archaeo-influencers about participation in my research.

The selection also presents a gender imbalance, considering that the great majority of case studies are women. This, however, reflects a trend observed in research, that is, on average more women tend to perform science communication on social media than men (Zhang, 2025, p. 7).

Another limitation is an underlying cultural bias, given by the choice of the English language as one of the selection criteria. By doing so, the main geographical areas represented in this research are North America (4 individuals) and the U.K. (1 individual). Because of this, other realities coming from different cultural backgrounds are unfortunately not taken into consideration.

Furthermore, the selection of the last relevant 15 posts only allows the observation of content produced in a limited number and time frame, thus excluding other kinds of content posted and communication styles used over time.

Regarding the engagement rate calculation, I must note that this relies on current follower counts, rather than the follower counts at the time each post was published. This may introduce some distortion, as using a higher, current follower count can artificially lower the engagement rate of older posts, which originally might have performed better relative to the follower number at the time. This is a common problem of research on social media, as public available data is limited (Richardson, 2019). Other studies have similarly relied on current follower counts when calculating engagement rates (AlSuhabani et al., 2025; De Giuseppe, 2025; MacKay et al., 2022). That said, because the engagement rate is calculated on mostly recent posts, the margin of error is assumed to be relatively low, unless otherwise specified. Therefore, the inclusion of the engagement rate is meant as an approximate, general indication of audience interaction, instead of a precise measurement of communication performance.

One last constraint has to do with the use of Instagram as the main platform for my research. Some of the chosen archeo-influencers have a larger presence on other platforms such as YouTube or TikTok, partly affecting also their communication style. Therefore, my analysis is only partial when compared to their broader social media activity. However, when deemed relevant, I make sure to note when a case study presents a prominent variation in the use of social media platforms, as this is also reflected in the information retrieved from the interviews.

To conclude, the intention of this methodology is not to evaluate or rank any of the archeo-influencers selected, but rather to examine their practices in a comparative way in order to draw insights and understand different approaches to archaeological science communication on social media.

5. Case studies

In this chapter I illustrate the results of the analysis conducted on the selected case studies, building on the methodology outlined in Chapter 4. For each case study, I present a brief overview, the general and quantitative data of the account, and the quantitative and qualitative data related to its content. The detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Instagram posts can be found in Appendix B. Then, I analyse the insights obtained from the interviews focusing on the general addressed themes, rather than treating each individual as a separate case, in order to highlight similar patterns. I conclude by synthesising the main results and the insights derived from them.

5.1. Case study 1: @tash_archaeo

Natasha Billson is a British archaeologist, presenter, and content creator, manager of the Instagram page @*tash_archaeo*. After obtaining her Bachelor degree in Archaeology at Bournemouth University in 2013, Natasha worked in commercial archaeology in the U.K. for several years. In 2021, she started working in the public education sector as a creative producer. In 2023, she completed a Master's degree in Public History, and she now holds a PhD position at the University of Bristol, combining art history, history and archaeology.

Natasha started her online presence in 2013 with a blog called *Behind the Trowel* (the same name was used then for her YouTube channel). Between 2016 and 2017, she started making content for Instagram and YouTube, but it wasn't until 2020 that content production became more consistent and her social media presence more visible. Because of this, in 2020 she became part of the popular archaeological TV show *The Great British Dig*.

5.1.1. Instagram quantitative analysis

- General data
    - account: @tash_archaeo (Natasha Billson | Archaeologist & Presenter)
    - retrieval date: 03/12/2025
    - page creation date: June 2016

- Quantitative metrics
    - posts number: 1,224
    - followers number: 43,100
    - following number: 1,116
    - total likes number (relevant last 15 posts): 29,697
    - total comments number (relevant last 15 posts): 935
    - mean engagement rate: 4.12%

- Notes
    - measurement period: 23/07/2025–17/10/2025
    - posts frequency: irregular. The analysed content spans over a period of 3 months, with gaps between posts ranging from a few days to several weeks. This is due to Natasha posting on other topics (e.g. British history and heritage, but also advertisements and

personal updates), affecting the observed posts frequency. Her general posting frequency is relatively high, around 2–3 posts per week.

- General analysis
  - o content details: composed of 14 reels (ranging from a few seconds to 3 minutes) and 1 static post.
  - o interactions and engagement: there is a relevant discrepancy between posts made in collaboration with the British Museum and the rest. This is due to Instagram's collaboration feature, which makes these posts visible to the audience of the British Museum page (with over two million followers), increasing the engagement rate. Regarding other posts, the engagement is usually below average. Because several posts date back a few months, their engagement may originally have been higher given the likely lower follower count at the time.
  - o most-engaged content typology: the posts made in collaboration with the British Museum (mean engagement rate: 6.95%). The single most-engaged content is a reel making fun of some stereotypes tied to archaeologists using a popular Instagram trend, scoring an engagement rate of 28.60%.

5.1.2. Instagram qualitative analysis summary

Through the 15 analysed posts, the content mainly revolves around reels that present objects or museum exhibitions, often linked to collaborations and promotions. The tone of voice is mostly informative, reflecting documentary narration, although shifting if required by the format. Narratives give backstories and captivating hooks, and emotions are used in some cases to make the past feel more "relatable". The posts are visually clear, combining shots of herself with object close-ups, and visual aids varying from reconstructions to animations, topped by subtitles with bolded keywords. Interactions with the public are limited to calls to museum visits and occasional questions, and replies to comments are relatively rare. Comments from users tend to express curiosity and support, but this is usually disrupted when the content revolves around collaborations with the British Museum, turning to hostility and debates over repatriation. Trust and credibility are built up through her professional self-presentation and collaborations with curators and museums.

5.2. Case study 2: @digitwithraven

Raven Todd DaSilva is a Canadian archaeologist, heritage professional and content creator, manager of the Instagram page @*digitwithraven*. She obtained a Bachelor degree in Classical and Near/Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. After an internship in Germany on art conservation and restoration, she pursued a Master of Science in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage at the University of Amsterdam, followed by a Master of Arts in Archaeology and Heritage of Egypt and the Middle East at the University College London. Currently, Raven works at the Natural History Museum in London, managing and developing online courses.

In 2016, she decided to start a YouTube channel dedicated to archaeology, together with the Instagram page and a blog, noticing how this subject was poorly represented online compared to others. However, content output only became more consistent starting from 2017.

5.2.1. Instagram quantitative analysis

- General data
    - account: @digitwithraven (Raven Todd DaSilva | Archaeologist)
    - retrieval date: 25/11/2025
    - page creation date: July 2016

- Quantitative metrics
    - posts number: 779
    - followers number: 44,600
    - following number: 1,027
    - total likes number (relevant last 15 posts): 52,584
    - total comments number (relevant last 15 posts): 933
    - mean engagement rate: 7.93%

- Notes
    - measurement period: 28/09/2025–23/11/2025
    - posts frequency: two posts per week on average.

- General analysis
    - content details: composed of 13 reels (ranging from a few seconds to 3 minutes) and two static posts.
    - interactions and engagement: posts have a substantial number of reactions and an overall relatively good engagement.
    - most-engaged content typology: the series of short videos "Ancient Site Sunday" (mean engagement rate: 10.99%).

5.2.2. Instagram qualitative analysis summary

Across the 15 posts, Raven mainly shares reels as part of her series "Ancient Site Sunday", along with few trend content. The tone of voice is clear and informative, with hints of narrative and informality. Humor and emotional drive appear sporadically, mainly in trend content. Narrative is present in the form of intriguing hooks and occasionally in a more complete storytelling and personal reflection. The visual style is simple and consistent, with Raven speaking on camera with a slideshow of images behind her, and clear subtitles. For trend content, text overlays add context when needed. She actively interacts with the public asking for suggestions, inviting to follow, and replying to comments. These range from curiosity and support to debate, corrections and occasional hostility. There are a few explicit trust and credibility cues, including archaeological training and fieldwork references and illustrating research context.

5.3. Case study 3: @annelisethearchaeologist

Annelise Baer is an American archaeologist, producer and content creator, manager of the Instagram page *@annelisethearchaeologist*. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Archaeology from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and a Master's degree in Archaeology for Screen Media from the University of Bristol. After graduating, she started a career in television production, often working on history and archaeology documentaries for channels like National Geographic and Discovery.

In 2020, while her work stopped because of the COVID lockdown, Annelise started making social media content about archaeology, first on Instagram and then on TikTok.

5.3.1. Instagram quantitative analysis

- General data
    - account: @annelisethearchaeologist (Annelise Baer)
    - retrieval date: 29/11/2025
    - page creation date: September 2024

- Quantitative metrics
    - posts number: 269
    - followers number: 58,600
    - following number: 239
    - total likes number (relevant last 15 posts): 36,723
    - total comments number (relevant last 15 posts): 426
    - mean engagement rate: 4.22%

- Notes
    - measurement period: 29/10/2025–24/11/2025
    - posts frequency: multiple posts per week (three to four, on average).

- General analysis
    - content details: composed of 14 reels (ranging from 1 to 3 minutes) and one static post.
    - interactions and engagement: posts have an overall relatively good engagement.
    - most-engaged content typology: the series of posts on Ancient Egypt (mean engagement rate: 6.33%), together with a video-comment on a picture from the upcoming film *The Odyssey* by Christopher Nolan (engagement rate: 13.22%).

5.3.2. Instagram qualitative analysis summary

In the 15 posts, Annelise mainly uses reels to discuss archaeological topics based on museum visits, news and current issues, and questions from users. In particular, many videos discuss Ancient Egypt as they were related to the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The tone of voice is mainly informative and informal at the same time. Narrative and emotional elements include the humanization of past people and objects, and occasional storytelling and personal reflections. The visual format is consistent, with Annelise talking to the camera with a slideshow of images behind her, together with clear subtitles. While a number of posts are dedicated answers to comments, replies in the comment section are few. Reactions range from support and curiosity to debate and occasional hostility. Trust and credibility are built through showing her personal experience in museums, transparency about uncertainty in archaeology, and several references to research papers.

5.4. Case study 4: @dirtdiaries_

Dr. Tenninger Kellenbarger is an American archaeologist, art historian and content creator, manager of the Instagram page *@dirtdiaries_*. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Art History and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East at Lycoming College (Williamsport, Pennsylvania) in 2016, followed by a Master's degree in Art History at Temple University (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) in

2018. In 2023, she completed her PhD at Temple University, focusing on Aegean Bronze Age art and archaeology. She is currently a professor at Temple University.

She started communicating about archaeology on social media in 2020. While working on her PhD dissertation, she would break down archaeological news and reports in simple videos to be posted on TikTok.

5.4.1. Instagram quantitative analysis

- General data
    - account: @dirtdiaries_ (Dr. Tenninger Kellenbarger)
    - retrieval date: 30/11/2025
    - page creation date: November 2012

- Quantitative metrics
    - posts number: 922
    - followers number: 144,000
    - following number: 346
    - total likes number (relevant last 15 posts): 48,197
    - total comments number (relevant last 15 posts): 524
    - mean engagement rate: 2.29%

- Notes
    - measurement period: 30/10/2025–26/11/2025
    - posts frequency: multiple posts per week (four to five, on average).

- General analysis
    - content details: composed of 13 reels (ranging from a few seconds to 2 minutes) and two static posts.
    - interactions and engagement: engagement is inconsistent, with 8 posts below average, and 7 with much higher scores. This fluctuation is not content-specific, as both low and high engagement posts come from the same aforementioned categories.
    - most-engaged content typology: there is not a specific content typology that is engaged the most. Two posts score an above-average engagement rate: one is a video-comment on several scenes from the upcoming film *The Odyssey* (engagement rate: 6.48%); the second is a meme (engagement rate: 12.87%).

5.4.2. Instagram qualitative analysis summary

Through the 15 posts, Tenninger mainly uses reels to post about archaeological news, topical issues, sites and artefacts through the series "Ruin my Monday", trends, and trailers for longer-form content (podcast episodes and YouTube videos). The tone of voice shifts often, being more informal, informative, narrative, humorous or emotional (or a mix of these) depending on the topic discussed. Narrative and emotional elements include storytelling, personal reflections, humor, and emotions like sadness and melancholy. The posts have a consistent visual style, with Tenninger speaking to the camera with a slideshow of images behind her, with clear subtitles. Trend posts rely on on-screen text and lip-sync videos with popular audios. Interactions with the public are varied, including invites to follow the page, asking for opinions, and sporadic comment replies. Comments from users mainly

express support, curiosity and debate. Trust and credibility are often reinforced through her expertise and titles, and occasionally through references to research articles.

5.5. Case study 5: @ethnocynology

David Ian Howe is an American anthropologist, archaeologist, comedian, and content creator, manager of the Instagram page *@ethnocynology*. He first started a Bachelor's degree in History at the University of Tennessee, then switching to an Archaeology programme, followed by a Master's degree in Archaeology at the University of Wyoming. He currently works full-time as a content creator.

In 2018, David started posting content on Instagram, at first sharing pictures of his dog with educational captions about the archaeology of the interactions between dogs and humans, as this has always been his main topic of interest during his studies (hence the name of the page). In 2020, he started posting also on TikTok and YouTube, where his popularity grew quickly.

5.5.1. Instagram quantitative analysis

- General data
    - account: @ethnocynology (David Ian Howe)
    - retrieval date: 30/11/2025
    - page creation date: May 2018

- Quantitative metrics
    - posts number: 763
    - followers number: 154,000
    - following number: 1,401
    - total likes number (relevant last 15 posts): 22,355
    - total comments number (relevant last 15 posts): 317
    - mean engagement rate: 0.98%

- Notes
    - measurement period: 05/09/2025–30/11/2025
    - posts frequency: The analysed content spans over a period of almost 3 months, with gaps between posts ranging from a few days to several weeks. The observed posts frequency is affected by the presence of non-archaeological posts (e.g., anthropology, advertisements, personal updates). The general posting frequency equates to 2–5 posts per week.
    - The low engagement rate may be impacted by post selection or reflect a temporary decrease, considering that content posted before the selected 15 posts show higher engagement.

- General analysis
    - content details: composed of 12 reels (ranging from a few seconds to 4 minutes) and three static posts.
    - interactions and engagement: most of the posts have an overall below-average engagement. Older posts may originally have had a higher engagement given the likely lower follower count at the time.

- most-engaged content typology: meme reels (mean engagement rate: 1.77%). The second most-engaged content is a graphic post on the history of the horse and human interaction (engagement rate: 2.42%).

5.5.2. Instagram qualitative analysis summary

Across the 15 posts, David mainly uses reels to showcase memes, interview clips as trailers for longer-form content (podcast episodes and YouTube videos), and general archaeological topics. A series of recent videos discuss the history of horse domestication. The tone of voice alternates between informative, narrative, and humorous, or a combination of these. Narrative and emotional elements are expressed through humor and storytelling. The visual style is consistent. Memes use text overlaid onto popular comedic clips, and educational videos present shots of both David and the guest supported by additional footage, animations, and subtitles. Interactions vary across posts, with some inviting to share opinions and sparking debates, and others with less activity. David often replies to both supportive and hostile comments, and debates. Trust and credibility are built up through collaborations with other archaeologists and references to academic research.

5.6. Interviews thematic analysis

The themes presented here reflect the main themes under which I grouped the questions for the interviews. The answers received are combined and compared with each other, highlighting similar patterns and differences. While I aimed to keep the interviews focused on Instagram, in this section I will also mention other platforms, as the communication of archaeo-influencers revolves around the use of multiple social media.

5.6.1. Background

This theme revolves around the academic and professional background of the case studies, with a focus on the motivations and goals that drive their online activity.

While all the selected case studies have pursued degrees (Bachelor's and Master's) in archaeology and/or related disciplines (e.g., conservation, art history, history), their subsequent careers have been varied. Tenninger has completed a PhD and is now a professor at her alma mater, thus fully belonging to the world of academia. Natasha, even though on a similar path, says: "I was in the commercial sector for so long [...] it's kind of weird for me to class myself as an academic, even though I've started this PhD journey". This brings us to a different pattern observed, that of applied and professional work. As mentioned, Natasha worked for many years in commercial archaeology before moving back into academia. At the same time, she started a career as a TV presenter (still tied to her archaeological work) and founded her own media production company. Similarly, Annelise went into TV production after her studies, working in that field for 15 years (including the production of archaeology and history documentaries). Moving away from archaeology, but still in the heritage sector, Raven currently works at the Natural History Museum in London as a product manager for the museum's online courses, partly because of the employment constraints in archaeology: "an archaeology job in the UK will pay less than you could make essentially at a grocery store". Lastly, David has decided to dedicate all of his time to his social media pages, becoming a full-time content creator, together with doing public lectures and comedy shows.

Although the motives behind the start of their online activity differed from each other and were usually driven by personal interests, the current goals that shape their communication have similar patterns. One main aspect observed across all interviews is the intention to educate about archaeology in an accessible and engaging way. Another pattern observed is the goal of bridging the gap between academia and the public. Annelise, the strongest proponent of this, says: "there is a gulf when it comes to knowledge of the general public about certain ancient history topics, and then the actual people who do the work in those topics". Tenninger shares her personal reflection as an academic on this: "we as individuals in academia are really missing out on a way to help change people's minds about us and about the topics that we cover".

5.6.2. Platforms and content

This theme covers which platforms are used by the interviewees, the planning and production of content, and the communication practices applied (mainly regarding tone of voice, the use of narratives, and emotional engagement).

Instagram is the social media platform that is widely used by all of the archaeo-influencers. However, not all of them indicated it as their main or preferred one. Annelise and Tenninger prefer using TikTok, where they have a higher following compared to Instagram. Also David has a higher following on TikTok, but enjoys using Instagram the most. Raven has a higher following on YouTube, although she says "I feel like I should say YouTube's my favourite because that's obviously my meat and potatoes, but I really love Instagram. I do. It's more fun".

Apart from personal preferences, all the case studies show an active usage of multiple social media platforms at the same time, the major ones being Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. To a lesser extent, and differing between archaeo-influencers, Facebook, X, Substacks, and audio streaming platforms (e.g., Spotify and Apple Podcasts) are also used.

Overall, content for Instagram doesn't follow a strict schedule and is created more spontaneously, depending on how much one is inspired by a particular topic. Some exceptions are Annelise's "soft scheduling" in case of events, and regular series like Raven's "Ancient Site Sunday" and Tenninger's "Ruin my Monday". All of them regularly post multiple times a week, ranging from a minimum of two to a maximum of five in some cases.

The workload of content creation varies significantly between case studies, also depending on the kind of content. For example, for a minute-long video some may need around 30 minutes (like in the case of Annelise), others up to 4–6 hours (like in the case of Natasha). As said, this highly depends on the type of content made, that can be more or less structured (for example, a video containing animations will take longer to edit).

The tone of voice adopted encompasses a wide spectrum. Natasha describes herself as a "traditional presenter", with a neutral and clear delivery often resembling a documentary narrator. David follows this "documentary style" tone for his longer-format content, but relies more on relaxed and humorous communication on Instagram. This platform difference is also observed by Raven, who is "a little bit quippier" and "sensational" on Instagram compared to her YouTube videos. Tenninger's "tone will shift depending on the topic", but apart from that is usually in "teacher mode", mainly due to her

profession. Finally, Annelise describes her style as "having a fun chat", "just like two people talking", showing "a sense of casualness and conversationality".

The use of narrative is observed in all of the case studies, but with some differences. Natasha embeds storytelling in the objects she talks about or in the places she explores. David uses narratives mainly in his long-form "documentary" content. Also Raven implements immersive storytelling in her longer videos, condensing this in her Instagram content with narrative hooks, given by a "need to grab your attention in 0.3 seconds". For Tenninger and Annelise, the main narrative frame is the "humanization of the past". Annelise argues against the perception of "the ancients as a monolith, a faraway distant pillar of knowledge", saying that "our ancient ancestors made laundry lists. They had birthday parties. Got mad. They were petty. They were just like us. We are just like them". Similarly, Tenninger emphasises the importance of making the past relatable to the public: "when you read and learn about history, and even teaching it, it can feel impersonal [...] it just takes one narrative, one story, one artifact to get somebody to be like 'Oh my gosh, they were just like me'".

The emotional engagement seen in the selected case studies primarily takes the form of humor, to varying degrees. Depending on the topic, David heavily uses humor, whether as stand-alone content or integrated with science communication: "I like being creative with it. It's art to me. Whether that means being funny or educational or just mixing it". Memes are a substantial part of his content, which often "get the most followers just cause they have the biggest reach". For Annelise, humor is an integral part of her "casualness": "99% of the time, whatever I'm talking about, is fun. And I use that to help break down the existing and perceived barriers between ancient history, people, places and topics, and the modern world". Natasha and Raven make relatively limited use of humor. "They might see me do some humour, but it's very rare" mentions Natasha, while Raven says: "I used to try and be really funny on Instagram. It didn't work so well for my content", currently preferring a more subtle humor.

While discussing other types of emotional engagement, the interviews turned to more negative or reflective emotions such as sadness and melancholy. This was recognized as the "sad girl archaeology/history" trend (which involves staring into the camera with a sad expression, a text overlay for context, and overall emotional framing given by background music, or the topic itself). Tenninger occasionally makes use of this approach, as this "will always pull at anybody's heartstrings" and do well in terms of reach. This however depends on what is discussed, as longer content "will pull more people, because they have that desire to learn more, especially when it's larger topics like Pompeii, Egypt, Cleopatra", says Tenninger.
Natasha says that "emotion-driven content is definitely beneficial, it really connects people with whatever that creator is talking about", but she generally doesn't adopt it as part of her style, using it only occasionally and strategically to boost engagement. Similarly, Annelise acknowledges the effectiveness of this trend, but she also chooses not to use it as it does not fit her style. Raven, although using emotions like sadness in a few posts, is the most skeptical of the "sad girl archaeology/history" trend, arguing that science communication should focus on giving context.
David does not discuss this particular trend, but reflects on his own experience with emotional content; if the post is for example about a dog burial, he will frame it in a sad and evocative manner, saying: "Those are some of my favorite posts [...] I have noticed when there's an emotional hook or an emotional angle to it, it does bring out a lot more commentary".

5.6.3. Branding and identity

This theme concerns the self-presentation of the interviewees on social media, and their reaction towards the term influencer, and archaeo-influencer.

Authenticity is a key element seen in the self-presentation of most case studies, with different levels. Annelise, David, and Raven appear on social media as their authentic self as they would do in everyday life, although admitting some degree of curation is unavoidable (whether that is about personal appearance on camera or a more lively tone of voice). Also Tenninger aims at being as authentic as possible, albeit partially constrained by her academic formation: "it is me, but there is some academic professional flair". Natasha is the one that acknowledges a higher control of her true-self, due to her professional background: "it can be performative in the sense of being professional and speaking to camera".

Overall, the interviewees negatively perceived the term influencer, because of its association with marketing, lifestyle content and celebrity culture. Instead, the term archaeo-influencer was received more positively, although none of the interviewees would use it to label themselves. Natasha describes it as a more "fun" term, and takes her categorization as archaeo-influencer as a compliment, albeit she would not describe herself as such. David, Raven and Tenninger recognize the term as more acceptable if it is about "influencing knowledge" (Tenninger) and the public's perception of archaeology. Annelise takes a slightly different angle on this: "the only thing I am trying to sell you [...] is the idea that you should go to a museum and you should buy more books". This said, each individual would rather use other terms to describe their activity on social media: archaeologist, community archaeologist or content creator for Natasha; public communicator or science communicator for Annelise; content creator or science communicator for Raven; scholar, archaeologist, and art historian for Tenninger; and anthropologist and/or archaeologist for David.

5.6.4. Audience and engagement

This theme refers to the interviewees' audiences, their interactions, the overall response of the public to their content, and the way successful communication is measured by each content creator.

For all the interviewees, the audiences reached are incredibly varied regarding age (18–70 years old, with an average concentration in the 20–40 years old range), sex and geographical location. Annelise describes her public as being composed mostly by women, while Raven's audience is currently mostly composed by men. A common pattern noticed (especially by female creators) is a demographic difference tied to the platform used, where YouTube usually has a predominantly male audience compared to a higher presence of female users on Instagram and TikTok. Whether a post will get more engagement from men or women depends also on the kind of content or topic discussed (in the case of Tenninger, for example, emotional content usually gets more reactions from women, while topics like ancient weapons will interest more men).

The kinds of reactions obtained by the audience differ across platforms and do not seem to be connected to a specific variable. The greater contrast is observed in Tenninger's and Annelise's experiences on Instagram and TikTok. Annelise avoids replying to comments on Instagram as "the vibes are really unpleasant", preferring to interact with people on TikTok, also often replying to comments with dedicated videos. On the contrary, Tenninger avoids the comments on TikTok because

of a series of severely negative experiences, and instead prefers to engage with her audience on Instagram (while maintaining a similar level of caution). Raven interacts with her followers in different ways: through live chats on YouTube videos premieres, polls, and replying to comments whenever she has time. Natasha mainly avoids responding to comments (apart from when necessary, for example explaining the context of a video). All the interviewees listed so far largely abstain from interacting with negative dynamics such as hate speech, arguments and misinformation, often monitoring and deleting harmful comments. In this regard, negative experiences in the form of misogyny and harassment from male users are a constant in comments and private messages for female creators. David emphasises a strong connection with his audience on Instagram, responding to both comments and private messages when he can. Regarding negative or divisive comments, he tries to be the first one to reply in order to prevent an argument from escalating.

Overall, reactions from the public tend to be mixed (although depending on the platform and the type of content), with positivity coming from usual followers contrasted with negative backlash by new viewers reached through more viral posts.

For the archaeo-influencers, measuring the success of communication rarely involves purely quantitative data such as likes, views and followers. Annelise, Raven and Tenninger value the quality of responses received: "even if one person sees my stuff and they're able to take a fact or learn something from it, then my job is done" (Tenninger); on a similar note, Raven says:

> [...] even nowadays when I get a comment from a video I made five years ago on, like, excavation methods, and someone's like, this really helped me [...] That comment means more to me, and that view means more to me than the 10,000 views that a clickbait video would get.

David recognises successful communication on YouTube through views and revenue, as the platform is his main source of income, while on Instagram he gives more importance to building connections and to meaningful interactions with his regular followers. The impact of Natasha's communication goes beyond platforms, as she associates success with invitations to "school talks, [...] to visit a museum or go to a press preview, or a paid partnership opportunity".

5.6.5. Credibility, trust and ethics

This theme addresses how archaeo-influencers balance their identity as archaeologists with their role on social media in terms of trust and credibility, how this is perceived by their public and by other archaeologists, and what ethical issues they face when using social media.

A common pattern regarding how credibility is expressed is mainly about establishing a trust relationship based on authenticity, clarity, and consistency, characteristics shared by all the interviewees. Qualifications and credentials come second. Annelise, David and Raven are those who find (or have found in the past) more challenging to balance their identity as archaeologists with their social media presence, as they sometimes doubt their legitimacy as real archaeologists (for example, due to lack of a PhD) in a sort of impostor syndrome. Despite this, their foundation in research and factual knowledge, their ability to express authenticity, and the PSI enabled on social media helps them bridge this perceived gap. For example, Annelise says that: "because of my existence on social

media in a public facing platform, I have become a reliable source of information [...] when it comes to history and archaeology". Also Natasha establishes trust and credibility by sharing clear and accurate information, blending her background in archaeology and TV presenting; on top of this, she sees social media as complementing her archaeological formation: "I feel like making social media now is the new community archaeology". Even if of secondary importance, credentials are still useful to foster trust: "I always tell people [...] that I am an archaeologist and art historian, just to build credibility" (Tenninger); "I showed up on the Internet saying, hey, I'm actually an archaeologist, [...] that sort of just established me as a credible voice" (Annelise).

The reactions from other archaeologists to the interviewees' online activity is either categorized as indifferent or positive, but never negative. Many have received support and appreciation from their peers (including former professors, or in the case of Tenninger, her own students). However, this tends to come from younger individuals, as older or more traditional archaeologists tend to not understand, dismiss, or undervalue archaeological science communication on social media.

Two of the main ethical issues encountered with the use of social media for archaeological science communication are about human remains and managing the interactions with the public. Presenting human remains to a wide online audience may be received as disrespectful and insensitive by some. Often, the content creators avoid showing human remains, or include warnings so the viewers can decide to avoid them. For David in particular, this is a sensitive topic since his content is often related to Native American communities, thus having additional ethical and legal boundaries.
Another ethical dilemma is balancing PSI and free speech with personal safety and harm reduction in a (online) public space. We have seen how most of the interviewees decide not to engage in arguments or avoid responding to comments and messages at all, since these can easily degenerate into threats to one's own safety. For this, they have to monitor comments and remove any harmful statements (e.g., misogyny and racism) that can also target other users.

David, Natasha, Raven and Tenninger find that oversimplification is often a risk involved in science communication on social media, especially regarding complex information that can be easily misunderstood. The struggle here is about making content accessible, easy to understand, and accurate at the same time.
Other ethical concerns are more personal. David carefully double-checks his content, fearing backlash from being perceived as politically biased: "every time before I hit post, I have to sit there and think, is this racist? Is it homophobic? Is it too woke? Is it not woke?". Another difficult decision for him to make is choosing what content to monetize, as he believes that education should be free while at the same time earning a living from his educational content. Regarding oversimplification and sensationalism, Raven sometimes feels the pressure to "sell out to the algorithm". For Natasha, another issue revolves around her collaboration with the British Museum, as posts made under such collaboration always feature debates about repatriation and colonial narratives in the comment section. She answers this by being transparent about her independent and impartial role of communicator, as she is often mistaken for an employee of the museum and personally attacked.

5.6.6. Concluding points on the future of archaeology on social media

This theme includes some concluding reflections from the interviewees about the future of the use of social media in archaeology.

A first pattern observed is a shared desire to see more archaeological science communication on social media performed by archaeologists and the institutions they belong to. This is framed as a necessity rather than an option, emphasising the need to uphold the public presence and legitimacy of archaeology. The interviewees manifest worries about the presence of misinformation and pseudoarchaeology online, and a lack of trust in experts, linking these to the need of having more archaeologists actively communicating about their profession on social networks:

> the more communication, the more people care about it, the more funding we get in a society
> where arts programs are getting cut, especially humanities and archaeology. We need to have
> the widest possible audience. We need to have as many people caring about us as we can,
> because if not, what's going to happen? (Raven).

The other reason given regarding the demand for more archaeologists online is the increasing recognition of social media platforms as new teaching and learning spaces, especially for younger generations; as David says, it's possible that in the future "less people are going to go to colleges and everyone's going to get their information from TikTok and AI generated people", needing more voices online to counter this. Consequently, this will require efforts by institutions to train archaeologists in science communication, the use of social media and the creation of short-form content that is accessible, engaging and accurate:

> Most experts [...] only know how to do things in an academic context and how to essentially
> just have someone do a lecture at you in a video form, which is not what needs to be
> happening. [...] platforms like Instagram and TikTok, need to have short form-content and it
> needs to be more direct, personable, casual communication. [...] But again, it's a skill. Not
> everybody has it, not everybody's meant for it, and that's ok, but it does help to have at least
> one person who is good at that (Annelise).

On this last point, the interviewees also express the desire for collaboration between them and archaeologists as a solution. This would combine the strengths of both sides, pairing the expertise and authority of researchers in the field with the communication skills and notoriety of archaeo-influencers. However, as Raven argues, archaeologists and institutions should have active social media pages to make these collaborations work. Similarly, Natasha notes that archaeologists need to start making content themselves first, as they could not always rely on archaeo-influencers as they have their own working schedules to follow.

> I would hope [...] that [social media in archaeology would] lends itself for more community
> outreach [...] hoping that there is more of a desire to get out there and remove any stigmas of
> being an influencer online and reshaping our mindsets to consider it as science communication
> and to really understand that that is a much better way to reach the whole world. [...] And
> hopefully within academia, more people will start using it to dispel the nonsense of, well,

academia is only for old white men. I mean, yes, [...] we got to change that, let's make learning more accessible. Let's make archaeology more accessible (Tenninger).

5.7. Comparison of the results from the analysis sheets and the interviews

Several patterns observable in the quantitative and qualitative analysis sheets are also identified by the creators themselves in the interviews. The most evident regards their main communication goals (i.e., making archaeology accessible and engaging, and connecting academia and the public), which are reflected by the consistent use of clear visual aids, subtitles, the use of narrative and emotional frameworks, and simple delivery of information.

Especially regarding narrative and emotional framing, the elements observed in the analysis of the posts reflect the strategies mentioned during the interviews. Narrative hooks, storytelling, the humanization of artefacts and past people, and emotional drive are stated in the interviews as communication approaches, constantly appearing in the examined posts. In particular, humor and trends (the latter to a lesser degree) are not occasional, but rather a careful tool used to make a topic more approachable, boost engagement, or increase PSI.

In the interviews, the creators mentioned that trust and credibility are mainly obtained by being authentic, clear and consistent, and only secondarily through professional identity. While the former are implicit and therefore more difficult to observe in the analysis of the posts, the latter is easier to recognize through explicit cues (e.g., titles, credentials). Consequently, these cues appear less often in the analysis sheets, even if credibility may still be established through tone and format. This is partly impacted by the fact that types of posts like memes and trends rarely present cues for trust and credibility, simply because there is no need to do so, as these are usually meant for engagement purposes. Moreover, the overall trust and credibility as "experts" is built by the archaeo-influencers over time, thus not all posts will always contain clear cues regarding their profession.

There are a few case study specific discrepancies between the data from the posts and the interviews. While Annelise described humor as an integral part of her communication style, this was not clearly noted in the analysed posts. This might be explained by the fact that, as she mentions, her use of humor is more overarching and part of her informal communication, rather than being expressed through explicit jokes or memes. This makes it difficult to separate it from her informal tone of voice. On the contrary, Tenninger did not specifically mention humor as one of her communication techniques; however, this appeared multiple times in the analysis, in the form of trends and memes. Furthermore, while she mentioned being often in "teacher mode", her delivery in many posts remains informal.
A similar contrast can be seen with Natasha. While in the interview she referred to humor as being mostly absent in her communication style, humoristic content reappears several times in her posts.

5.8. Conclusion

These case studies show that archaeological science communication on social media does not follow a linear path, but rather spans a wide spectrum of different communication practices. These approaches are related to social media marketing and influencer practices, while at the same time

being shaped by the original ideas of the archaeo-influencers and by more traditional communication modes.

The effectiveness of this communication (understood in terms of engagement metrics and interactions with the audience) is collectively expressed by the case studies through repeatable formats, visual clarity (camera presence, visual aids, subtitles), and strategies that reduce the distance between expert and public (an appropriate tone of voice, narratives, and emotional framing depending on the context). Credibility, at the center of the trust relationship between archaeo-influencers and their followers, is built over time and not always explicitly expressed.

Thanks to the interviews, it is possible to interpret these patterns as intentional strategies implemented by the archaeo-influencers, and to see how these are affected by platform constraints, professional limitations, and personal ethics.

In the next chapter, these results are interpreted in light of the theoretical frameworks provided in Chapter 3, providing the base for a broader discussion on the effectiveness, credibility, and ethics of archaeological science communication on social media.

6. Discussion

This chapter discusses the interpretation of the data obtained from the analysis of the case studies through the theoretical concepts provided in Chapter 3. With this discussion, I aim to synthesize the main patterns observed on social media communication practices regarding archaeological science communication and form the base for the final answer of my research questions in the last chapter.

6.1. Influencer-style practices in archaeological science communication on social media

In Chapter 2 we have seen how SMIs are characterised as self-branded micro-celebrities who attract attention and cultivate an authentic personal image, thus being able to reach and connect with a vast public through short-form content on social media platforms. Often SMIs are also associated with marketing and consumer outreach for companies.

With the analysis presented in Chapter 5, we can see how a selected group of content creators that communicates about archaeology on social media (labelled in this thesis "archaeo-influencers") follows some of the aforementioned characteristics of SMIs. These individuals have achieved a great following, and have developed a recognisable online identity and a personal communication style, with their frequent posts and interactions with their audiences. The marketing component here is only reflected in the sense of communication, apart from the content monetization and institutional collaborations of some of the case studies.

Practically, the influencer-style that these archaeology content creators adopt is observable in the form of repeatable formats, a constant presence on camera, self-disclosure, and a coherent tone of voice. Information is condensed and delivered through accessible and engaging content, mostly in the form of short videos. Recurrent communication practices include, but not limited to, the use of simple and conversational language, visual aids (combining images, videos, sounds, animations and subtitles), narrative framing (storytelling and hooks to capture the attention of the viewers), emotional framing (humor, passion for archaeology, humanization of the past), content favoured by platform algorithms (i.e. trends and popular audios), and a diversification of the platforms used (for different kinds of content and to maximise reach).

It is important to stress the fact that these communication practices are highly personalised, as each individual adapts them in different ways, according to their own personality, preferences, and background. Some notable examples of personalised practices are museum collaborations by Natasha, dedicated posts as answer to comments by Annelise, a recurring video series by Raven and Tenninger, trends and emotional drive by Tenninger, and the use of memes by David.

To better define and understand these communication practices, it is important to situate them within the science communication models illustrated in Chapter 3. Overall, the observed content follows the deficit model, consisting in educational posts in which the content creator delivers the information to the public (although this does not usually happen in a sterile way, but is often done with engagement in mind). At the same time, communication on social media platforms also belongs to the dialogue and participation models. Comment interactions are the main dialogic element of social media, and often shape the content produced by creators. The participation model is enacted by the possibility of

followers to form a community and interact between each other in the comment section of posts. However, the main element of the participation model here is, as seen in the case studies, the fact that archaeologists with completely different backgrounds have had the possibility of communicating about archaeology on their own terms, without needing to be associated with an official institution or to go through standard communication channels (television, radio or newspaper). Therefore, following Trench (2008), all three science communication models coexist together in the context of social media, and their use varies according to the situation.

In the context of public archaeology, the other communication model reflected by archaeo-influencers is Holtorf's (2007) public relations model (see Chapter 3). Because of the nature of social media and influencer-style communication, the archaeo-influencer's practices can be understood in the sense of marketing and consumption of archaeology. Although none of the case studies explicitly described their communication in marketing terms, we can see how their content is framed and "packaged" to reach a vast audience, be consumed and enjoyed. Archaeology is thus branded, where branding is understood as linking specific qualities, values, and a personality to a product, to make it seem more "human" and relatable to consumers (see Chapter 2).
While a few archaeo-influencers make a living out of the content they produce, it does not imply that archaeology becomes a mere commercial product, but rather communicative modes resemble marketing strategies, with the end goal of making archaeology accessible, popular, recognisable, and engaging.

Based on these observations, I refine and complete the definition of archaeo-influencers first mentioned in Chapter 2: archaeo-influencers are archaeologists who perform archaeological science communication on social media towards a wide audience, through the development of a recognisable online identity and communication style, and by packaging archaeological knowledge into accessible and engaging short-form content.

6.2. Interpreting effectiveness in practice

The effectiveness of the archaeo-influencers' communication can be understood in two ways. First, it can be measured quantitatively, by looking at metrics like numbers of followers, likes, comments, and views. The engagement rate is another metric that can be used to check content consumption through likes and comments, although it is not directly visible and needs to be calculated. The problem with these quantitative metrics is that they do not reflect the quality of the interactions with the public. If a post has thousands of views and a high engagement rate it means that it has reached many people and has had many interactions, but it does not necessarily reflect effective communication if the response is mainly negative. Negative engagement is not always bad, as it still boosts engagement in favour of the algorithm, and it can lead to constructive discussions and debates. However, it can be problematic when comments contain insults, harassment, racism and misogyny.

Often, archaeo-influencers themselves do not pay attention to metrics, apart from those cases in which content is monetized and a high views count corresponds to higher revenue. Instead, they determine whether their communication is effective by the quality of the interactions with their followers. This is unfortunately difficult to measure in a systematic way, as engagement quality depends on the context, and can range from support and curiosity to debate and hostility.

The data from the case studies suggests a set of communication practices that can be determined effective because of their high engagement rate combined with positive interactions. These include: recurring series with episodic content, which are recognizable and have a consistent structure; discussing news, topical issues or controversial topics that attract discussions and debates; using humor, mainly in the form of memes. The use of social media trends can also be at the base of effective communication, but work best when used strategically, keeping archaeological information at the center of attention. On a similar note, the effectiveness of emotional content depends on the topic treated and on who is producing it. In some cases, when creators who do not typically use emotional framing experiment with it, these kinds of posts tend to perform less well. For others, emotional engagement is at the base of their content and seems to be effective for them: is the case of Steph Black (known on Instagram and TikTok as *@stephthearchaeologist*), who originated the "sad girl archaeology/history" trend mentioned in Chapter 5. Although I was unfortunately unable to include her among the case studies, her work is worthy of mention. I will not include in this list the use of narrative framing, since this is, with varying levels, at the base of most of the communication done by archaeo-influencers, and not a standalone practice used by some.

This reflects what we have seen in Chapter 3, where narrative framing is discussed as a central tool in meaning making in science communication, as it turns archaeological information into engaging stories about our past. When considering framing, also the use of emotions can be useful in connecting the public with archaeological knowledge, depending on the topic. In particular, humor proves to be an effective communication strategy, confirming the results coming from previous research on the matter (see Chapter 3).

6.3. Credibility on social media

Credibility is another element of online science communication that is difficult to analytically observe. In the interviews, credibility is described as a trust relationship with the public being built over time through authenticity, clarity and consistency, and less as something coming from academic status. This distinction is more apparent in the overall case studies analysis, where credibility can be observed through implicit and explicit clues. The former are harder to analyse systematically, since they are embedded in things like tone of voice and years of presence on social media as a point of reference for archaeology. Explicit cues, instead, are easier to identify thanks to reference to credentials, institutional collaborations, or source citation, although appearing less often.

In Chapter 3, I discussed the study from Zhang and Lu (2023) which compared social media content posted by scientists and influencers and observed the reaction of the public. Their results suggest that scientists tend to be perceived as more expert and authentic (thus eliciting stronger PSI and information-seeking intentions), while influencers encourage prosocial intentions and thanks to their PSD evoke further PSI (which in turn contributes to a higher perception of authenticity). In this perspective, the case studies analysed in this thesis appear as an hybrid position that combines the advantages of both approaches. The archaeo-influencers draw on their academic and professional background as archaeologists, while being highly skilled in the use of social media and adopting influencer-style self-disclosure, self-branding, and other communication practices.

However, I must note that I cannot systematically measure the actual effect of archaeo-influencers' expertise, authenticity, and self-disclosure on their public in the same way that Zhang and Lu (2023)

did, as it would require a different research design focused on audience response. Therefore, the connections that I am drawing here remain provisional interpretations.

Another parallel can be drawn between the archaeo-influencers and the scientists interviewed by Zhang (2025; see Chapter 3), where in both cases authenticity is the most important element to build trust and credibility; moreover, also storytelling, humor, and self-disclosure are common features. However, contrary to what observed by Zhang (2025), the archaeo-influencers rarely feel like they need to perform a certain version of themselves to appease their public, and appear less concerned about micro-celebrity dynamics. Furthermore, another difference regards the perception of social media communication by peers. While the interviewees in Zhang (2025) reported a discredit towards their presence on social media by their fellow academics, the archaeo-influencers did not mention any negative perception by their colleagues (both academic and professional); on the contrary, this was generally positive, or neutral at worse (although some cases expressed a personal fear of being considered under-qualified, which is not reflected in reality).

6.4. Ethical tensions of archaeo-influencers and social media

There are two levels of ethical tensions that arise when discussing influencer-style communication practices in archaeological science communication. The first concerns ethics of the actual communication practices I have been discussing, while the second comprehends the broader ethical implications of practising science communication on social media platforms that are essentially tied to market logics.

When considering ethical issues in influencer-style communication practices, the data from the case studies align with what highlighted in the literature in Chapter 2 and 3.
A first concern regards the discussion of specific topics that can be particularly sensitive for the public, thus requiring additional care regarding format and tone of voice implemented. Human remains are the most prominent example mentioned in the interviews, which is consistent with the broader debate on the display of human remains in public spaces (Jenkins, 2010). Different members of the public might find the vision of human remains insensitive, so it would be advisable to include a disclaimer when it is necessary to show them. Other sensitive topics include contested heritage, colonial history, sites at risk of looting, or other controversial matters whose presentation on social media might enhance harm if not dealt with caution.
The second most encountered issue by archaeo-influencers was community moderation, where the free expression of the audience needs to be balanced with individual safety and harm prevention. Being visible in an online space makes you vulnerable to personal attacks regarding your statements, beliefs, or profession, which can quickly escalate into hate speech and threats. Similarly to what observed by Zhang (2025), the majority of the harmful comments to archaeo-influencers are directed towards women, with racism being another theme seen in negative interactions. These can also be aimed towards other users. It is therefore important for content creators to ensure a safe space where people can politely exchange and discuss ideas, and to set boundaries when needed, even if it involves reducing PSI. This includes monitoring misinformation, which can often require considerable effort. This raises questions about responsibility and the limits of dialogue in practice.
Another ethical issue concerns oversimplification and sensationalism. This arises not only from the need to make information digestible and appealing for a wide audience, but also from the need of

producing content that performs well for the algorithm, as in the case of trends and more simplistic content in general. Especially on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, short-form content is the preferred communication medium, prioritising captivating hooks and fast-paced, dramatic speeches. Simplification is not unethical per se, but it needs constant attention to preserve information from distortion.

Finally, the monetization of educational content could be viewed by some as an ethical tension. If some individuals further specialise as science communicators and make that their full-time profession, I do not consider this inherently problematic. What rather matters ethically is being transparent about which content is monetized, and about paid sponsorships and advertisements.

Apart from these practical issues, there are broader ethical concerns related to the very use of social media for archaeological science communication to consider.

The first has to do with the categorization of archaeo-influencers. A recurring stigma both in the literature and in the interviews is the association of the word influencer with marketing, brands, and a carefully constructed persona. When thinking of a classic SMI, it is easy to imagine a celebrity with hundreds of thousands, if not millions of followers, communicating through advertisements and lifestyle content. As we have seen in Chapter 2, this is reflected by the response of Mojarad (2017) to Galetti and Costa-Pereira (2017), in which she criticised the idea of relying on SMIs for science communication because of their inexperience on communicating complex topics, ending with a higher risk of spreading misinformation. A similar perception was recorded in the interviews, where archaeo-influencers distanced themselves from the term "influencer", as these were associated with crafted personas who sell products rather than sharing knowledge. This is where the ethical tension lies: while archaeo-influencers rely on many of the same strategies and communication practices of SMIs, they resist the identity of the latter. It is in this context that I support the idea of removing any negative moral connotations from the label "influencer", as they could easily be transferred to the term "archaeo-influencer".

SMIs are, in the practical sense of the term, individuals who acquire notoriety on social media through practices like self-branding, authenticity display and audience connection (see Chapter 2). If we focus on strategic communication, self-branding, monetization and market logics as the main ethical issues with SMIs, then also other actors performing science communication might be susceptible to the same critique. As shown by Weingart and Guenther (2016), all science communication practitioners have personal interests behind their work: governments and politicians pursue public support and legitimacy, press officers aim for institutional promotion, scientists self-promote themselves and their research to gain notoriety and secure funds, science journalists often follow the need of selling stories; and all of them can conduct their communication on social media (see Chapter 3). These dynamics, that we have so far ascribed to SMIs and archaeo-influencers, appear to broadly characterise the way science is communicated in today's society. To me, this suggests that what feels ethically concerning is not just using influencer-style practices for science communication, but the wider market logics that shape how research is funded and made visible (see Weingart & Guenther, 2016; see Chapter 1).

Seen under this lens, the need to "sell" archaeology is not a novelty introduced by social media, but rather a consequence of the economic system we live in. Again, we have seen with Holtorf (2007) that branding and marketing of archaeology have been in use for quite some time (see Chapter 3). In this perspective, the moral question that arises is whether archaeology, as an academic discipline, can avoid engaging in forms of communication that resemble marketing strategies. In an ideal scenario,

I would agree that this is not how archaeology should be conducted or communicated. However, I argue that these market dynamics are out of our direct control. Ignoring them would mean overlooking how visibility and support for research are currently produced. The use of social media (in particular, influencer-style communication) is not the threshold beyond which archaeologists move from academic neutrality to the world of marketing and competition. Certainly, social media, with its market logics, intensifies this phenomenon and makes it more visible. This raises a difficult question: should archaeologists refuse to engage in these dynamics, or work within them to show and protect the value of archaeology (see Chapter 1)? While I do not have a definite answer to this, I argue that as long as tools like social media exist, we should take advantage of them and use them critically, without necessarily reinforcing negative marketing dynamics. The aim would be that of treating marketing as a communication strategy, not as a way to sell off archaeology in exchange for worthless popularity.

6.5. Further implications for archaeological science communication on social media

Building from the paragraph before, I present some further implications for archaeological science communication on social media. This thesis presented innovative ways of conducting archaeological science communication online, showing the example of the archaeo-influencers. That said, archaeologists that wish to communicate on social media do not need to solely rely on SMIs to communicate for them, but they can rather follow the example of their communication practices and adapt them to their own needs. With this, I also do not intend to imply that all archaeological science communication has to be on social media, nor that every archaeologist should become a content creator. As evidenced by the analysis of the case studies, this kind of communication requires time and skills that often archaeologists (especially in the case of full-time researchers) lack. Institutions (e.g., universities and research institutions) could offer resources and training to support researchers in this communication endeavour, that go beyond the classic idea of handing information to be communicated to the PR office of that institution. But when this is lacking, active collaboration between archaeologists and archaeo-influencers (as also proposed by them in the interviews) could prove valuable, as the latter combine their experience as communicators with their archaeological background, overcoming the problem presented by Mojarad (2017) and Fonseca et al. (2024) on the collaboration with SMIs.

As we have seen in Chapter 1, social media are increasingly becoming the main source of information for many people. Science communication on social media happens regardless of who practices it, whether is a trained individual or not. If archaeologists are not present on these online platforms, they leave the space for others to tell the story of our human past. Pseudoarchaeological narratives can easily become predominant through the same dynamics and communication practices discussed above. Therefore, archaeologists face the choice of whether to participate in science communication on social media and become a trusted voice for archaeology online.

7. Conclusion

In this thesis, I explored a phenomenon that is becoming increasingly visible in contemporary public archaeology: archaeologists who communicate on social media in a way that partly resemble SMIs practices, managing to reach large audiences through short-form content. These are defined here as "archaeo-influencers". In particular, I examined the impact that this communication style can have on the effectiveness, credibility, and ethics of archaeological science communication. Building on the background information and the theoretical frameworks, I applied a mixed-method approach, combining a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Instagram content of 5 selected archaeo-influencers, together with semi-structured interviews. The results of my research are reported below in the answers to the main research question and the sub-questions posed in the introduction.

- *What impact does "influencer-style" social media communication practices have on the effectiveness, credibility, and ethics of archaeological science communication performed by archaeologists?*

Overall, I argue that influencer-style practices can strengthen the effectiveness of archaeological science communication, by increasing the accessibility, visibility and engagement of archaeological knowledge. At the same time, it is difficult to exactly define effectiveness, since the quantitative metrics used to determine how much content is seen and reacted to do not provide information about the quality of these interactions. An overall tentative qualitative observation of the comments was done to assess a first judgement on the nature of the reactions, but for more accurate results a more in-depth qualitative engagement analysis will be needed in the future.

In terms of credibility, the data suggests that this is not simply obtained by presenting one's academic titles. This is rather built on a trust relationship that develops over time through authenticity and consistency, while still sporadically communicating expertise in a more explicit way. The display of authenticity typical of SMIs (and consequently of archaeo-influencers) plays an important role in PSI and trust. At the same time, the work of the selected archaeo-influencers does not seem to undermine their credibility in the eyes of other archaeologists.

Regarding ethics, influencer-style communication practices amplifies some issues that already exist in science communication and public archaeology. On a practical level, these include discussing sensitive topics like human remains, the responsibility of managing community interactions, the risks of harassment, and the need to avoid oversimplification and sensationalism. On a broader level, there is an ethical tension with the use of the label "influencer", as it is opposed because of its negative connotations, although the adoption (unintentional or deliberate) of its communication practices has proven effective for the case studies. Another broader ethical concern regards the blurring of the line separating academia and research from marketing as a consequence of the use of social media and influencer-style practices for science communication.

- *What are the positive aspects of adopting social media in archaeological science communication, and what are its negative aspects?*

The main positive aspects that derive from the use of social media platforms are accessibility and visibility. Online social networks are a space where archaeological information can circulate freely, allowing for dialogue and participation beyond traditional communication channels and academic circles. For this, they enable multi-vocality, giving the possibility to non-experts, independent researchers, and marginalized groups to share their perspectives.

On the other side, the negative aspects include the easy spread of misinformation and pseudoarchaeology, hate speech and direct threats to archaeologists, constraints created by platform algorithms (which tends to prefer simpler, "trendier" content), unequal access to the internet, the time and efforts needed to manage an account, and user privacy issues.

- *What are the advantages of archaeologists engaging directly with the public on social media, and what are their challenges?*

Some of the advantages that archaeologists can expect from engaging in social media communication are becoming points of reference for archaeological knowledge, showing an authentic face of archaeology that differs from mainstream media representations, building a community interested in their field, showcasing their personal research and receive support, and actively participating in shaping how archaeology is discussed and understood online.

There are, however, considerable challenges to this. Not all archaeologists have the time and the training to manage one or multiple social media accounts and actively produce good quality content. Solutions include institutional support and collaboration with archaeo-influencers, which still would require additional work on top of their regular job. Moreover, dealing with harassment and other ethical concerns can be emotionally straining.

- *What are the "influencer-style" communication practices that characterise archaeological science communication on social media?*

This is a complete list of all the influencer-style communication practices discussed in this thesis, that other archaeologists can adopt and implement in their own outreach on social media: short-form content (i.e, short vertical videos ranging from a few seconds to 2-3 minutes, and pictures slideshows) to be posted preferably on multiple platforms, on-camera presence, authentic self-presentation (with some degree of self-branding), visual clarity (good quality videos, images, animations, and subtitles), simple and engaging tone of voice, repeatable formats and video-series, trends and popular audios (to boost engagement), narrative framing (hooks, storytelling, and humanizing the past), emotional framing (use of humor, especially in memes, and sadness), institutional collaborations, personal self-disclosure, interactions with the public through comments, audience-led content creation, and monetization and sponsorship (when appropriate). It is important to stress that all of these practices can be personalized according to one's background, preferences and professional constraints. The result is a wide spectrum of influencer-style communication practices, rather than a single rigid model.

7.1. Limitations and suggestions for further research

The main limitations of this thesis are tied to the methodology implemented, and are therefore listed in Chapter 4. An additional constraint regards the lack of audience-focused data. The analysis mainly interested archaeo-influencers and their communication, and was partly shaped by their own reflections from the interviews. Observations on the reactions of the public were limited to a superficial qualitative examination of comments. This means that it is not possible to draw conclusions on the effect of archaeo-influencers' communication on their followers, specifically regarding learning outcomes, trust, PSI, information-seeking intentions and prosocial intentions.

Based on these limitations, I now propose a series of suggestions for further research in the use of social media for archaeological science communication.

As I just mentioned, there is a need to investigate the actual public's perception of archaeo-influencers and the effect of their communications, through surveys and experiments following the example of Zhang and Lu (2023) and related SMM research.

On a similar note, it would be interesting to systematically research the perception that other archaeologists (especially within academia) might have of the archaeo-influencers, thus not solely relying on the latter's personal experience as I have done in this thesis.

Further studies could also expand the number of content creators analysed, and comparatively look at other platforms besides Instagram (like TikTok, YouTube, Facebook and X) to check any differences in communication practices and public engagement.

Apart from archaeo-influencers, I would suggest further documentation of other actors performing archaeological science communication on social media, mainly research projects and institutional accounts. This would make it possible to identify any similarities with archaeo-influencers, understand what works best for their communication, and develop effectiveness benchmarks that relate to their outreach aims.

Moving on to a broader level of future research, it would be useful to conduct an up-to-date investigation of public trust in archaeologists, and on how archaeological information is encountered and consumed, similarly to the surveys discussed in Chapter 1 and 2. This would allow us to understand how archaeologists are considered in today's society, how widespread pseudoarchaeology really is, and understand how to better communicate with the public.

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Appendix A

Quantitative and qualitative analysis sheets

- Quantitative analysis sheet (account)
  - General data
    - account
    - retrieval date
    - page creation date
  - Quantitative metrics
    - posts number
    - followers number
    - following number
    - total likes number (relevant last 15 posts)
    - total comments number (relevant last 15 posts)
    - mean engagement rate
  - Notes
    - measurement period
    - posts frequency
    - additional notes
  - General analysis
    - content details
    - interactions and engagement
    - most-engaged content typology

- Quantitative and qualitative analysis sheet (relevant last 15 posts)
  - Date
  - Type
    - reel
    - carousel
    - picture
  - Retrieval date
  - Content
  - Likes
  - Comments
  - Engagement rate
  - Views (reels only)
  - Tone of voice
    - academic: technical and rigorous insights
    - informative: clear and direct
    - promotional: focused on attracting attention and participation
    - narrative: engaging and well-told

- informal: casual and conversational
- humorous: relies on humor
- emotional: relies on emotional engagement (sadness, malincholy, anger…)
  - Narrative and emotional elements
  - Visual quality
    - photos/videos/graphics
    - visual style (site/artefacts images, reconstructions, on-screen texts, face-to-camera, animations, audio…)
    - platform features (captions, subtitles, trend audio…)
  - Interactions with the public
    - invitation to reactions (questions, calls to like/comment/share/follow)
    - answers to comments
    - visible patterns in comments (curiosity, debate, hostility, support, amusement…)
  - Trust and credibility
    - reference to credentials, experiences, sources, methods…
    - uncertainty, nuance, reflexivity
    - self-representation (expert, fan, enthusiast…)
  - Additional notes/remarks

Appendix B

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the posts

Case study 1: @tash_archaeo

Post 1

- Date: 17/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: Show and description of a Buddhist reliquary, part of an exhibition on Ancient India at the British Museum.
- Likes: 135
- Comments: 4
- Engagement rate: 0.32%
- Views: 2,710
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, reflecting documentary narration. Promotional at the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: narrative around the past life of the artefact.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter, of the artefact and its case, with additional images (stupa) to explain the artefact's context. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean but is too low. The post uses a muted trending audio, likely added to boost visibility.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted in the comment section to go visit the artefact before it is too late. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as knowledgeable and professional.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel ends with a promotion of the exhibition on Ancient India at the British Museum.

Post 2

- Date: 29/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: Show and description of different Viking hoards, part of the exhibition "Treasure: History Unearthed" at the Museum of Liverpool.
- Likes: 220
- Comments: 8
- Engagement rate: 0.52%
- Views: 4,442
- Tone of voice: informative, with hints of informality (perceived as the curator expresses personal, subjective opinions). Promotional at the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: absent due to the purely informative tone.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter, of the artefacts and their case, with additional images (artefacts' close ups and maps) to explain the artefact's context. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and excitement about the exhibition.
- Trust and credibility: the artefacts are explained by the curator of the collection. The post is made in collaboration with the Museum of Liverpool.
- Additional notes/remarks: the creator is only present at the beginning and end of the reel, letting the curator talk about the artefacts. The reel ends with a promotion of the exhibition "Treasure: History Unearthed" at the Museum of Liverpool.

Post 3

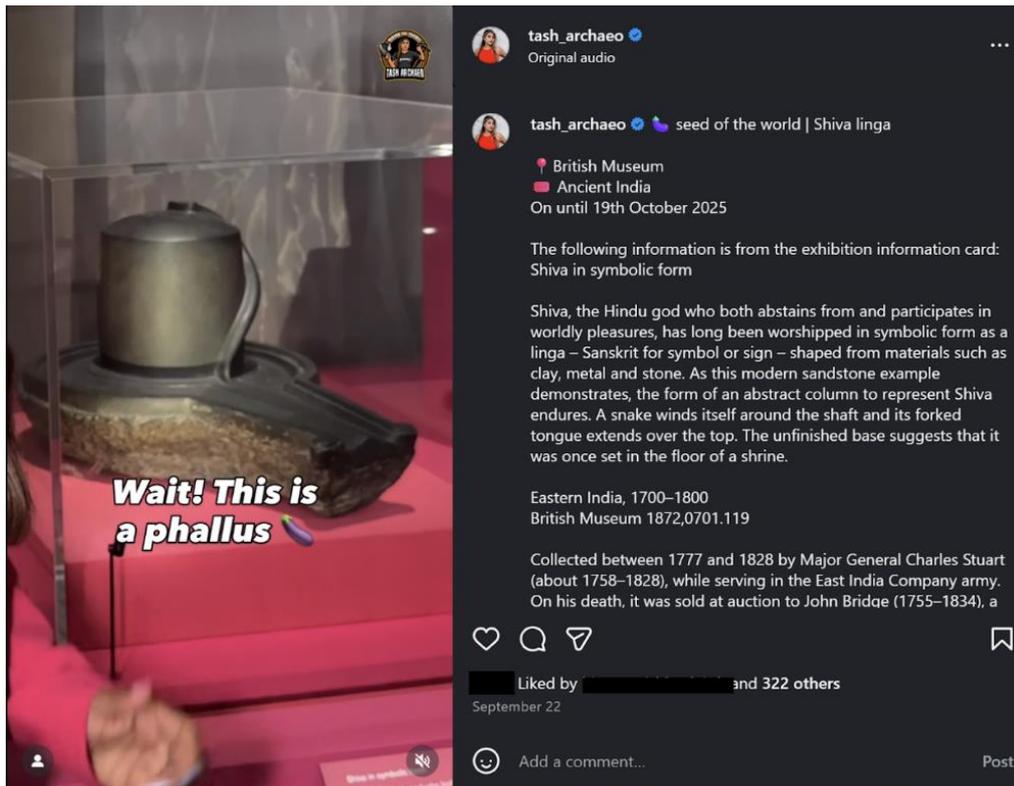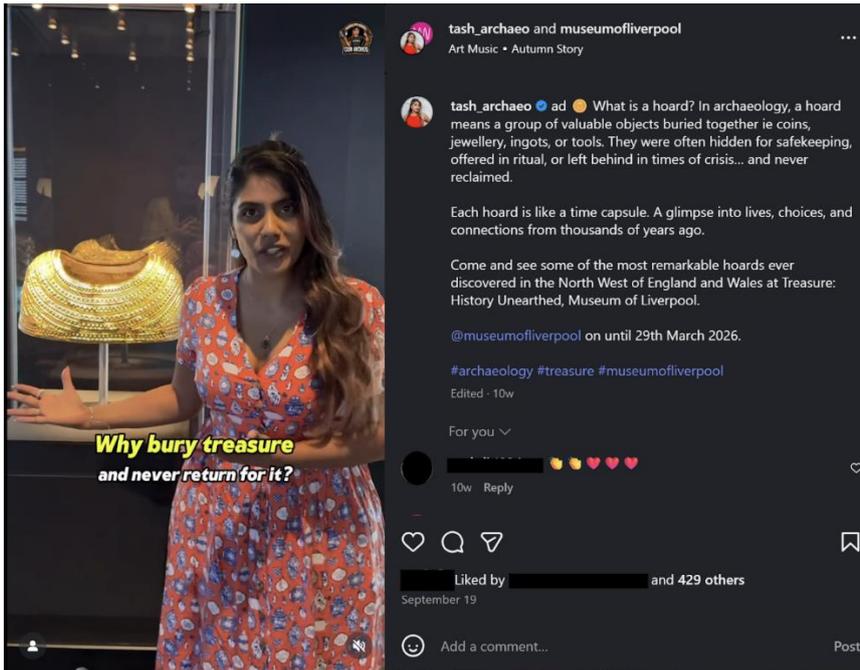- Date: 22/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: Show and description of a Shiva linga, part of an exhibition on Ancient India at the British Museum.
- Likes: 323
- Comments: 9
- Engagement rate: 0.77%
- Views: 10,700
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, reflecting documentary narration.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on the history and meanings of the artefact, starting with an intriguing hook.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter, of the artefact and its case, with additional images (statue of Shiva) to explain the artefact's context. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with background ambience noise (reminiscent of a Hindu temple).
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted in the comment section to go visit the artefact before it is too late. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as knowledgeable and professional. Moreover, extra information from the exhibition information card is pasted in the post's caption.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 4

Date: 19/09/2025
Type: Reel
Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
Content: Explanation of what hoards are in archaeology and how they vary through time, using artefacts exhibited at the exhibition "Treasure: History Unearthed" at the Museum of Liverpool.
Likes: 430
Comments: 8
Engagement rate: 1.01%
Views: 9,230
Tone of voice: informative and narrative, reflecting documentary narration. Promotional at the end.
Narrative and emotional elements: absent, apart from the use of an intriguing hook at the start, and a metaphor used to describe hoards.
Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter, of the artefacts and their case, with additional images (artefacts' close ups and maps) to explain the artefact's context. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (Instagram audio).
Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted in the caption to go visit the artefacts. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as knowledgeable and professional. The post is made in collaboration with the Museum of Liverpool.
Additional notes/remarks: the reel ends with a promotion of the exhibition "Treasure: History Unearthed" at the Museum of Liverpool.

Post 5

- Date: 12/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: Opening speech for the exhibition "Treasure: History Unearthed" at the Museum of Liverpool.
- Likes: 146
- Comments: 14
- Engagement rate: 0.37%
- Views: 4,400
- Tone of voice: narrative, emotional, and humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: the speech is given by reading a poem written by the creator. This narrates the exhibition and its artefacts using storytelling and emotional appeal, with a hint of humor at the end.
- Visual quality: Clear video of the creator reading the poem. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is support and appreciation for the poem.
- Trust and credibility: the post is made in collaboration with the Museum of Liverpool.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 6

- Date: 11/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: Show and description of Buddhist iconography, part of an exhibition on Ancient India at the British Museum.
- Likes: 2,092
- Comments: 92
- Engagement rate: 5.06%
- Views: 103,000
- Tone of voice: informative, narrative, and with hints of informality (perceived as a conversation between the creator and the curator). Promotional at the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on the history and meanings of the artefact, starting with an intriguing hook. The objects are used to tell the story of the evolution of Buddhist iconography.
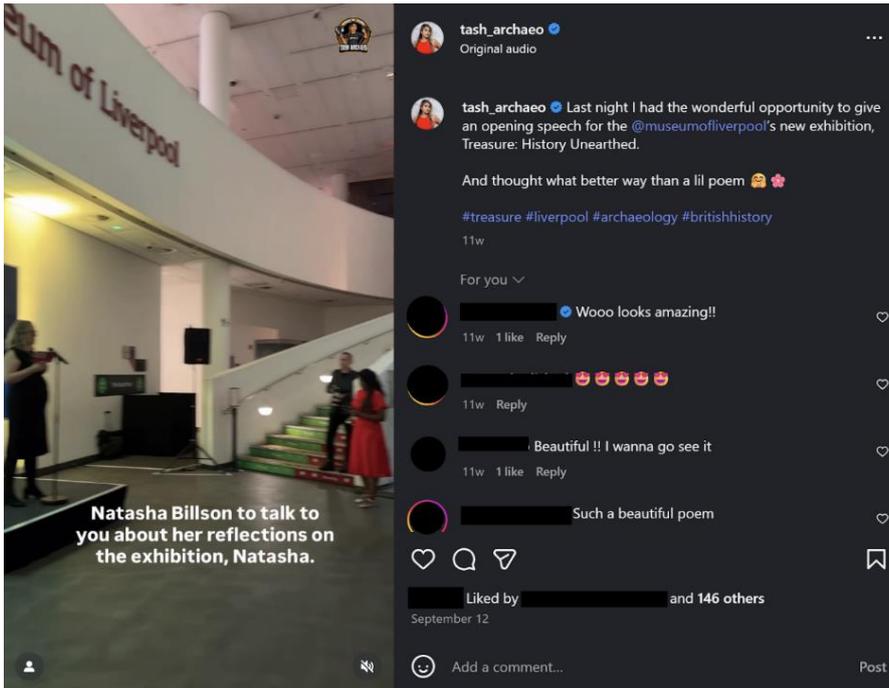- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenters, of the artefacts and their case, with additional images (artefacts' close-ups) to explain the artefact's context. Animations bring the objects to full screen, and highlight specific features. Clear subtitles with bolded key words and emojis. The audio is clean, with traditional Indian music in the background and sound effects that accompany the animations.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. One comment about information on the exhibition is answered. Some comments express curiosity and support, but most of them show debate and hostility towards the British Museum, asking for the artefacts to be returned to India.
- Trust and credibility: the artefacts are explained by the curator of the exhibition. The post is made in collaboration with the British Museum.
- Additional notes/remarks: the creator lets the curator talk about the artefacts. The reel ends with a promotion of the exhibition on Ancient India at the British Museum.

Post 7

- Date: 21/08/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: Show and description of the statue of the lion of Knidos at the British Museum.
- Likes: 6,539
- Comments: 548
- Engagement rate: 16.44%
- Views: 173,000
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, reflecting documentary narration.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on the history and meanings of the statue, starting with an intriguing hook.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter and of the statue, with additional images (drawings and reconstructions) to explain the statue's context. Animations reconstruct the statue and highlight specific features. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean, with subtle background music and sound effects that accompany the animations.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to go visit the statue. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is debate and hostility towards the British Museum.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as knowledgeable and professional. The post is made in collaboration with the British Museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 8

- Date: 13/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: A meme reel where the creator and the curator on the Ancient India exhibition at the British Museum imitate the position of different statues.
- Likes: 294
- Comments: 8
- Engagement rate: 0.70%
- Views: 7,489
- Tone of voice: humorous
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor is evoked by the playful imitation of the statues.
- Visual quality: Clear videos showing the creator and the curator. The on-screen text explains the context of the video. A smaller text in the upper-left corner of the screen shows the name of the exhibition and the location. A popular trending song is used for the audio.
- Interactions with the public: the creator asks in the comments if her followers have seen the exhibition yet. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: The post is made in collaboration with Dr Sushma Jansari (exhibition curator).
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 9

- Date: 08/08/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: tour of the Chiltern Open Air Museum.
- Likes: 228
- Comments: 9
- Engagement rate: 0.54%
- Views: 4,389
- Tone of voice: informal and promotional, with a hint of humor.
- Narrative and emotional elements: the creator records her reactions of joy and amusement to the museum exhibitions.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator and the museum exhibitions. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (Instagram audio).
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to go visit the museum. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as a simple visitor to the museum. The post is made in collaboration with the Chiltern Open Air Museum.
- Additional notes/remarks: advertisement for the Chiltern Open Air Museum.

Post 10

- Date: 07/08/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content:
- Likes: 4,676
- Comments: 125
- Engagement rate: 2.06%
- Views: 155,000
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, reflecting documentary narration.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on the history and meanings of the artefact.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter and of the statue, with additional images (close-ups, reconstructions and AI images) to explain the statue's context. Animations highlight specific features of the artefact. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean, with background music and sound effects that accompany the animations.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is split between curiosity and support, and debate and hostility towards the British Museum.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as knowledgeable and professional. The post is made in collaboration with the British Museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 11

- Date: 30/07/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: link between a Roman cosmetic tin and the creator's skin care routine.
- Likes: 147
- Comments: 7
- Engagement rate: 0.35%
- Views: 7,445
- Tone of voice: informal, promotional and emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: emotional connection with the past is established as the creator relates her skincare to a Roman individual who did the same 2,000 years ago.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator and the product used, with additional image of the mentioned artefact. Clear on-screen text explains the content of the video.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answered two comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: information on the artefact and the company that excavated it is provided in the post's caption.
- Additional notes/remarks: contains promotional content, but it is not explicitly marked as an advertisement.

Post 12

- Date: 27/07/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: trend-based reel that makes fun of some stereotypes tied to archaeologists in a museum.
- Likes: 12,287
- Comments: 43
- Engagement rate: 28.60%
- Views: 147,000
- Tone of voice: humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor is evoked by making fun of some cliches of archaeologists and museums.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator and b-roll of the museum. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (Instagram trending audio).
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answered one comment. The public finds the content funny and relatable. One comment is negative, comparing archaeologists to thieves.
- Trust and credibility: as part of the trend, the creator starts every sentence with "I'm an archaeologist".
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 13

- Date: 25/07/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: short tour and promotion for the Chiltern Open Air Museum.
- Likes: 137
- Comments: 7
- Engagement rate: 0.33%
- Views: 2,811
- Tone of voice: narrative and promotional
- Narrative and emotional elements: the on-screen text used (same as the caption) is evocative: "Stepping back in time through 2,000 years of British History. Every doorway, different century. Every wall, a story".
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator walking through the museum exhibitions. Clear on-screen text explaining the content. A popular Instagram trending audio is used.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to visit the museum in the caption. The creator positively answered one comment. The public's main reaction is amusement and support.
- Trust and credibility: different bodies tagged, such as the Chiltern Open Air Museum and the Heritage Fund.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 14

- Date: 24/07/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: different buildings at the Chiltern Open Air Museum and how these emotionally moved the creator.
- Likes: 257
- Comments: 4
- Engagement rate: 0.60%
- Tone of voice: informative, narrative and emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: each building is presented with its own story and emotions are evoked to make the past feel real and relatable.
- Visual quality: good quality pictures of the buildings. Clear on-screen text for every picture.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to interactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator introduces herself as an archaeologist in the last slide.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 15

- Date: 23/07/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 03/12/2025
- Content: show and description of the Borradaile Oliphant.
- Likes: 1,786
- Comments: 49
- Engagement rate: 4.25%
- Views: 82,100
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, reflecting documentary narration.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on the history and meanings of the artefact, starting with an intriguing hook.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the presenter and of the artefact, with additional images (close-ups and AI images) to explain the statue's context. Animations highlight specific features. Clear subtitles with bolded key words. The audio is clean, with subtle background music and sound effects that accompany the animations.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's reaction is split between curiosity and amusement, and critiques over the veridicity of the information provided.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows herself as knowledgeable and professional. The post is made in collaboration with the British Museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Case study 2: @digitwithraven

Post 1

- Date: 23/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Meroe. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 2,898
- Comments: 56
- Engagement rate: 6.62%
- Views: 34,000
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent apart from the intriguing hook at the start.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (Instagram trending audio).
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support, with a few comments criticising some of the presented information.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 2

- Date: 20/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: reassessment of Schliemann excavations at Troy.
- Likes: 318
- Comments: 25
- Engagement rate: 0.76%
- Views: 7,377
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling of the excavations at Troy.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator filming herself on site (Troy). Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (Instagram trending audio).
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. No invitations to reactions. Most of the comments are answered positively. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support, with some debate present.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows what discussed in the video on site.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 3

- Date: 18/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Cahokia. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 10,800
- Comments: 222
- Engagement rate: 24.71%
- Views: 132,000
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent apart from the intriguing hook at the start.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (Instagram trending audio).
- Interactions with the public: The public is exhorted to like and follow, and asked about suggestions for the next video in the series. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support, and debate.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 4

- Date: 15/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: link between the creator's experience on the excavation at Troy with the novel *The Song of Achilles*.
- Likes: 386
- Comments: 15
- Engagement rate: 0.89%
- Views: 7,300
- Tone of voice: narrative and emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: personal, e
- motional narrative that links Troy's past and mythology with present day excavations, with a reflection on the creator's fieldwork experience.
- Visual quality: Clear video of the site of Troy. On-screen text presenting the context of the reel, linking visuals and audio. The audio is clean, with background music and a recorded voice (possibly the audiobook of the mentioned novel).
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reaction. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator's personal experience on the excavation at Troy are mentioned in the caption and comments of the post.
- Additional notes/remarks: More information and context is present in the caption of the post.
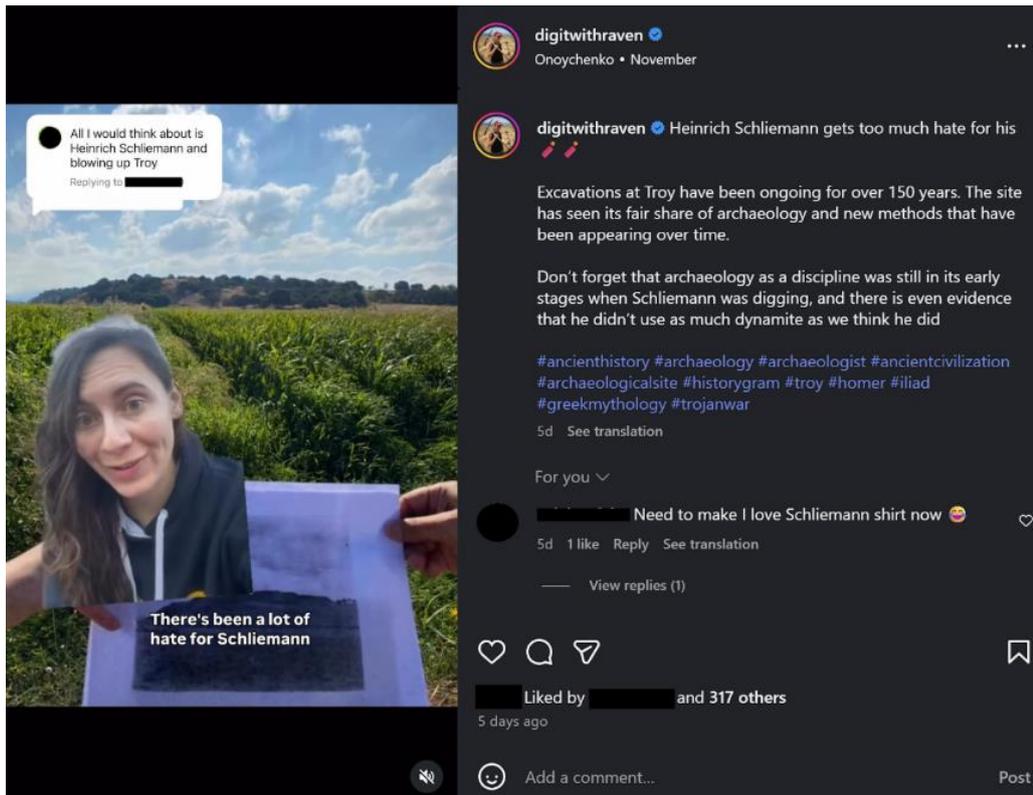
Post 5

- Date: 9/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Akrotiri. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 7,568
- Comments: 67
- Engagement rate: 17.11%
- Views: 74,600
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent apart from the intriguing hook at the start, and the conclusion.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow. The creator positively answers a few comments, including one in which she is corrected by an archaeologist working on the site. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support, with some debate and misinformation (Atlantis) present.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 6

- Date: 2/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Tikal. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 937
- Comments: 13
- Engagement rate: 2.13%
- Views: 12,600
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: intriguing hook at the start, storytelling of the site's discovery, and conclusion.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music (reminiscent of traditional Mayan music).
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: use of the inclusive "we" (e.g. "we haven't excavated") positioning the creator as part of the archaeological community.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 7

- Date: 26/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Angkor Wat. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 3,893
- Comments: 114
- Engagement rate: 8.98%
- Views: 40,700
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent apart from the intriguing hook at the start.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is asked about suggestions for the next video in the series. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support, with some debate present.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 8

- Date: 21/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: Instagram trend. The creator shows different pictures of herself as a teenager, showing her passion for archaeology.
- Likes: 1,016
- Comments: 37
- Engagement rate: 2.36%
- Views: 26,000
- Tone of voice: humorous and emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor is evoked from the self-deprecating pictures of the creator as a teenager, at the same time showing her long-standing passion for archaeology.
- Visual quality: slideshow of old pictures. On-screen text at the beginning explains the context of the reel. A popular trending song is used for the audio.
- Interactions with the public: the public is asked about their passion for history as teenagers. The creators positively answer most of the comments. The public's main reaction is support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows her long-standing passion for archaeology.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 9

- Date: 19/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Pömmelte. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 6,532
- Comments: 96
- Engagement rate: 14.86%
- Views: 88,500
- Tone of voice: informative and informal, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent apart from the intriguing hook at the start.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creators positively answer a few comments. The main reaction is curiosity and support, with some debate present.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 10

- Date: 15/10/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: pictures of the best Roman sites, according to the creator.
- Likes: 666
- Comments: 59
- Engagement rate: 1.62%
- Tone of voice: informative, emotional and promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: provocation given by the title.
- Visual quality: clear slideshow of pictures of different Roman sites, with their name/location visible.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to comment with their favourite Roman ruins outside of Italy. The creators positively answer a few comments. The public's main reaction is debate and hostility, with some curiosity and support present.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed
- Additional notes/remarks: the first picture of the post presents the characteristic of a "clickbait" title, explained by the additional context in the post's caption ("hot take" by the creator).

Post 11

- Date: 12/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Ingapirca. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 1,029
- Comments: 12
- Engagement rate: 2.33%
- Views: 14,400
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: intriguing hook at the start, together with storytelling of the site's history together with its description.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 12

- Date: 09/10/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: Instagram trend. Pictures of artefacts from Sutton Hoo that emotionally moved the creator.
- Likes: 833
- Comments: 34
- Engagement rate: 1.94%
- Tone of voice: informative, narrative and emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: reflective and personal narrative around the Sutton Hoo artefacts and site that made the creator fall in love with archaeology again, together with the emotional connection created by showing the artefacts in relation with the people behind their discovery.
- Visual quality: clear slideshow of pictures and videos of Sutton Hoo (site and artefacts).
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to visit the site. The creator positively answers most of the comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator tells about her archaeological education in university in relation to the site.
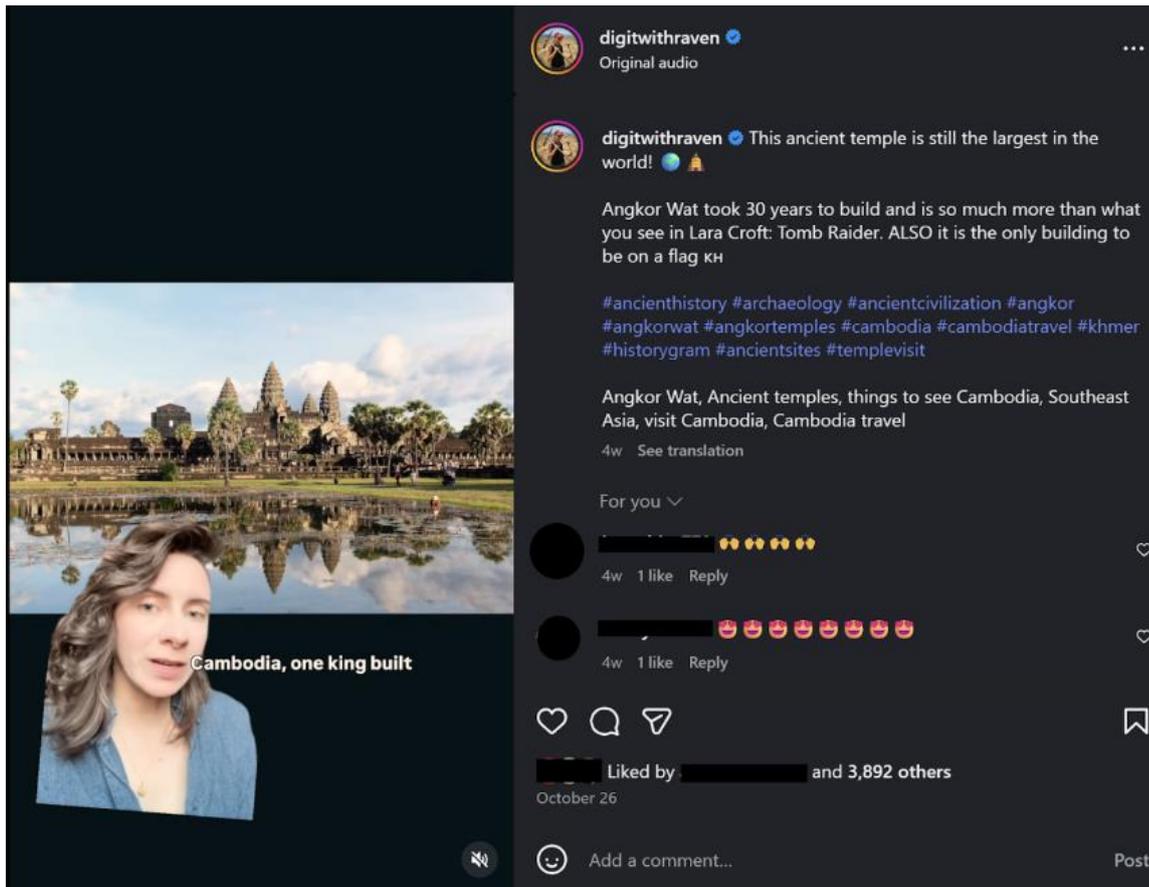- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 13

- Date: 05/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Gunung Padang. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 936
- Comments: 20
- Engagement rate: 2.14%
- Views: 14,400
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent, apart from the intriguing hook at the start, and section where the site's origin is discussed.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to share their thoughts in the comments. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's reaction is a mix of support and debate, with some hostility present.
- Trust and credibility: the creator tells the editorial history of the research paper discussed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 14

- Date: 02/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: meme/trend-based video showing interesting features of a Portuguese archaeological site.
- Likes: 659
- Comments: 8
- Engagement rate: 1.49%
- Views: 19,000
- Tone of voice: informal and humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor is evoked by the creator's personal experience during a visit to an archaeological site.
- Visual quality: video of the creator on site, with an on-screen text explaining the context. A popular trending song is used for the audio.
- Interactions with the public: the public is asked about what excites them the most while visiting an archaeological site. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is amusement and support.
- Trust and credibility: personal experience visiting the archaeological site.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 15

- Date: 28/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 25/11/2025
- Content: show and description of the site of Cliff Palace. Part of the series "Ancient Site Sunday".
- Likes: 14,113
- Comments: 155
- Engagement rate: 31,01%
- Views: 133,300
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent apart from the intriguing hook at the start.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the archaeological site in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to like and follow. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support and debate.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Case study 3: @annelisethearchaeologist

Post 1

- Date: 24/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: tour of the Viking World in Iceland.
- Likes: 264
- Comments: 2
- Engagement rate: 0.45%
- Views: 4,713
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the museum in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answer to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: recall of the creator's personal experience at the museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 2

- Date: 21/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: second part of the video on Viking clothing at the Saga Museum in Iceland.
- Likes: 462
- Comments: 8
- Engagement rate: 0.80%
- Views: 6,928
- Tone of voice: informative, informal, and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on past Viking lifestyles through clothing analysis.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the museum in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answer to comments. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support and debate.
- Trust and credibility: recall of the creator's personal experience at the museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 3

- Date: 21/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: Viking clothing at the Saga Museum in Iceland.
- Likes: 496
- Comments: 9
- Engagement rate: 0.86%
- Views: 6,861
- Tone of voice: informative, informal and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on past Viking lifestyles through clothing analysis.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the museum in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answer to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: recall of the creator's personal experience at the museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 4

- Date: 18/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: tour of the Pylos exhibition at the Getty Villa, focusing on figurines. Part of a series called "Little Guys Through History".
- Likes: 617
- Comments: 2
- Engagement rate: 1.05%
- Views: 9,975
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: informal language (e.g. "adorable little figurines with these cute smooshy faces") is used to describe the artefacts, "humanizing" the objects and making them more relatable.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the museum in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answer to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows some uncertainty over the definition of an artefact.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 5

- Date: 14/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion on some scenes from the upcoming film *The Odyssey*.
- Likes: 7,625
- Comments: 124
- Engagement rate: 13.22%
- Views: 120,000
- Tone of voice: informative and informal, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: the movie scenes discussed are used to talk about Mycenaean archaeology.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the movie scenes in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. No invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator introduces herself as "your friendly neighborhood archaeologist". Moreover, she mentions her own professional experiences in historical reenactments productions.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 6

- Date: 13/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion of up-to-date information on Akhenaten, Atenism and Amarna.
- Likes: 1,140
- Comments: 15
- Engagement rate: 1.97%
- Views: 15,700
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. The public is exhorted to consult the extra resources given at the end of the video. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: emphasis on the importance of updating older knowledge in archaeology, acknowledging previous theories as wrong, and acknowledging uncertainty due to a lack of information. Moreover, resources with additional information on the topic are given at the end of the video.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 7

- Date: 11/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion of the figure of Akhenaten.
- Likes: 4,779
- Comments: 100
- Engagement rate: 8.32%
- Views: 72,400
- Tone of voice: informative, informal, and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling ("humanization") of the life of Akhenaten, with references to modern day politics.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. No invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, debate and hostility.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 8

- Date: 10/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion of the location of the mummy of Nefertiti.
- Likes: 5,899
- Comments: 57
- Engagement rate: 10.16%
- Views: 83,400
- Tone of voice: informative, informal and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling of the mystery on the mummy of Nefertiti.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. No invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support, debate and hostility.
- Trust and credibility: acknowledging uncertainty due to a lack of information. Showing excerpts of a research paper on the topic. Moreover, a resource with additional information on the topic is given.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 9

- Date: 07/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: explanation of the Amarna family tree.
- Likes: 2,617
- Comments: 27
- Engagement rate: 4.51%
- Views: 38,400
- Tone of voice: informative and informal, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: "humanization" of the Amarna family.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. No invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support and debate.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks: a disclaimer about human remains is included at the start.

Post 10

- Date: 04/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion of up-to-date information on Tutankhamun.
- Likes: 8,559
- Comments: 46
- Engagement rate: 14.68%
- Views: 99,500
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to consult the extra resources given at the end of the video. No answers to comments. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support and debate.
- Trust and credibility: showing excerpts of a research paper on the topic, also presented as an extra source to be consulted.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 11

- Date: 03/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: announcement of the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo, showing some of its exhibitions.
- Likes: 1,541
- Comments: 14
- Engagement rate: 2.65%
- Views: 15,600
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent, apart from a comment on the museum accessibility at the end.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: recall of the creator's personal experiences in the museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 12

- Date: 02/11/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: announcement of the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo.
- Likes: 1,216
- Comments: 6
- Engagement rate: 2.08%
- Tone of voice: informative and informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: emotional reflection of the creator talking about her memories in the museum.
- Visual quality: clear slideshow of pictures of the inside of the museum.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the pictures have been previously taken by the creator.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 13

- Date: 31/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: Show and description of the Linda Vista community hospital in Los Angeles as an example of contemporary archaeology. Part of a series of videos on spooky archaeological sites.
- Likes: 434
- Comments: 6
- Engagement rate: 0.75%
- Views: 8,514
- Tone of voice: informative and informal, partly emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: personal, emotional reflection on the feelings the site induces in the creator.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed, apart from a brief personal recollection of the site from the creator.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 14

- Date: 30/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion of the Natural History Museum in New York as a "spooky" place. Part of a series of videos on spooky archaeological sites.
- Likes: 561
- Comments: 7
- Engagement rate: 0.96%
- Views: 9,468
- Tone of voice: informative, informal and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling of the Natural History Museum in New York, used to talk about the colonial history of anthropology and archaeology.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the reel is made as an answer to a comment from a previous post. No invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: recall of the creator's personal experience at the museum.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 15

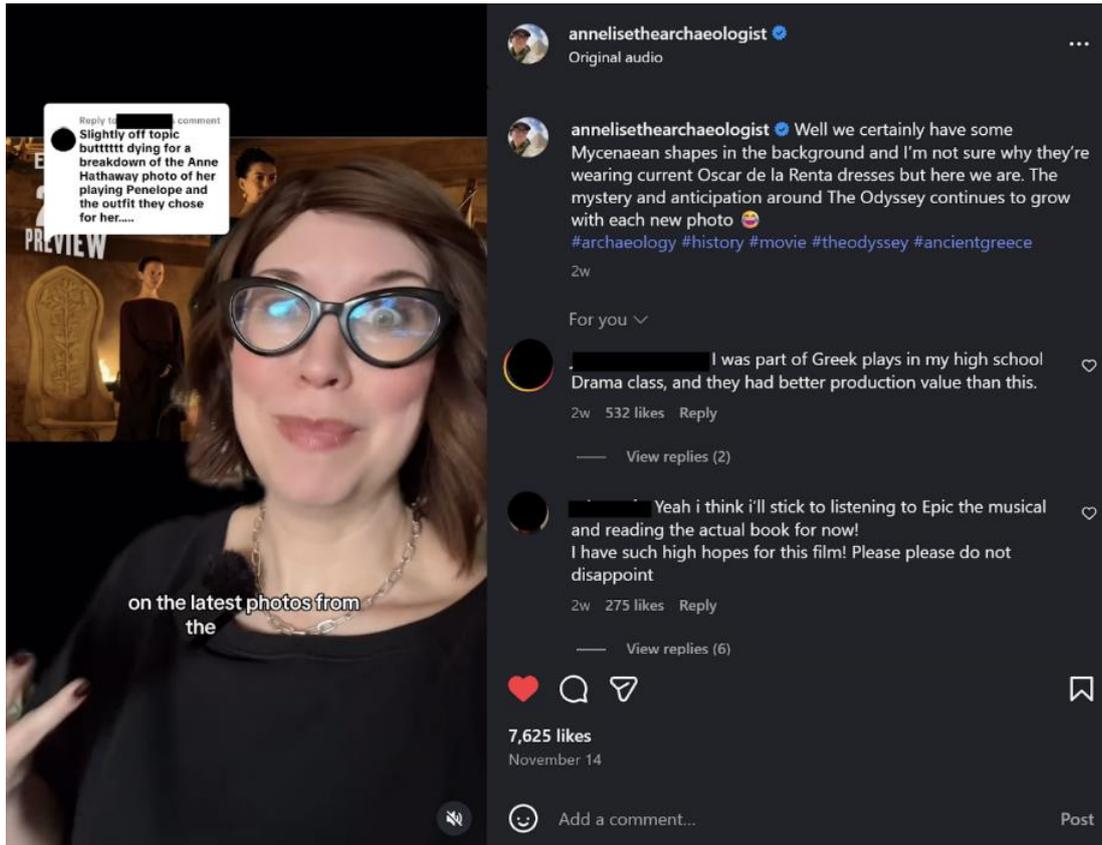- Date: 29/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 29/11/2025
- Content: discussion of tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Part of a series of videos on spooky archaeological sites.
- Likes: 513
- Comments: 3
- Engagement rate: 0.88%
- Views: 7,587
- Tone of voice: informative, informal and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling of the archaeological site in relation to their "spookiness".
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answer to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Case study 4: @dirtdiaries_

Post 1

- Date: 26/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: discussion on some scenes from the upcoming film The Odyssey.
- Likes: 8,968
- Comments: 372
- Engagement rate: 6.48%
- Views: 103,000
- Tone of voice: informative and informal, partly emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: anger and disappointment can be perceived from the creator.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is asked to share opinions. The creator answers different negative comments with one general comment, while personally positively answering other positive comments. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support and debate.
- Trust and credibility: the creator mentions her field of expertise and title at the start. The research article mentioned is properly referenced in the caption.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 2

- Date: 25/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: trend-based video showing what the creator studies in a humorous way.
- Likes: 645
- Comments: 2
- Engagement rate: 0.44%
- Views: 14,000
- Tone of voice: humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: the creator evokes humor assuming the positions of some statues/artefacts to show what she studies.
- Visual quality: clear videos and pictures of the creator and the statues/artefacts, with an on-screen text explaining the context of the video at the start.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow in the caption. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the video explains what the creator studies.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 3

- Date: 24/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: show and description of a 9,000 years old necklace. Part of the series of videos "Ruin my Monday".
- Likes: 1,210
- Comments: 7
- Engagement rate: 0.84%
- Views: 18,800
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, partly emotional. Promotional in the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling of the object's owner's past life through the description of the artefact, with a personal reflection on love in the past.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is suggested to check more information in the caption. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator introduces her with her title at the start. A research article is properly referenced in the caption as an extra source of information that the public can consult.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel ends with a promotion of the creator's latest podcast episode.

Post 4

- Date: 21/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: Instagram trend. Show and description of a Mjölnir pendant excavated in Sweden.
- Likes: 987
- Comments: 5
- Engagement rate: 0.68%
- Views: 27,800
- Tone of voice: informative and emotional. Promotional at the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: the on-screen text at the start (together with the background music) frames the artefact discussed as emotionally meaningful.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator with an on-screen text introducing the content, followed by a slideshow of pictures from the mentioned excavation accompanied by on-screen text providing the relevant information. A popular trending song is used for the audio.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's new podcast episode. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel ends with a promotion of the creator's latest podcast episode.

Post 5

- Date: 20/11/2025
- Type: Picture
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme about the Millennial pose and the Gen Z stare, using a Sumerian figurine.
- Likes: 18,521
- Comments: 20
- Engagement rate: 12.87%
- Tone of voice: humorous. Partly informative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the meme (especially knowing the context of the Ea Nasir trend, a series of memes about the ancient copper trader which usually use a picture of the same figurine to depict the merchant).
- Visual quality: clear image of the figurine and on-screen text that explains the content.
- Interactions with the public: The public is exhorted to follow. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is amusement and support.
- Trust and credibility: actual archaeological information on the statue is provided in the post's caption (although without further reference).
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 6

- Date: 19/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: show and description of a sorceress' kit from Pompeii, used to discuss ancient amulets in general.
- Likes: 4,246
- Comments: 25
- Engagement rate: 2.96%
- Views: 43,300
- Tone of voice: informative, informal and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on ancient amulets using different examples.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's new podcast episode. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator introduces her with her title at the start.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 7

- Date: 17/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: news on the discovery of a cartouche of Ramesses III. Part of the series of videos "Ruin my Monday".
- Likes: 717
- Comments: 5
- Engagement rate: 0.50%
- Views: 12,700
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: use of the discovery for storytelling about the Bronze Age and the life of Ramesses III.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's new YouTube video and podcast episode. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 8

- Date: 14/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: promotion for the creator's new YouTube video, with a trend-based lip-sync video.
- Likes: 387
- Comments: 2
- Engagement rate: 0.27%
- Views: 15,500
- Tone of voice: promotional and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: description of the murder of Ramesses III as a murder mystery.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with clear subtitles explaining the content. The audio is from a film/series used for the lip-sync trend.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's new YouTube video and to follow. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 9

- Date: 12/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme describing the creator's interest in Bronze Age history, with a trend-based lip-sync video.
- Likes: 448
- Comments: 5
- Engagement rate: 0.31%
- Views: 9,407
- Tone of voice: humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by self-deprecating attitude on the creator's interest.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with clear subtitles explaining the content. The audio is from a film/series used for the lip-sync trend.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively replies to one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 10

- Date: 10/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: news on the discovery of an Isis bust. Part of the series of videos "Ruin my Monday".
- Likes: 4,897
- Comments: 51
- Engagement rate: 3.43%
- Views: 58,200
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, partly informal.
- Narrative and emotional elements: use of the discovery for storytelling about Roman mythology.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow and share what they think. The creator positively answers most of the comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 11

- Date: 07/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: news on the discovery of a Hercules statue in Ibiza.
- Likes: 928
- Comments: 5
- Engagement rate: 0.64%
- Views: 10,000
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative. Promotional in the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: use of the discovery for storytelling about Roman history and mythology.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator introduces her with her title at the start.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel ends with a promotion of the creator's latest podcast episode.

Post 12

- Date: 05/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: promotion for the creator's new podcast episode, with a trend-based lip-sync reel.
- Likes: 880
- Comments: 3
- Engagement rate: 0.61%
- Views: 26,700
- Tone of voice: promotional and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: partial reenactment of necromancy in the past.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with clear subtitles explaining the content. The audio is from a film/series used for the lip-sync trend.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's new podcast episode. No comments (Instagram only).
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 13

- Date: 04/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: Instagram trend. Show and description of paintings in Pompeii.
- Likes: 4,257
- Comments: 20
- Engagement rate: 2.97%
- Views: 210,000
- Tone of voice: informative and emotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: the on-screen text at the start (together with the background music) frames the topic discussed as emotionally meaningful.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator with an on-screen text introducing the content, followed by a slideshow of pictures from the mentioned excavation accompanied by on-screen text providing the relevant information. A popular trending song is used for the audio.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's profile. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 14

- Date: 03/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: discussion of necromancy in the ancient world. Part of the series of videos "Ruin my Monday".
- Likes: 641
- Comments: 1
- Engagement rate: 0.44%
- Views: 10,800
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative. Promotional in the end.
- Narrative and emotional elements: use of an archaeological site to discuss necromancy in the ancient world.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator, with a slideshow of pictures of the topic discussed in the background, as a visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with a subtle background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is invited to join the creator's upcoming trip to Turkey and to check out the creator's new podcast episode. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is support.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel ends with a promotion of the creator's latest podcast episode.

Post 15

- Date: 30/10/2025
- Type: Picture
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: show and description of a cuneiform tablet about ghosts.
- Likes: 1,465
- Comments: 1
- Engagement rate: 1.01%
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: "humanization" of the past by comparing ancient and modern experiences of ghosts.
- Visual quality: clear image of the tablet and on-screen text that explains the content.
- Interactions with the public: the public is invited to check out the creator's new podcast episode. No answers to comment. The public's main reaction is support.
- Trust and credibility: actual archaeological information and location of the tablet is provided in the post's caption (although without further reference).
- Additional notes/remarks:

Case study 5: @ethnocynology

Post 1

- Date: 29/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme about hominin gene mix between modern humans, Neanderthals and Denisovans.
- Likes: 698
- Comments: 16
- Engagement rate: 0.46%
- Views: 20,900
- Tone of voice: humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the use of a series clip (in this case from It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia) in meme format to to frame the topic.
- Visual quality: clear video of the series clip in meme format with on-screen text explaining the content.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reaction. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is amusement.
- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 2

- Date: 19/11/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: pictures explaining the history of the horse and human interaction (part 1).
- Likes: 3,698
- Comments: 30
- Engagement rate: 2.42%
- Tone of voice: informative, partly academic.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent.
- Visual quality: clear pictures with drawings, texts, maps and pictures explaining the content of the post.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to watch the creator's latest YouTube video and to follow. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the post was made in collaboration with two academics that research horse-human interactions.
- Additional notes/remarks: extra information summarizing a previous YouTube video on the topic present in the caption.

Post 3

- Date: 18/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme about megafaunal extinction and its causes.
- Likes: 2,452
- Comments: 52
- Engagement rate: 1.68%
- Views: 52,400
- Tone of voice: humorous and informative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the use of a series clip (in this case from The Office) in meme format to frame the topic.
- Visual quality: clear video of the series clip in meme format with on-screen text explaining the content.
- Interactions with the public: the public is asked what they think about the topic. The creator positively answers a few comments, while engaging in debate in others. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support, amusement, debate and hostility.
- Trust and credibility: information on the topic is provided in the post's caption (although without further reference).
- Additional notes/remarks: the post's caption explains the context of the meme.

Post 4

- Date: 17/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: interview with Dr. Carlton Shield Chief Gove on underwater archaeology in the Caribbean. Third part of the series on the history of horse and human interaction.
- Likes: 132
- Comments: 2
- Engagement rate: 0.08%
- Views: 6,369
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, partly promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on horses spreading in the Americas after Spanish conquest through the field experience of the interviewee.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator and the interviewee, with additional videos (b-roll) and images (animated maps and artefacts) as visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with sound effects that accompany videos and animations and no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow the tagged pages. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the interviewee is an archaeologist involved in the research mentioned. The post is made in collaboration with him and his archaeological institute.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel is meant as a trailer for the creator's latest podcast episode/YouTube video. Additional information on the video can be found in the post's caption.

Post 5

- Date: 15/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme about Neanderthal hunting strategies.
- Likes: 7,847
- Comments: 50
- Engagement rate: 5.12%
- Views: 136,000
- Tone of voice: humorous and informative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the reenactment of a Neanderthal in meme format together with an American military song.
- Visual quality: clear video of someone impersonating a Neanderthal in meme format with on-screen text explaining the content. Instagram audio used as background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is amusement and support.
- Trust and credibility: information on the topic is provided in the post's caption (although without further reference).
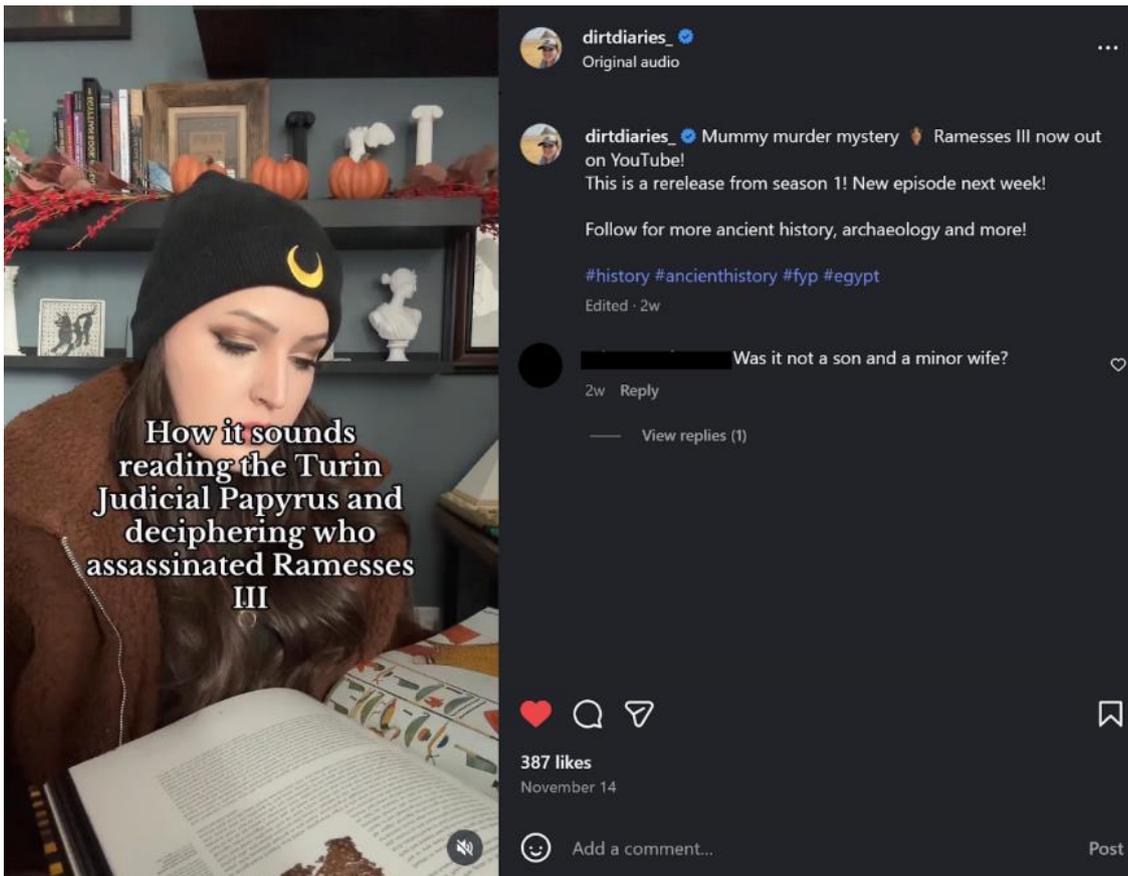- Additional notes/remarks: the post's caption explains the context of the meme.

Post 6

- Date: 05/11/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme about Ea nasir, followed by a promotion of the creator's merchandise.
- Likes: 820
- Comments: 12
- Engagement rate: 0.54%
- Tone of voice: humorous, informative and promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the use of a movie/series clip in meme format to frame a historical event.
- Visual quality: clear video of the movie/series clip in meme format with on-screen text explaining the content. Clear pictures of the merchandise with a link to the e-store.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is amusement and support.
- Trust and credibility: information on the topic is provided in the post's caption (although without further reference).
- Additional notes/remarks: the post's caption explains the context of the meme.

Post 7

- Date: 04/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: interview with Dr. William Taylor on the history and domestication of horses.
- Likes: 745
- Comments: 10
- Engagement rate: 0.49%
- Views: 11,900
- Tone of voice: informative, partly academic and promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent due to the purely informative tone.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator and the interviewee, with additional videos (b-roll) and images (artefacts and reconstructions) as visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the full interview on YouTube and the interviewee's book. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the interviewee is an archaeologist researching the topic discussed. The post is made in collaboration with him.
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel is meant as a trailer for the full interview on YouTube.

Post 8

- Date: 02/11/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme/trend-based video showing flintknapping.
- Likes: 1,028
- Comments: 24
- Engagement rate: 0.68%
- Views: 21,500
- Tone of voice: humorous.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the meme trend used, which positions flintknapping as producing a better sound than iced coffee.
- Visual quality: clear video of the trend meme followed by clips of the creator performing flintknapping.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is amusement and support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator shows his expertise in flintknapping.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 9

- Date: 27/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: introduction to the interview with Cassidee Thornhill on the dispersal of horses in North America. Second part of the series on the history of horse and human interaction.
- Likes: 273
- Comments: 14
- Engagement rate: 0.18%
- Views: 7,776
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, partly promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on horses spreading in North America through excavated horse remains.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator and the interviewee, with additional videos (b-roll) and images (animated maps and remains) as visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with sound effects that accompany videos and animations and no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to share thoughts and check previous videos of the creator. The creator positively answers a few comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support, with some debate present.
- Trust and credibility: the interviewee is an archaeologist involved in the research mentioned (although not directly present in this specific reel).
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel is meant as a trailer for the creator's latest podcast episode/YouTube video. Additional information on the video can be found in the post's caption.

Post 10

- Date: 27/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: meme about horse domestication and spread.
- Likes: 1,419
- Comments: 17
- Engagement rate: 0.93%
- Views: 23,800
- Tone of voice: humorous and promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: humor evoked by the use of a trend-based meme to frame a historical event.
- Visual quality: clear video of the trend-based clip (the dog and the cat) in meme format with on-screen text explaining the content. Instagram audio of a popular song used as background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the creator's latest series of videos on YouTube. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is amusement and debate.
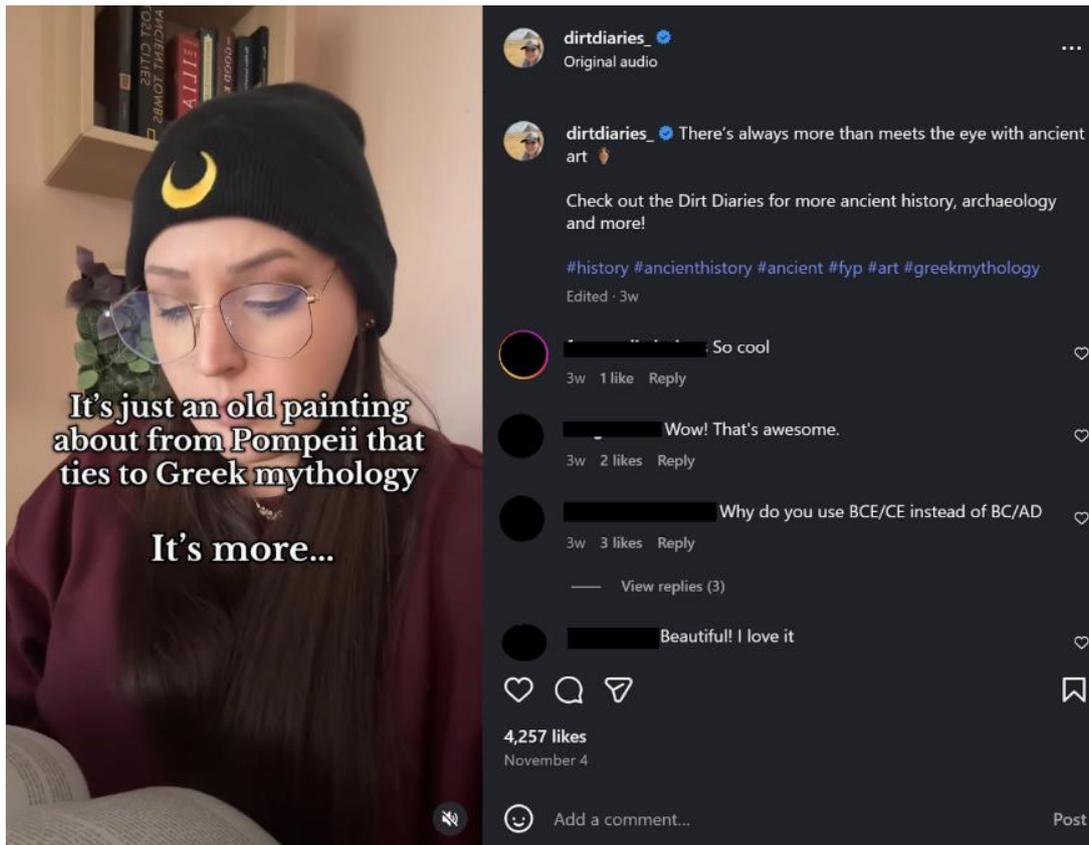- Trust and credibility: no cues observed.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 11

- Date: 20/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: introduction to the interview with Dr. William Taylor on the history of the domestication of horses. First part of the series on the history of horse and human interaction.
- Likes: 767
- Comments: 44
- Engagement rate: 0.52%
- Views: 13,700
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative, partly promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling spurring from the creator's personal curiosity about the topic.
- Visual quality: clear videos of the creator and the interviewee, with additional videos (b-roll) and images (animated maps and pictures) as visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with sound effects that accompany videos and animations and no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers most comments, including one hostile one. The public's reaction is a mix of curiosity, support, debate and hostility.
- Trust and credibility: the interviewee is an archaeologist involved in the research mentioned (although not directly present in this specific reel).
- Additional notes/remarks: the reel is meant as a trailer for the creator's latest podcast episode/YouTube video. Additional information on the video can be found in the post's caption.

Post 12

- Date: 17/10/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: advertisement for a product useful for archaeologists and scientists in general.
- Likes: 147
- Comments: 1
- Engagement rate: 0.09%
- Views: 3,814
- Tone of voice: promotional.
- Narrative and emotional elements: absent.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator and the product. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with added sound effects and no background music.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to check out the product. No answers to comments. The public's main reaction is support.
- Trust and credibility: the creator makes it very clear that it is a paid partnership.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 13

- Date: 29/09/2025
- Type: Reel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: discussion of collectors and foragers in apocalyptic media, described through an ethnoarchaeological framework.
- Likes: 451
- Comments: 21
- Engagement rate: 0.30%
- Views: 9,516
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling of how collectors and foragers function/used to function in history using apocalyptic media (movies and games) as comparison.
- Visual quality: clear video of the creator with additional footage (movie and games clips together with drawn schemes, either as b-roll or in the background) as visual aid. Clear subtitles. The audio is clean, with no background music.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator positively answers most comments. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: reference to the research mentioned is provided in the comments.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 14

- Date: 07/09/2025
- Type: Picture
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: a painting of a Native American dog and a travois. Discussion on mobility and hunter-gatherer societies.
- Likes: 686
- Comments: 11
- Engagement rate: 0.45%
- Tone of voice: informative and narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: storytelling on hunter-gatherer mobility based around dog and travois.
- Visual quality: medium quality screenshot of a painting.
- Interactions with the public: no invitations to reactions. The creator ironically answers one spam comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity.
- Trust and credibility: the extra information in the caption has proper academic references.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Post 15

- Date: 05/09/2025
- Type: Carousel
- Retrieval date: 30/11/2025
- Content: a series of pictures on hunting with bow and arrow. Discussion of hunting with bow and arrow in archaeology.
- Likes: 1,192
- Comments: 13
- Engagement rate: 0.78%
- Tone of voice: informative, with a hint of narrative.
- Narrative and emotional elements: mainly absent, apart from the start and a discussion on the continuum of the hunting technique through time.
- Visual quality: three pictures depicting a prehistoric hunting scene (drawn by Tom Björklund), lithics, and a modern Hadzabe hunter.
- Interactions with the public: the public is exhorted to follow. The creator positively answers one comment. The public's main reaction is curiosity and support.
- Trust and credibility: the extra information in the caption has proper academic references. Moreover, the creator mentions that the topic was his research focus in university.
- Additional notes/remarks:

Appendix C
Interview questions

Background

1. Can you tell me about your (academic) background and how did you start communicating archaeology on social media?

2. What are your general goals as a content creator?

Platforms and content

3. Which social media platforms do you use, and why?

4. Do you plan your posts strategically (e.g., using schedules or trends), or are you more spontaneous?

5. How many working hours do you usually spend on your page?

6. What are your communication strategies, regarding: the kind of content you post, the tone of voice (e.g., professional, informal, expressive), the use of narratives and emotional engagement (e.g., sadness, humor)?

Branding and identity

7. How would you describe the version of yourself that is on social media?

8. Would you consider yourself as an influencer (or "archaeo-influencer")?

Audience and engagement

9. Who is your audience?

   a. Are there any specific population groups you aim for?

   b. Does that influence your content?

   c. Have you ever felt the need to adjust your content to meet your audience's expectations?

10. How do you interact with your followers, and how often?

    a. What obstacles do you encounter when doing this?

11. What kinds of responses do you usually get to your content (e.g., curiosity, debate, misinformation, hostility, support)?

12. How do you measure the "success" of your communication?

Credibility, trust, and ethics

13. How do you balance your identity as an archaeologist with your role on social media?

    a. How is your credibility as an academic perceived by your peers and the public?

    b. Has the growth of your followers changed the way you are perceived by your peers and the public?

14. Do you make a deliberate effort to establish trust and credibility with your audience?

15. Do you face ethical dilemmas when creating content (e.g., simplifying too much, using the right terminology, dealing with controversial or sensitive topics, monetization)?

16. What are other negative aspects that you might have noticed about the use of social media for science communication?

Concluding points

17. Would you like to see more communication like yours from other archaeologists or institutions?

18. How do you see the role of social media evolving in archaeology in the next few years?

Interview with Natasha Billson

10 November 2025, 11:06am

1h 25m 7s

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:13

Thank you for joining me in this interview. The topics we're going to cover today are going to be about your background, about the platforms and the content you produce, about branding and your online identity, and your audience and engagement. We're going to discuss what are the implications for credibility, trust and ethics. And then we're going to finish with some concluding points. So, if you don't have any questions, I will start.

NB **atasha Billson** 0:47

Yes, let's start.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:49

Alright, so can you tell me a bit about your background, both professional and academic, and how you became interested in communicating archaeology and social media?

NB **atasha Billson** 1:01

So I did my undergraduate degree at Bournemouth University from 2010 to 2013. During that time I carried out field work. I think I ended up racking 6 months to nine months worth of field work experience whilst I was at university.

And then I also did some commercial work as well. So by the time I graduated, I had a year's worth of field work experience. I then went on to become a commercial field archaeologist. So in the UK think you might class as CRM.

I'm not sure how you do it, but basically it's the commercial sector. I did that from 2013 all the way up to 2021.

And then from 2021, I was still in commercial archaeology, but I moved out of the field and went into the research education sector and basically the public education sector as a creative producer. And then from that working with the archaeology company, I then became a freelancer for them. So for the last three years I've had my own company

carrying on with the projects because in a freelance space you're able to do more with the budget than if you're tied down into the company. And that's what worked out to be the best options.

NB **Natasha Billson** 3:07

So I did my undergraduate graduated in 2013, I went back to university in 2023 and I did a public history master's. Now it's 2025 and I've started a funded PhD at Bristol and it's technically cast as history of art, but it's not. It's history. It's archaeology. It's a bit of everything. So I'll be doing that for the next couple of years. The reason why I started social media was because really from the get go of doing my undergraduate I knew I wanted to do community based archaeology, basically public engagement. I always wanted to do something with archaeology and getting the public involved. In 2013 I met an archaeology professor called Howard Williams, who at the time was doing a blog (Archaeodeath) and I spoke to him during a conference at Bournemouth which I was organising and he said, you know what, do a blog just start now. So that weekend I bought the URL domain for Behind the Trowel, a name that I'd been thinking about that summer separately whilst on a field expedition because I knew I wanted to do it and I wanted to speak to people who had experience.

NB **Natasha Billson** 4:35

So I got the domain, I started doing like a blog stuff and then I got the YouTube channel and I thought from the beginning I would make YouTube videos. It just never happened. I filmed content and never edited it, but everywhere I did my digs as I travelled across the world in my first year from graduating, I worked in like all over. I was filming it. I just have never edited it and the quality is terrible now.

So I was always in the background and I wanted to do something with the community, but I always thought, OK, I need to work first in the commercial sector and get some experience and go back to uni and do masters. My plan was to do 2 years of work, save the money and go back to uni. They just never happened. Work became so interesting that I thought, why? I don't need a degree? It's what my thoughts were. And in some senses, for what I was interested in, it's true to an extent. I didn't need a masters. I didn't need a PhD to do what I was doing. I was already doing it. Undergraduate is great because you get your theories and methods in place. I do still think that's good. Everything else on top, you don't really need to do the commercial sector as much.

NB **Natasha Billson** 5:51

So I wanted to become a community archaeologist, but to get that job is really difficult. So I started to make social media content again around 2016. I jumped back into it, started making a little bit Instagram 2016/2017. I started doing Instagram.

And showing what I was doing, but I had difficulties in being able to show true commercial archaeology because there's constraints around filming on site, because you have to have permissions in place and a lot of commercial archaeology digs, you don't get permission. So it's quite tricky, but I filmed a couple of YouTube videos and Instagram. They were my two main platforms and they still are.

NB **Natasha Billson** 7:01

So I started doing social media. Then TV. So I would say around the pandemic, so 2020 is when I went and started doing YouTube live shows, which is kind of like a live podcast slash lecture series. So it's called behind the trowel- archaeologists in quarantine. And I was filming that after work, because I had loads of friends and colleagues and people I want to, I've always wanted to speak to. They've always been busy, but they weren't busy anymore. And even though I was still working because it's the commercial sector, I was able to find time to interview them and that kind of pushed me. I would say so. From the pandemic, it really accelerated my content creation and becoming consistent at what I was producing from 2020 onwards Because of my social media presence and my activeness on there, commercial archaeology units saw this and they remembered me for it from years before, asking me can we make a YouTube video? Can we post something on Facebook? So then I started getting hired as freelancer to make content for them or train them, which is why the freelance company comes in later on.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 8:27

Nice. And so when you started making content, what were your general goals as a content creator, was it mainly for education, entertainment or public engagement, and have they changed over time?

NB **Natasha Billson** 8:29

So my main goal was to find a creative way to make archaeology accessible to as many people as possible, especially individuals who thought archaeology was not for them.

Many people I've spoken to have always been passionate about it. They've always said, oh, I wanted to be there when I was a kid.

But they've never had access to that information, so I thought there must be a way. So it was always from an educational point of view as a public outreach because I couldn't do that at work, which is what I always wanted to do. We had one community dig per year if that. And I was always first up for that, they assigned me automatically that they knew I'll be up for it. So I really wanted to find ways to engage, and then it came to a point where my motivation changed a little bit where I realised there are people who do not look like me. In a public facing way of archaeology, there's a stereotype of what an archaeologist is, an old white guy, and I didn't really see that as an issue until there was one summer of an excavation, it was a very busy year, there's a lot of people coming in and out every week, and it came to a point where we go to the pub on a Friday night and they would tell me I was the first archaeologist they've ever worked with that was not white.

And it became a reoccurrence of that one summer and it stuck in the back of my head. I was like, OK, so there is an issue here, which is that there are people who do study archaeology in university, but they don't carry it on. They just keep it as a degree that they've learned, but they don't get a job in the field.

NB Natasha Billson 10:31

In any aspect it's a bit different in the academic space, but definitely in the commercial space there wasn't a connection, so that kind of re motivated me to make content. So like there are other people out there who maybe do not feel comfortable, but there is the space for them. And it's always now a motivation, I would say. Archaeology is for everyone. Literally. Let's change the image.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 11:06

All right. Thank you. So you said you started mainly on YouTube at the beginning, you were trying that out and then you decided to also use Instagram. So I'm understanding those are the two social media platforms you still use the most. Have you also started using something else, I think I saw you also have a TikTok account?

NB Natasha Billson 11:25

. I have TikTok, It's just that my content doesn't relate to that platform. I know what I have to do to make the content work, I just don't want to. I see the trends of what would work

to make it more enticing, more click-baity. I just don't want to make that type of content. I still post on TikTok as well. I just would not make content specifically for the platform.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   11:52

Right. Like the things you make for Instagram, they can also work on TikTok for that matter.

NB atasha Billson   12:05

. But that platform is stagnant. Like it doesn't grow, the followers. It's very, very slow. And that's because I'm not making a very specific type of click bait, entertainment style content, which needs to be done for that platform.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   12:24

Right. So basically Instagram is your preferred platform to use.

NB atasha Billson   12:31

, I would say so. I also have Facebook, but I don't really post as much. I go through a stage where I post and then I don't. Obviously, I had Twitter, I never really used it and obviously I don't use it now. . So Instagram, YouTube.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   12:33

As we were saying different kinds of content can go on different platforms, so you might use YouTube for more in depth content, is it something you also have been doing, maybe using different platforms, not just for different content, but maybe also for different audiences?

NB atasha Billson   13:22

Yes, so the usability of each platform factors in what type of content I will make. If I want to make an in-depth 10 minute video, I will film it horizontally and I will have the idea to post that on YouTube. I may take bits out of there and post into Instagram, but YouTube is the first. I would make separate content for Instagram, specifically one to three minutes maximum. Even 3 minutes is too long, you know, but I I would try to do one to two minutes ideally. And even then, I'm still always trying to get that one minute, and I will

recreate content specifically with that in mind when it comes to filming and editing and then that, will just get cross post on TikTok and Facebook if I remember.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 14:14

So basically, when you plan your posts, do you usually do it strategically, maybe using schedules or you see what's the trend of the moment or are you more spontaneous with that?

NB Natasha Billson 14:27

There was a time where I did have a content schedule and I would say, once a day at a certain time I was posting. Now I just go when I feel like it. There may come a moment where I'm more consistent, say like 3 times a week, five times a week. But it goes ebbs and flows. It depends on what's happening with work and everything else.
But target audience wise, which you said earlier, which I never responded to, generally speaking, my demographic is 50-50 male to female. So gender wise, 50-50. Age range, from 18 up to 50, they're all kind of equal. Is it? Maybe it's like 30% in the one that's like in the late 20s, early 30s category, it's like a little bit more, but otherwise it's quite general and even geographically I'm all over as well.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 15:30

Do you know how many working hours do you usually spend on your page, say per week, like how exhausting is the work?

NB Natasha Billson 15:44

To write the script for a video, because I research my information, it can take anywhere from one to two hours just for the research and scripting. And then filming is the easiest bit, that's like half an hour. 20 minutes, 10 minutes to film the video itself. Then it's the editing which can take like 2 hours, 3 hours, because the captions alone take me anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour, just for the embedded captions that I will put in to every video that I make. And this is for a one minute video, for an Instagram video. A YouTube video will take a week, two weeks, 3 weeks because I'm not spending my whole day. But there are times where I will block out. So it came to a point where I had to stop making content every day because I was spending like 5 hours a day on the content itself. On top of having a job, it was exhausting it is.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 17:16

I've noticed a lot of your posts are together with the British museums. So for example, in that case, it's still all the work on you or you get like collaborators to work with you.

Natasha Billson 17:36

So with the British Museum that took one year to even get to a point where we could film. And they saw nothing. All they wanted to know is where I was going to film. So the British Museum didn't see my script. They didn't see any of this. All they saw is where I was going to film and then they would sign on the video after I had filmed it saying yes or no.

There's one case where I said the 15th century for a recent video, and then they came back to me and said can you say medieval, because there's discrepancies whether if it's 14th century or 15th century. There's a debate. So can you just say medieval and this comes from the creator; the creator of that section said, can you do this? And then they told the communications team and I deal with the communications team, so if there is an edit it's like something like that or like there's a typo in my caption grammar. The video itself for the British Museum is different to every other cup of content I make because we want to make that to the highest level we can. My husband films it. Sometimes I film on a tripod, but he comes and films that one. Because we have literally 5 minutes to film the video, like we have a little bit of time because it's before the museum opens. So he films that, and then the editing he helps. So I edit and then he will help with some like extra graphics and the sound because I'm terrible at those two things. But generally speaking, I would do probably 80% of the whole thing and he'll just sort the sound out for me. And he might just sometimes play around with it a bit more. Maybe he'll spend like a day on that video or two days doing some nice graphics if he feels inspired by something I've done, he wants to take it and make, but one video would take a week. I don't know how many hours. Honestly, I can't even give an estimate. 10 hours. I don't know.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 19:44

For example, when you work for the British Museum, does the communication take a lot of time? When they have to review your work and everything.

Natasha Billson 20:13

It's actually very quick on their side, pretty quick sometimes. So when I say I want to film

these ten objects, and then what they did with that is they had to then go to the curator. So that took them about two weeks for the first time to organise because with the British Museum they had to get permissions from each curator and then they had to look at the schedules of all the cleaners and the security and then the tours. The morning tours, the private tours. And then they had to organise a schedule around what was happening internally, but I didn't see any of that, so I just came and everything was fine. They just said OK, we've got 10 minutes here, so I knew we had 10 minutes in every place that's walking there, filming all the the B roll. So where there's nobody in the space and then they're stopping me on camera.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 21:06
Right.

Natasha Billson 21:07
. And so it very short amount of time, but it was fine. It was fine. We're used to that. So it's not a problem. That's why I script everything beforehand. Now, back in the day, I didn't. Now I script.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 21:11
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I see. I see.
Right.
I see. So was it like if I understood correctly, was it at the beginning your idea like you want to do content on the British Museum and collaborate with the British Museum. So it was all like.

Natasha Billson 21:21
Yes.
.
It was what happened was is I used to make because I'm a member. I've been a men for like 10 years. I would make exhibition videos and I put it on Instagram.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   21:42
I see.

NB **Natasha Billson**   21:48
Like, come with me to explore this exhibition at the British Museum and they happened to see one I made on the Burma to Myanmar exhibition. And that was a guest now two years ago. I think they happened to see that video and it was circulated inside the communications team.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   21:58
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NB **Natasha Billson**   22:08
And then they reshared it. I was that one of the first content. I was the first content creator that they ever like reshared a video of , which was really cool. So they reshared the exhibition video and then from that, I guess they started to talk like, oh, I made another video about another exhibition. There's no. Then they invited me to some of their press previews.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   22:14
Oh yes.
Exciting.

NB **Natasha Billson**   22:29
Which normally journalists get invited to, not social media content creators. There was the shift within museums about two years ago where they started invited to content creators very slowly. Some are more active than others and now some are more active or adopting this idea of you invite a content creator when you invite the journalist.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   22:31
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 22:48

And they can film at the same time. So they started inviting me to these events and then from that I just made some comments and they were like, , we'd love to have you in. So we had these, like, casual conversations in person I picked up on e-mail.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 22:50

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 23:04

And then there was a long process because they were developing their social media teams. They were creating their infrastructure, so they didn't want to bring anyone in without their.
I guess policies in in place, like all museums, they started building policies about for content creators coming in the big museums anyway have done that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 23:15

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 23:24

So.
, I can't it. It was in the idea, but I pitched the idea of look, I want to do this. I pitched 3 different ideas and they loved this one, which was like, we want you to come and do it like. And we want to publish it every two weeks. First of all, they said we want to do it every week. And I was like, what? This is incredible.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 23:34

.
Awesome.
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NB **Natasha Billson** 23:45

Then they said, OK, let's let's do it every two weeks because we have our schedules with

everything else they decided. And I was like, wow, that's incredible. Like they've given me this opportunity because like a dream like that was a dream. Like, I go to museums all the time and film their objects. But to be able to go out of hours and do it and go on their platform.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 24:02
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NB Natasha Billson 24:03
. So it was good, it it was.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 24:05
That's awesome. , , . When was this? I don't know if you mentioned it. Like when you started the.

NB Natasha Billson 24:11
The filming the contract started.
I think we filmed in February. We filmed it for two days in the morning like Thursday, Friday. I was like 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM two days. We filmed 5 videos, 5 videos and then it was up to me when I would edit and give to them.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 24:20
Right.
.

NB Natasha Billson 24:35
We decided for April that it would start give me two months and honestly the editing process, I didn't have all the videos ready by April, I was giving them three videos at a time. Once, once a month, I give them three videos so they staggered it.
And now so the videos I think we finished in August. So from April to August, I had this collab every two weeks.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 24:57
I see.

NB **Natasha Billson** 24:58
And then they they they've been waiting. They're waiting for me to come back and feel more. I just don't have time. .

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:04
. No, I understand. Oh, . So speaking more on the like communication strategies. What's like your preferred for example, tone of voice like you like to be more like, professional, more informal, more expressive.
And do you tend to use? I mean, I've seen your video. So for the sake of the interviews, I'm asking you like, do you like to use like narratives or, like, emotional engagement, like sadness or humour?

NB **Natasha Billson** 25:38
Yes, I I guess I'm more of a traditional.
I come across as like a traditional presenter. I've been told by the other content creators and I'll take that. So I think I'm more neutral in how I present the objects that I'm speaking about, or if it's about an object. I'm very like. I have no emotion, nothing. I'm just speaking the facts and I'm trying to.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:45
.

NB **Natasha Billson** 26:02
In a way that everyone can understand why it's so cool. Basically, if I'm in a place and I'm exploring something, it's more narrative driven. Like come with me to see this. And again, I say the facts and then I think I say my thoughts.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:06
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 26:18

But I don't use emotion.

I only do that as a last resort when I need to push my account views up a little bit, so every now and then I will do an emotional post like Sad Girl history style. I will do that. I will do that and and unfortunately.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:29

Right.

.

NB **Natasha Billson** 26:39

Unfortunately, those videos take me.

10 minutes and I will get millions of years.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:45

.

, it's the. It tends to be like that. So I'm not on on social media.

NB **Natasha Billson** 26:49

, unfortunately.

. . So. But now and then I will do it. I haven't done one for a while, but probably will just to push up the account a little bit. So strategic strategically, I will do that. Otherwise I prefer to be.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 27:02

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 27:09

Just communicating without emotion, just trying to break down the information to make it as easy as possible for people to understand and then maybe use the narrator like an app. , I would say.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   27:20

Right.

What do you think? Maybe like using emotions? For example, in your case would maybe look bad on your communication or I don't know. Maybe there are other reasons.

NB **Natasha Billson**   27:33

, this is tricky for me because I do a lot of TV. It's tricky, so I don't want to come across and because I'm older as well. Right, people, which people don't realise I'm 34. So the other content creators who are producing content are in the mid early to mid 20s.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   27:37

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Nicely.

NB **Natasha Billson**   27:51

There's only a few of them that are a bit later, right, but they don't. They don't have a career in within the archaeology space. They've either done a degree and that's it that they became content creators. I worked first. So I worked 1st and I started to make content on top. And then because I have the TV.

That's seen by various people across the world, producers and things like that. I'm I edit myself, which might be a bad thing to be honest with you. Like I should. Maybe I should be making more this emotional content. Maybe I'll change my mind and like by next year I'll be doing that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   28:19

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NB **Natasha Billson**   28:26

You know, we'll see, we will see. But I feel like I'm moderating myself because of the TV aspect of who I am. I'm worried about my digital footprint.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   28:26

153

We'll see.

Right.

Right. I still and we'll we'll go back to more on specific more in that like a little bit later. But no, no, I fully understand and I mean there is not really like.

NB **Natasha Billson**   28:41

So that that's why I'd prefer to be.

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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   28:56

What's bad and what's like, right? Also because the research, the actual research done on the, you know, effect of these kinds of alternative kinds of communications is very limited, let's say, so very recent. So you know there are still not very.

Like defined, you know, strategies or what that the outcomes and it really depends on the audience that one might have compared to somebody else so.

NB **Natasha Billson**   29:14

But.

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But emotion-driven content is definitely beneficial, it really connects people with whatever that creator is talking about. It does work, and we've seen that like the numbers talk, the emotion is definitely a weigh in and I've read an article recently I've forgotten who.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   29:32

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Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   29:43

By, annoyingly, but they talk about how, if, if an audience member can relate to something in an emotional setting, they're more likely to remember that object and talk about it later on versus like a plaque in a museum that just says.

The date where it came from, its location versus a story of this vessel was in a ship found in a shipwreck. It would have held this, this, this so if we don't have that storytelling and then

the emotion of it being a part of a shipwreck and people think, oh, it's a shipwreck. What happened there?

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 30:07

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NB Natasha Billson 30:16

People don't connect, so I do think it's very important. I just definitely don't. Don't.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 30:17

Right. . Do you think you could, like, find this this source when when like when we are done, you can like 'cause, I would really like to to to, to read that if you.

NB Natasha Billson 30:21

I will find it.

.

, it was a through a LinkedIn post. I read it.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 30:34

See, I see him.

NB Natasha Billson 30:34

Right.

I will try. I keep my LinkedIn open and then I'll .

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 30:38

. Thank you. Thank you very much. If you can just do it. When we're done, I would be very grateful. Thank you. All right. So , we will like go back on the that in a little bit. Now I want to ask you like how like then would you describe the version of your?

Itself that is on social media. So as we said, you try to keep it more professional like you. So like do you let's say perform like a certain version of yourself online or or not really you try to keep it somewhat like real like.

NB **Natasha Billson** 31:12

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, I think I sense I censor myself like I take the comedy out, which is the bad thing, like I shouldn't, but I cut. If I'm making jokes, I will probably cut it out. So when people meet me in real life, like I'm I'm more sociable, more bubbly, which I think comes across in the videos where I'm on location.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 31:18

How would you?

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Can I see you?

NB **Natasha Billson** 31:36

Versus when I'm talking about an object, so it depends on what type of content I'm making, but I think I'm very succinct. When I make content I'm like like I will make, I will say what I need to say, I won't.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 31:36

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Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 31:53

Do anything in between because of I'm thinking about the editing. Really I'm not thinking about anything else and that's come with with being being a content creator for so long, it's come with just the skill set. Now that I will.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 31:58

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 32:07

Somewhat performed a camera, say all the facts and that will be that I was cut off. Then I would enjoy the space that I'm in before and after so it can be performative in the sense of

being professional and speaking to camera. , , . Now and then they might. They might see me do some humour, but it's very rare.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 32:25
Right.
. No, I mean, I did see some videos. For example, you have one video about the exhibition in India, the British Museum, like doing, for example, the like, imitating the poses of the statues for example, like. So I wouldn't say like, you know, because the way you're talking about yourself, like you're saying, oh, like you come like.

NB **Natasha Billson** 32:42
.
, that's true.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 32:51
Across like super like maybe like serious or professional, I'd say like it's an in between. I don't think you. . . No, no, exactly. I don't think you come across as too, like, professional. Like, it's nice. For example, when you're talking about exhibitions, I think that.

NB **Natasha Billson** 32:56
Oh, it's good to know.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 33:08
You know, you're saying it with a tone like like a documentary tone, you know? But then I see, like, you keep it, then separate from other kinds of content, there will be more like, , humorous. Or let's say, emotional. Let's say, you know.

NB **Natasha Billson** 33:12
None.
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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 33:25

Interesting. So my next question was, would you, how would you describe yourself with one term like would you rather consider yourself like an influencer or like I'm? Coining the term for my thesis like RQ influencer or not for you like or like content creator, what's the term you would like prefer? What's more, adapt.

NB **Natasha Billson** 33:56

It's funny because only recently I would I called myself a content creator, which is odd because I've done it for so long.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:05

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What did you? Well, how did you? How would you have described yourself in the past then, if not as a right, right. Right. , .

NB **Natasha Billson** 34:09

I don't.
There's an archaeologist, like a community archaeologist. I feel like making social media now is the new community archaeology. It's a new public engagement. It's a new outreach tool, but I guess you know what archaeo influencer sounds fun, but I don't know, like the weight of the idea of being an influencer freaks me out.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:28

Right.
Right. No, no. And I fully get it because I mean.

NB **Natasha Billson** 34:40

So I never call myself an influencer. However, I was at an event last week, and the girl next to me was speaking to someone she goes Oh , I'm an influencer, and this is a history content creator, and I was thinking to myself, I guess, well, actually.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   34:43
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   34:55
To other people, that's what we're classed as. I just don't see myself like that.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   34:59
, I mean, and I fully understand because a lot of the times the term influencer can have like negative connotations tied to it, but then I don't know what I've been seeing. For example, in the literature in research is that.
The term is flu answer is just used to describe you know somebody that is on the Internet and he has a personality and you know the share content and and I mean the definitions also vary. You know there is who always tie also like monetary aspect to.

NB **Natasha Billson**   35:22
Substantial following, .

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   35:32
Being an influencer and there are definitions that don't do that. So it's really like I mean, again this is all like very recent in also and in the aspects of researching this topic. So but what I've been noticing is that for example, the term influencer or.

NB **Natasha Billson**   35:36
Hmm.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   35:52
Influencer style communication is the is used to describe, you know, like, like who, who does the content creation on on social media, especially social medias like like Instagram or TikTok rather than maybe.
YouTube or Twitter? So hence why I was like including these questions in the interview because I do discuss about like social media influencer and how like they they

communicate and what are they strategy for how in the way they've been recorded in the research and in literature.

NB **Natasha Billson** 36:09
Hmm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:26
And that's hence, like the coining the term like archeo influencer to, like, give it some more of a of a of a sphere of a specific sphere of influence. Let's say you know.

NB **Natasha Billson** 36:36
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It's a it's a compliment. I just. , I would say it's a compliment to be to be put into that category, but .

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:50
. So.

NB **Natasha Billson** 36:52
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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:53
Is is not something you fully see as the other like as a negative.

NB **Natasha Billson** 36:58
No, it's not. I mean, no, I don't think it's a negative. , no, I think it's.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:58
Aspect.
.

NB **Natasha Billson** 37:05

It shows that. I guess we have an influence of individuals because we have a mass following or or high engagement and it's generally about something positive you know. So I guess overall it is, it's just something I don't refer to as myself, but I have no problem with other people referring to me as that.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 37:11
Right.
Right, right, that is.
Right. They're starting reeling. So let me know if you hear any noises. All right. Perfect. So going back on your audience, I mean, we understood that it's very varied. There is people from different demographic groups.

NB Natasha Billson 37:29
I don't hear anything.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 37:44
When you started, were there specific population groups like demographic groups you aimed for or not really like you were just doing science communication, archaeological communication for like the public in general.

NB Natasha Billson 37:57
Hmm.
Um.
I'm not really sure because like when I was at work and we did community days, we would tailor our content to the audience. So it was school kids. We would talk in a certain way. We'd do certain activities and then if we had like an open day where adults could come along local residences.
It'll also be a different way.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 38:26
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NB Natasha Billson 38:29

I found that kids understand more than we think they do, and I found that just describing the way I was speaking about something they understood.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   38:43
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   38:43
They didn't find it complicated, and if they if they didn't understand, they would just ask. And I remember at one point when I was creating some content, I'd ask my cousins, who were different ages. So at the time there would have been like 1015, I'd ask them like, watch this, like, what do you think, do you understand? And they'd all be like, , we understand.
And then adults, sometimes I'll have questions from the adults that I was asking versus the kids, which I thought was really interesting. And I was like, OK, so why I think it's the way they're thinking about when they listen to the content. So maybe the kids are picking up on certain things, they they lose attention and they'll come back.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   39:04
OK.
I see it was very interesting, .

NB **Natasha Billson**   39:23
And then with the adults, maybe they're paying attention for the whole thing. I think that's what kind of happened when I was comparing the content. So I don't really have an age. I just wanted people to.
, I didn't have an age, which maybe is a bad thing, or maybe it's a good thing. Who knows?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   39:37
Right.
, there is no yes or no. Um, so let's say.

NB **Natasha Billson**   39:44
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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 39:50

. So since they are not aiming to a specific like group of people, it doesn't really influence that much the content you you make, I'd say and like have you ever felt the need maybe to adjust your content to meet your audience's expectation?

NB **Natasha Billson** 39:58

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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:08

Now, I don't really know like what's like. What's the extent of your interactions with your followers?

NB **Natasha Billson** 40:22

Overall, I've just made the content that I like. I've tried to find enjoyment and as soon as I don't find enjoyment in what I'm making, I'll stop and I'll do something else, which is what I've done many times. So I've tried to centre what I produce around.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:33

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Hello.

NB **Natasha Billson** 40:40

How I feel about it.

And the only reason I've done that is because I found when I started making content for the consumer, I was being consumed by it and in a negative sense, because of how much time goes into it. And if you don't get enough views, it's quite disheartening sometimes.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:54

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NB **Natasha Billson** 40:58

When there's no engagement or there's criticisms about it, so I just started to find things that I found interesting. I'd make content about it, so I adjusted, adjusted the content most on a personal basis. However, as I mentioned earlier, I know and I saw the trend as it started about this emotional content where you look straight.

To camera.

And you do nothing right and it's just text. I saw when that trend was happening and there are there are other content creators who were who were new, who had just came into the scene and they started making that type of content and they have millions of followers now. I could have done the same thing. I just chose not to. I don't know if that was a good thing or a bad thing.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:22

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Right.

NB **Iatasha Billson** 41:38

You know, but I chose not to do that because I guess I didn't want to. But then I would do it sometimes, but I would make that content not specifically. I would just take a video where and I would pause a section where I was thinking.

I'll just cut that out and I would make it like times 2 speed slow or times 3. The speed slow and so it would just look like I'm staring at a camera like thinking really deeply. But really it's just I've edited it and I did that a few times.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:56

Hey.

Right.

The marked way to do it, you know, I would say it's.

NB **Iatasha Billson** 42:12

, I did that a few times and I was I could not believe how much response I got to that content over me speaking on camera. So I find people reading, they prefer that they engage more. So sometimes I make that content now even now I still diversify while just doing music.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:17
It works, .

NB **Natasha Billson** 42:29
And and text on screen.
And I do that for the consumer more so than me, definitely.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:33
I see.

NB **Natasha Billson** 42:40
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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:41
No, I understand that. So. So what? What are like usually the kinds of responses you get on your content, you get more like curiosity or like debate or also like?

NB **Natasha Billson** 42:44
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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:58
Misinformation or hostility, like negative comments.

NB **Natasha Billson** 43:01
Oh my gosh. Everything. I get everything. , I get everything. I found that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 43:03
It's like very general, .

NB **Natasha Billson** 43:11
I started like just looking at other content creators comment sections with mine.

On videos that I would try to make similar similar style or whatever and I noticed that I would have more negative comments than they would. So I was like and it would be about anything or everything. It'd be nitpicking as we were saying in England, like nitpicking.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 43:26
Interesting.
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NB **Natasha Billson** 43:33
Umm.
I mispronounce words all the time, but I would never stop that from going from making my content go live because that's me. Like I will mispronounce and then I don't care.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 43:43
Right. It also shows, like Alton, Authenticity, I'd say.

NB **Natasha Billson** 43:47
, I could edit that out. I don't I could dub over myself. I don't. I leave it like I see it. I hear it, but I've I've made that mistake and the spelling is correct. It's just a mispronunciation. And then anyway, when I Google later on, there's multiple pronunciations depending where you're from. So.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 44:04
OK.

NB **Natasha Billson** 44:04
I'm like, whatever. So I always get picked up on that sometimes, of course, you'll get the misinformation about something that's been said, the collaborations with the British Museum. Obviously I get because it's a joint post and a lot of that will be repatriation based comments.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 44:08

And.

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NB **Natasha Billson**   44:23

Or to do with events that have taken place at the British Museum. And then I will get those people commenting on my page separately as well. But it's the same comments, so it's like I see what they're doing, they're doing it because they're protesting. So that's fine. Like they're doing it on my page as well. It's not a problem. It's not personal.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   44:33

Yes, Sir.

NB **Natasha Billson**   44:39

But they try to make it personal, but I don't see it as very occasionally I will engage with them and say, look, this is a collaboration where I've created the content and it's been posted on there and your comments are inappropriate now and then I will say it if I'm in the mood to start this conversation because it's not a conversation with them, it's like arguing.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   44:40

Right.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   44:59

And there's no need for it. I also have like philtres, so negative comments certain words are picked up and then just automatically not shown or deleted. And that's like to do with race racial racially charged.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   45:02

Right.

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NB Natasha Billson 45:14

Comments normally only I'm fine with everything else, but those I had to do as well.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:17

My share.

NB Natasha Billson 45:23

Wow, yes, I get. I get a lot of those and don't get me wrong, bad commenting comments are good for the algorithm, right? Because you're more likely to comment if you disagree with something than if you agree. So there are certain times when my comment section is just negative posts versus someone saying answers are really cool or I want to do more reading or I want to visit this exhibition.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:28

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Right.

NB Natasha Billson 45:42

It just depends, I think on where that video has popped up and who's engaging with it. There are times when they may discuss an object that's been that I've spoken about in a positive way or challenge me in something I've said that's also fine.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:42

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Right.

NB Natasha Billson 46:00

So , it depends. It depends on the video.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 46:04

, I know. Of course. Makes sense. That's. . For example, the videos I've been also like

reading comments on the, like the videos you've been doing with the British Museum and it's there, there is a lot of that. But then so like those people that come, for example from the British Museum posts.

NB **Natasha Billson** 46:14

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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 46:22

Do they also then you said also go on comments or like your regular posts and and it's .

NB **Natasha Billson** 46:29

, because they they think I'm. I work at the museum. That's why. So they're just they're just copy and pasting. You know, it's nothing. June major. , it's it's OK. What they're doing, like they're valid in what they're saying. It's just I I'm not. I don't work there. I'm not.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 46:33

Right, right. Right, of course.
Right. Like out of context, so you know.
Thank you.

NB **Natasha Billson** 46:48

The government.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 46:49

Right, right. So you're not, let's say you you don't feel the the let's say not the need but also like the like you're more like take it off with the British Museum than than with me right for.

NB **Natasha Billson** 47:02

I think I think in my head it's like I understand the legislations that are in place by the government and I understand how museums work. I think being in being an archaeologist for so long working in different.

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Aspects of it. I understand the policies that are in place, so I'm not going to be offended if somebody comments that on my page because from their point of view they're protesting, which they're entitled to do, and they're asking for things sometimes which are I agree with.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:28
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 47:37
What they're asking for what they're saying. , I understand from both sides. So I'm impartial. I would say I'd better not to say anything.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:37
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Right.
Would you like usually respond to this kind of comments or you tend not to? Because I mean, you know, like the institution of the British Museum is involved. So you would rather have like them responding to this kind of comments or it's because it's still like under your profile, your page, do you feel?
Feel like the need to to respond to this kind of like negative comment.

NB **Natasha Billson** 48:11
I think only.
I think it was only ever difficult when there was the issue around the Israeli event that took place. There was a government Israel government event where they hired, they hired the British Museum.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:29
Uh-huh.
All right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 48:32
And I happened to be one of my videos were coming out around that time. So as a part of

people actively protesting against that and people saying, why did that take place? I started being bombarded with these comments and I came to a point where I was like, guys, this video.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:45
Hello.

NB **Natasha Billson** 48:50
Is is I tried to say in that it's like look this is not me supporting the British Museum as a event space for hiring out like I don't like. I'm not here to support what they've done. This video is a part of a collaboration which is like a fortnightly thing.
Like it's nothing to do with me supporting what people have decided to do, who have nothing to do with what I'm doing, like a separate. I'm an archaeologist, so I just sort of say, look, it's be be impartial here for a second. Like, I'm not here supporting anyone's decisions. I'm not for or against. I'm just making a video about this object in the collection.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:07
Bye.

NB **Natasha Billson** 49:25
And that was difficult because then people were like, you shouldn't be affiliated with them. And like, I'm just making, I'm making content about an object. And the museum for me is an important place, otherwise I wouldn't be making content there. Like when it comes to decolonization, fair enough. Like, I will happily have a debate over things like that sort of thing we can.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:30
Oh.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 49:44
Umm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   49:45

How are you?

NB **Natasha Billson**   49:51

So , it proved really tricky in those moments because obviously I'm my I didn't know what to do in that situation. I clearly just ignored the whole thing, which most people would have done. I just like I commented try and say look, this is what's happening. This video is part of collaboration.

This is not me.

Supporting. . And it's difficult.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   50:12

Right, right. But is the no. Of course, of course. But you think maybe, I don't know, like now I haven't really like paid attention, but like, maybe like you try. Do you try usually to like, I don't know, disclaim the fact that you're you're not really like working for the British Museum.

Like like I like just to like avoid confusions between like who watches your content.

NB **Natasha Billson**   50:35

I always say like.

, it's. But people, people still don't get that, though.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   50:42

Right, right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   50:43

I don't think and this is actually something to do with the usability of the app. I don't think consumers understand.

What a collaboration is verse a paid partnership verse working for somewhere verse being a content creator like I don't think people get that still and I think maybe in a year's time or two years time when more people are accustomed to this type of content relationships.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   50:59

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   51:08

Maybe it'd be different, but it's tricky because I say , I'm a content creator and there's times and now I use that term more because more people understand it. So I say I'm a content creator.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   51:18

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   51:20

But , it's it's interesting with other museums I'm trying to think so I've collaborated with loads of museums and organisations, so obviously the British Museum is the biggest one, which I mean, it's super grateful for. But , I think people, I think some people just assume that I work there.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   51:26

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NB **Natasha Billson**   51:36

Nothing I can do about that, no matter how many temperatures explain.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   51:36

I said , no, of course. I mean people like, there is always the level of superficiality from, you know, like some people just want to comment just to, I don't know, just because they want to argue or, you know, put like.

NB **Natasha Billson**   51:52

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MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   51:52

Negative comments or everything or like also like specifically regarding to the British Museum, I feel like there is the, you know, idea that like everything in the British Museum is like stolen. I mean, a lot of things are there. I shouldn't really be there for, like, legal purposes and ethical purposes.

NB Natasha Billson   52:10

Hmm.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   52:12

Like I know, like a lot of other artefacts are like rightfully there and like, you know, I guess like people, I see that like they instantly assume that in the British Museum. OK, so the things you're talking about, they're stolen or like they have, they're problematic and.

NB Natasha Billson   52:28

, , it's it's tricky. It's very tricky because there's that, it's that assumption. You're right that everything is stolen. I mean, the, the the problem with that term saying that it's stolen is when they say this, they're obviously talking about the object when it was originally taken.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   52:29

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NB Natasha Billson   52:46

, they could have been from looters, but generally speaking, they're bought by Antiquitarians who went around the world. Europeans who went around the world and took what they wanted, right. And then the discipline of archaeology comes from that. But then, even with archaeology in the nineteen 20th centuries.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   52:52

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NB Natasha Billson 53:02

It's very different to what we do now. Thank goodness. You know, there's more systems in place, you know, like, like objects were not stolen from certain objects, were not stolen from Egypt. They're under excavations. However, it's the agreements that were in place that were ridiculous, which is where whoever was excavating now.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:05

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NB Natasha Billson 53:22

Whatever European team, it was American Canadians. Sometimes they could choose what objects they took.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:26

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NB Natasha Billson 53:30

And then they'd leave a certain percentage left for the for the Egyptians, which is crazy when you say that out loud. But so in theory, , you could say that agreement was ridiculous, but in theory there's a document there.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:37

Right.
No. , , of course.

NB Natasha Billson 53:45

So that this is this is the problem, isn't it? This is the. This is why it's so problematic, but the whole event.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   53:49

Of course. Do you ever find yourself trying to explain this? Maybe you're talking about you're making a video about an object. That's some like people are commenting like, oh, stolen, whatever. And do you ever, like, try? Maybe sometimes to explain that, like, things are a bit like different or not like.

NB **Natasha Billson**   53:59

Hmm.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   54:07

Just so like easy or like superficial.

NB **Natasha Billson**   54:09

I think it's really. I think I there was a time when I did and I realised people just reading the text so it's different when you speak versus reading and people will still misunderstand what I'm saying. When I when I try to read, when I try to say to them like if you just go on the website search this.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   54:13

Hello.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   54:27

Object number you will find all the information about how the object has ends up in the British Museum collection. , or even if I tried to explain, there's still someone's not happy with that comment. So it came to the point where I was like, you know what I put as much information as I can in the caption.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   54:38

Sorry.

NB Natasha Billson 54:42

Including the object number like or sources. Sometimes I put the sources, I get my script idea from it depends. Everybody is different and then it's up to them like they they can easily Google the object and the information there.
They're choosing not to.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 55:00

Right.

NB Natasha Billson 55:02

So it comes to a point where I have to do that now. There's no point. .

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 55:04

No, of course we understandable. So , we talk about, . Positive and negative engagement. How would you like measure overall the success of your communication? Like, how would you like say, OK, my communication is being like.

NB Natasha Billson 55:09

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MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 55:22

Successful like like people are reacting in a certain way or you just go by views and likes like how do you how would you define it?

NB Natasha Billson 55:24

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When I get emails asking for like doing school talks, things like that, that's when I feel like I've done something good.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 55:41

OK.

That's very nice.

NB **Natasha Billson** 55:44

I would say that's probably that's the first thing that comes to mind when you say this. It's like, OK, I'm doing something when you send the e-mail, I'm like, OK, of course I'm going to reply to it straight away if I don't reply straight away, I'm going to forget, but also.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 55:58

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 55:59

You know, it's an important part. So obviously I'm doing something right. It's only in those moments. I don't really have validation from the views or likes or comments. I think when I get.

Invited to visit a museum or go to a press preview, or a paid partnership opportunity.

They're like, OK, I'm doing something right here. People are seeing the content, people are engaging with it, they want to visit the sites and they want me to talk about.

What I think about the exhibition space, the objects and and then those moments like, OK, I'm doing something wrong. People understand what I'm doing. But , the comment section itself is just tricky. I don't really read the comments. Honestly, I came to a point where I just don't really read them.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 56:33

Uh-huh.

Right.

Here.

Like time consuming? It also maybe when you see like a lot of like, like this kind of negative comments we discussed that really like responding to them it's you know has no no end go you know, .

NB **Natasha Billson** 57:03

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There's no ban. , it's no end. . Once you start, you're going down a hole. So it's very difficult.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 57:06
. When there is no like like constructive discussion, you know, like it's I get it.

NB **Natasha Billson** 57:11
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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 57:17
Alright, so going back to the way you're perceiving your identity on social media, like, how would you? Well, we already like discussed a bit about your balance between the balance between your identity as an archaeologist and your.
Persona let's say on on social media and the way these interact and I want to ask you, how is your like, let's say credibility as an academic or as an archaeologist like perceived by your peers.
But we saw like, how is it perceived more or less by the public, but like, how do your peers do they see you in a positive or like in a more negative way since you started doing your job online?

NB **Natasha Billson** 58:01
Yes, so with.
When I was a full time commercial archaeologist and I started making content online, overall it was positive.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:11
Right. . Because they you told me they they hired you by by seeing your accountant online so.

NB **Natasha Billson** 58:15
. , that was years later. That was like maybe 3-4. Five years later. You know, this people once

once basically post pandemic or during the pandemic. They were like, OK, we need something. And because of the content I was making, , I was hired by.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:20
But.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 58:29
The research department, which was amazing. So , I think overall in the commercial sector it was positive and there were academics, lecturers who saw what I was doing and then they would share their content with their students.
And when I it's tricky because my social media content creation is is very much tied in with my TV work. I'm I'm in a different position to a lot of content creators. I I am a professional TV presenter that's like my bread and butter as well.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:46
Nice.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 59:03
Like I get a lot of work from that and I've been doing that since. I think my first. , my first US documentary was 2019, so really consistently from 2019. I did a few things before. But really 2019 onwards.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 59:18
But.

NB **Natasha Billson** 59:19
And then in the UKI did the great British dig, which is a UKTV show based on community archaeology and my credibility. Then, you know, I think at the time I must have been.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 59:25

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NB Natasha Billson 59:36

I think I was 28 when we started filming and one of the reasons why I was recommended was because of my professional work.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 59:47

Right.

NB Natasha Billson 59:47

And that's actually the reason why I got the job. I was saying the TV job was because of my professional work as a commercial archaeologist. And then I started making content online at the same in 2020. It was the same time the stuff was going on, but.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:00:02

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NB Natasha Billson 1:00:03

I'd already I should say I was recommended for TV roles. I remember being recommended for TV roles by my old university lecturers for my undergraduate degree, like five years later. That's to be recommended me. I'd have emails from producers saying I'll be this lecturer recommended you.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:00:14

Nice.

NB Natasha Billson 1:00:20

From Bournemouth but still now.
I'd get recommendations for my university lecturers.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:00:30
Uh-huh.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:00:33
So I think overall's been positive. I think people who meet me on social, it's positive.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:00:36
, it sounds pretty positive. Like, I don't know, like for example, now that you're doing your PHDI don't know if you have a peers that maybe like have commented on in a positive or in a negative way about your your role online or?

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:00:52
But I don't tell people.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:00:54
I see.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:00:54
But what's happened? What's happened is that my my supervisor, my PhD supervisor, followed me on LinkedIn, then followed the Instagram. And from there and then she's recommended me. She's she's pushed me in in a way to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:01:05
And then found out from there.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:01:14
To now talk with the university's policymakers and the heritage departments about making content like had these roundtable discussions. So like, I'm I've been invited to speak at this roundtable discussion with these with the with peers, and I'll be representing the PhD students, the PGRS.
But.

I'm also going there from experience, so it's like interesting. Now I'm in that sort of space where there's an intersection. So my experience in the, the content creation space has now come into the PhD. So now a podcaster pitched an idea because I'm funded.

So I pitched the idea to the funding board and all the students want to do it now. So now they're slowly starting to see that. , I make content. So they're taking it as a positive, and they're asking for advice, which I like. I'm happy.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:01:59
Nice.

Right.

It sounds awesome because I read the papers about interviewing scientists that do communication on social media, and very often they they don't really wanna disclose it, or when the their department board knows.

But it's they. It's always a a problem. They they they don't think it's like like adequate for a for a scientist, a researcher to like do this kind of thing. So like, this is really, really awesome. The things I'm hearing from you about.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:02:37
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That's good to know. , I think maybe, maybe it's just this year. Like I think things are changing, right? I think, you know, if I speak to my other friends who are lecturers who made content, they had issues 100%. But I think also I'm just starting in. I'm coming in as a professional into the PhD.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:02:44
About your your experience, .

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Uh-huh.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:03:01
So like, they know, like I'm not coming in fresh from from uni, from an undergrad or whatever and.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:03:01

Right.

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:03:11

I think because what I've done in the archaeology space, people know who I am from, from what I've done from the TV side and from the social media side overall, it's been positive. Of course I'm going to get comments here and there like anyone would.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:03:23

Correct.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:03:30

I think I get judged more from people who come across me on social media and who think I am not a professional.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:03:38

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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:03:39

I think I've been judged more from that aspect, which is interesting. Not from that, not from a professional aspect. I would say people who don't know me or.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:03:42

I see. Interesting.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:03:50

Didn't understand why I had these TV jobs. They just thought, oh, she's a content creator. She isn't. She's she's not a professional. And I've had that with TV production companies as well. That, oh, she's a content creator. She can't talk about this and then they'll be like, no, no, no, she is professional.

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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:03:54

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Right.

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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:04:07

She just makes comment as well. So in other aspects there is that, but then it's easy to kind of get over it once they understand that I have professional background.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:04:07

I see you.

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Interesting. I had a question about like like how do you like if you make an effort like a deliberate effort in establishing trust and credibility with the with your audience or the people you work with?

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:04:28

Hmm.

, that's tricky. It's very tricky. People come across the video on social media. They don't necessarily go into your profile after so that people who have a negative thought will just automatically straight away reply.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:04:32

Uh-huh.

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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:04:45

They'll comment on that video. They don't have a second thought. They won't do a background into who the person is. Great examples. I had a video where again, it's with the British Museum and it was the recent video I did on Watson Manor where I had to connect, not just the object, but I had to talk about various place. I had to bring in.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:05:00

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:05:03

I had to do a lot more in that video than I would normally. I wasn't just talking about the object itself. I was doing a journey from where those objects, how those objects ended up at the museum, which was they were donated right from this house. So I had to go to the house and film there and come back to the Museum Gallery and the comments in there were like, oh, I don't know who this person is, who's talking about about them.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:05:13

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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:05:22

But I'd love to know about the art history, or then I'd love to know about the the story of, oh, why is there a copy? I'd love to know this. I'd love to know that. And instead of them just Googling, they want people in the comment section to tell them they don't want to go outside of that video to see any, any more information.
And they won't even check to see who I am, you know, so that so it's a nice example of how sometimes people are very nuclear. And in that moment, they're just looking at that one thing. They're not looking outside. So you're more easily judged.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:05:42

Right.

Right. So you can try as much as hard as you want to maybe like establish these like credibility distrust, but if people are not like let's say collaborative on that you know like also wanting to to know you.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:05:59

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MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:06:08
Better than it, but your efforts are vain. Let's say in that in that sense.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:06:09
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, and. And also, which is crazy, this is crazy. But you know, you can Google me, which is so weird to say out loud, but because of the TV work and other stuff I've done, there is AI have a massive digital footprint, right? So all they would have to do is just Google.

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:06:22
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Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:06:30
But even then, to be fair, they may not understand what a commercial archaeologist was or is. No matter. Back in the days to make a lot of content on that. But I still people don't really understand. I think that concept too much, and it just reminds me that one day I need to go back and start making content about that again.

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:06:44
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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:06:48
When I get time, .

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:06:48
Of course. Have you faced like other other ever? Sorry. Other like negative aspects or ethical dilemmas. We like creating content for for social media.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:07:03
I think when it comes to human remains is a really big one. I think I've shown.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:07:05
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:07:12
The times I've shown human remains is when it's to do with like ATV project and I've taken a clip and it might be in the trailer for example, the Great British dig that in the trailer there is human remains or like when we're discussing those episodes and as part of the promo.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:07:22
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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:07:29
You know, I put the disclaimer at the top because that became a thing that we did during during the pandemic years. A lot of trends started happening. So we did the disclaimer of human remains are going to be on screen through the things that I learned through social media. Because for me as an archaeologist, I didn't have an issue.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:07:44
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Of course.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:07:47
Talking about human remains, looking at them posting pictures I never thought of it until others started questioning it, so I still struggle now with the ethics of posting that because I'm thinking not as me as an archaeologist. I'm thinking of the people finding that information.
I don't know what to do, so I rarely will. Would post something about that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:08:06
Right.
Of course.

NB Natasha Billson 1:08:12

. And I think that's that's the only thing I've ever had to really think about.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:08:18

Right. Do you think sometimes maybe, for example, when you're trying to condense information in a short video, do you think simply you're like maybe risking to simplify too much of the the content like what the the very DCT of what you're saying?

NB Natasha Billson 1:08:19

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Like.

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MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:08:37

Or.

NB Natasha Billson 1:08:38

, it's tricky. So generally speaking, my videos are a minute long. I would say overall average. So I think in the moments where I feel like I can't go in depth too much in the captions. I will say read here or check this website out.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:08:44

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NB Natasha Billson 1:08:55

To do further reading.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:08:57

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NB Natasha Billson   1:08:58

I would put that in the caption. Normally if I find it, but I have to oversimplify, I think. I don't think I can get into detail and this is like a 234 part video or YouTube. That's where the YouTube videos come in.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:09:00

Hey, sue.

Right.

Right.

NB Natasha Billson   1:09:14

That can be more, I think, .

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:09:14

Right.

I see. And the last question for the general topic was because I read this paper analysing how usually with the content creation social media on Instagram, specifically how the there is a trend in which.

The more your following grows the the worse the engagement gets, like there is less engagement or more like negative comments, the more your your your follower, the growing number. Have you noticed this?

Or your profiles.

NB Natasha Billson   1:09:56

I think actually, , I think so.

I think so. Now that you say I think.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:10:03

If you know it's like this threat, like in the past years, like over the years and the the growth of your profile.

NB Natasha Billson   1:10:06

, I did. , because it's just how the algorithm works, isn't it? Unfortunately, as I said earlier, like a negative comment, you're more likely to leave a negative comment than a positive comment anyway, like if you like something you might, you might press the like button. Right. But if you disagree with something, you're more likely to say something. It's what I've seen online. So I think, yes, I would agree with that. Now that you say.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:10:27
Right.
Maybe I mean, in your case specifically now that I think about maybe ask to do going back to what we were saying before about your collaborations with the British Museum. So of course being posted you know on the British Museum account gets your way more visibility, but also way more.
Negative interactions, so it could have something to do with that. What do you think? Or or no.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:10:58
None.
I think it's sometimes down to the content that I'm making, whatever it's about. In general, I think those videos have higher views, of course, like a natural engagement, they have higher. But even if I was to compare it to add the videos I've made and have similar views.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:11:04
Just just the comp, alright.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:11:19
Or more views I do get. . Higher number of negative, but it depends. You know unfortunately depends on the content, specifically what it's about. If it's this sort of sad girl history style content and if I'm talking about something that I know will trigger people so.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:11:27
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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:11:36

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Talking about facial reconstruction, talking about histories that basically change the narrative of what happened in the past, right, if we talk about slavery, anything like this, those contents will have a lot of negative comments from individuals who are racially charged, right? They're not happy with this content being made and.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:11:45
None.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:11:55
They want to say that it's misinformation, don't want to challenge. We'll talk about Graham Hancock on it like these are what is what comes up. So in those moments, , I think it's very specific to the content that's been made.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:11:59
Right.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:12:11
Umm.
That's why those videos do so well. Those sad girl style histories because it's a mix of positive and negative. There's a lot of negative. So it's , clickbait like, right? I know what would get it. Well, sometimes if I do like archaeology news, that's always quite positive.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:12:19
Right.
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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:12:30
And I'll go back to that. I do hope to go back to that, to making content about that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:12:35
, it'd be really interesting.

NB Natasha Billson 1:12:37

, I've always. That was always one of the things. Like, I've been saying this for years, about 4-5 years now. I was like, I'd love to do a weekly archaeology news dissecting like, what's coming up in the papers and actually going well. Let's let's work out where their source is from.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:12:45

Right.

NB Natasha Billson 1:12:52

Like where they get this news, because most of the news isn't from recent it happened a couple of years ago, but only now it's been published, right? So.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:12:52

Right.
So would you like also let's say to focus on connecting more the world of academia to the public rather than, for example, what you're doing now with museums or you used to do with the like commercial archaeology?
Like dissecting papers like I don't know. That's like.

NB Natasha Billson 1:13:12

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Maybe maybe that is, I think subconsciously, I've always thought myself as not being an academic, so I struggle with being put in that box because I was in the commercial sector for so long and we were told we were the others in the archaeology sector. We were never part of them. You know, we were the others.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:13:24

Right.
, I get it.

NB Natasha Billson 1:13:35

So I never felt like I was a part of the the academic crew. So it's kind of weird for me to class myself as an academic, even though I've started this PhD journey, you know, it's weird for me. I don't know. I think I'll get there. But the idea of it right now is still tricky.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:13:43
, exactly. .
, , . About like, identity of, like, personal identity rather than what the happened. What's your position is rather than, you know, commercial or cardiologist or PhD position.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:13:51
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. I just will always be like I'm an archaeologist. I think I don't like. I think I'm. I'm neither of those boxes. In a way. I mean both. I'm like, but I'm not really in the commercial sector either anymore. So it's weird for me. But I would say, , I think.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:14:02
Right, .

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:14:16
Going through the papers are really important because those papers are difficult to understand. It's academic academic jargon like get rid of that and just tell people why we've got this information. I'd love to do that if I have time and I think I will do that. But based on my PhD research, I think I'm going to start from that way first.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:14:20
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Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:14:33
Because I'm reading about it right now, why not make content about what I'm reading and separately, if I have time trying to do the the news that I'll kill you news, it's just finding the balance so.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:14:37
Right.

, sounds really, really interesting. . So I'm going to the concluding points for this interview. Would you like to see more communication like yours from other archaeologists or institutions?

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:14:46
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Oh, both 100%. I think the more people that are online the better.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:15:01
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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:15:03
That maybe institutions need to support the academics, so train them from the get go museums kind of do this a certain working environments. They train your staff, media training you get.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:15:07
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:15:18
And then you have social media policies like they'll have talks, maybe, and then the social media teams will try and get the academics or the curators or the people working there online because it's normally separate teams. So it's really the professionals.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:15:29
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Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:15:35

The archaeologists need to have confidence to talk about whatever their subject matter is and be OK with the negative comments that will come.

Like they will come and I think it's a lot of companies safeguard their staff by saying, look, it's no problem. So like for example the British Museum, because there's a lot of negative comments, they were always emailing me and messaging me that are you fine with this?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:15:45

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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:16:02

You won't think. And I'm like, no, I'm fine. This is great. It's good for the video algorithm like, but that's because I'm a I'm a content creator first. If I was a curator talking about this and getting those comments, I might have a different reaction because I'm not used to it. So I think it's great that they have this safeguarding in effect.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:16:07

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Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:16:19

And I think it can be a part of the training process and I think we need that in all aspects of archaeology, through academia, in commercial, in universe, in museum settings. We need to have it, I think, and I think more people need to because this is what gives power to pseudoscientists like Graham Hancock. They're great storytellers.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:16:38

Exactly, .

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:16:39

And that's all it comes down to. Is being able to be a good storyteller. The more professionals out there, the better it is for all of us.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:16:49

. So you would you rather say you prefer more? Let's say archaeologist taking on the initiative of doing communication like this, for example, on social media rather than maybe.
Looking for a collaboration with the people like you that are already being very active on on this platform like, should they archaeologists do their own or like see collaborations with common creators like you?

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:17:18

They'd have to do both, because you're going to. I think you know, for some content creators. Well, no. Most of us has about time management and we have to say no to things. So you can't rely on anybody.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:17:20

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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:17:36

To help you get experience and with social media, it's like you just reminded me I had a message that's come through that I need to reply to. Someone's asking for advice on becoming ATV presenter. The systems in place have changed.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:17:46

Uh-huh.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:17:51

Content creation is made from a phone now, so I think everyone needs to start first. Try to understand they can do training, speak to the content creators, get some ideas, maybe get training first hand. That'd be great. I used to do workshops ages ago. I think if I can get funding, I'll do it again.
And if I have time, I would love to do that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:18:13
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:18:17
But I think, , I think I'll just have to start themselves and then start if they're not active, no one's going to help them realistically, realistically.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:18:26
Right, they need the support from the institutions they're tied to, right?

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:18:30
, but even this is the problem, though. They're not gonna, they're not necessarily gonna get support from the institutions because.
Every every single content creator is different and it's built on trust, so you can tell from the type of content someone makes, what they may make if they if you invite them to your museum, you have a rough idea already.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:18:42
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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:18:55
Because they can't censor what you're going to make some. Some places will ask for them to review and they will not give permission for a collaboration that might be in your contract as well. But you don't want to be censored for what you want to say. So that's that fine line. You don't want to sell yourself, you know, sell yourself to the devil, so to speak. You want to be able to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:19:00
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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:19:14

Say what you want to say, and I think there's no point of doing collaborations at the beginning until you know yourself, so collaborations are not good until you're established who you are, how you make content unless you want them to film everything and them to edit everything. And therefore you're just a presenter.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:19:31
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:19:31
But to get that experience, it's different now. You need to make content yourself.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:19:38
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:19:38
. And then I think yes, having the support of institutions would be great wherever you work, wherever you're working, if it's a university body, the lab, as part of their engagement process, it would be easier for academics, I would say is to have. , like a group, a cohort.
And then they have that like steering group to create the content, because that's how academia works, right? It's a little bit different. So it's adapting I think, versus when you're at a company, technically you don't have permission to film on an excavation site, so you don't film where you are, you're much from the particular object and talk about that object or talk about a technique you're doing.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:20:00
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:20:15
Where you can't tell the location, but everything you make will be shared if you like it or not. Archaeology is such a small discipline that you know 1° of separation. If I make content, someone's probably shown to someone else saying oh.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:20:16

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NB **Natasha Billson** 1:20:31

Don't you work with her?

So you have to be aware I would say of what you make online and be ready for the consequence. So as long as you're happy with what you make, that's what that matters.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:20:33

OK.

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I'd say those are very good advices and my last question is more like general and towards with a look towards the future like how do you see the role of social media evolving in archaeology in the next few years?

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:20:45

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It's an important component, I think.

If we look at the habits of how people are engaging with content, whether that be digital or in person, generally speaking it's more digital now. So like there are QR codes that you scan when you go to a museum, or you can do AVR and and see what their landscape looked like. So.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:21:15

Right.

NB **Natasha Billson** 1:21:22

More money is being put into those aspects and I think now more than ever, if people are Googling where they want to go, so if they're going on holiday to Rome, they're going to go in TikTok and they're going to search places to go in Rome and they're going to see videos.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:21:36

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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:21:38

And you're going to have people who are visiting his heritage sites. And so we went to here, we spent this much. We went to here. We did that much. So you have normal people making content about it. We don't have enough experts making content about those places. So I feel like it's very important and the.

The space is changing and I think there's confidence now, whereas I think the next generations they don't need institutions as much as we did. You can see that generationally, which is so weird to say. I'm not even old, but like I've noticed the difference with people coming out of uni now versus when we came out of uni.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:22:04

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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:22:11

The barriers were different. Now it's it's it's so easy to make content now, generally speaking, everyone's phone is decent quality camera, so I think and there's loads of free apps to edit, there's loads of YouTube tutorials.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:22:13

Right.

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, it's true.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:22:28

Uh again, most people using TikTok, right? So there's loads of TikTok tutorials out there as well and and.

I think I can't remember how many users there are versus how many creators there are in the TikTok, but it's a crazy gap, something I don't know. Let's say there's like one. It's like,

for example, this is like 1 billion users. There's only like 1,000,000 creators, so it's opportunity for more people.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:22:43
Interesting.
.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:22:51
So the fact is that the the the contrast in how many people consume the content to how many people make the content is huge. There's a huge gap. So there's room for for content creators and the space in archaeology and history is very small. It's the same creators, you see all the time.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:23:03
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:23:09
And that's because of the algorithm, right? But it's very easy now, I would say to be a content creator, a new content creator, it's easy to create a new page. Now you're more likely you're more likely to get more views if you started making content now versus me. If we posted that same video.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:23:09
Of course.
.
Uh-huh.
Interesting. There's a good time to to start, or whoever would like to start now.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:23:26
It's like algorithm. , , . But the algorithms are favouring new accounts as well. So all these things is this is very easy now. It's so much more easier than before.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:23:35
Oh, interesting.
Right.

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:23:43
So , all you have to do is just and also by making content yourself. It's a great communication skill. You learn how to speak, you learn how to talk about whatever it is in a certain amount of time.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:23:52
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NB **Natasha Billson**   1:23:56
So skill.
And I think, , I think universities, institutions, they need to see that it's a skill. So it is, it's this, the new TV social media is the new TV.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:24:00
Right.
Of course.
Right. No, I I fully I could not agree more with these statements. .

NB **Natasha Billson**   1:24:11
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And YouTube is the new school. People go to YouTube to watch 1/2 an hour video instead of reading a textbook.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:24:20
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Natasha Billson   1:24:21
So .

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:24:23
Oh, it's definitely true there. Anything you would like to add that we have like you would have wanted to discuss and you didn't have the possibility with my questions or you think we're because I don't have any more questions from my side. I don't know if there is anything to add for you for you or we can also.

Natasha Billson   1:24:38
Oh.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:24:42
Stop the interview here. We've covered quite some like things like. Thank you. Thank you for that.

Natasha Billson   1:24:42
I'm not sure. I think. I think I don't know. We've covered quite a lot I think.
No problem. If you need to do another one later, no problem. Honestly, did you get hold of Raven? She was on holiday, so I don't know if she's replied. She will do it. I'll ask her. , you can stop. . Let me do it right now. One second.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:24:53
Correct.

Interview with Raven Todd DaSilva

25 November 2025, 06:05pm

1h 33m 5s

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:04
OK.

Umm.

Alright, everything is working perfect.

OK. So thank you for joining me in this interview. We're gonna cover the bunch of topics, including your background, the platforms and content that you produce, your identity on social media.

Your audience and engagement, how this reflects credibility, trust and ethics, and then we're going to conclude with some concluding points. So if you're OK with it, then we'll start.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 0:45
Sounds good, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:46
Alright, amazing. So can you tell me a bit about yourself, especially regarding your academic background and or professional background and how did you became interested in communicating archaeology on social media?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 0:59
Sure. I'll start the long list. I I'll do the qualifications. Bachelor in classical sieve and near Middle Eastern sieve from the University of Toronto many many moons ago in Canada.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:13
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:15
And then I moved to Germany about almost 10 years ago now to start focusing on art conservation and restoration. And I was doing an internship there. When then I decided to.

Eventually, then pursue my masters at the University of Amsterdam for Conservation restoration of cultural heritage, and then from there COVID hit didn't really know what to do after graduating, that because obviously no jobs.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:41
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:53
And so then I went over to London to beat the Brexit EU passport stuff and I started my MA. So I did an MSC in Amsterdam and then I did an MA it at UCL.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 2:02
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 2:10
In the archaeology and heritage of Egypt and the Middle East. So that's sort of the academic journey per southeast of of me and myself and yeah, so it's been.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 2:20
Next, did you do your bachelor in Toronto? Are you partly Canadian yourself or? Yeah, you are. You're just Canadian. Or border raising can. OK, OK, I see. I see.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 2:25
Yes, Toronto, Canada. I am. Yeah. Yeah. They're born and raised in Canada.
First race in Canada and then my dad is Portuguese, hence the the the British. The EU passport. Yeah. But like a big mix of other things. But yeah, those are the main two. I guess we that's how I got to Europe. Yeah, so.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 2:37
OK. OK. OK. I see. I see.
All right. All right, clear.

Raven Todd Da Silva 2:48

I was, you know, when I was that kid that was always really interested in, you know, ancient history, archaeology, all that stuff from a very young age. And then it was actually so in high school, I would say, like, I was always that person, always wanted to make videos when there was something that.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 3:05

Mm-hmm.

Raven Todd Da Silva 3:08

A school project and there was the ability for me to make a film doing it. I'd rather do that than like a poster or a presentation. I always wanted to sort of make a movie and I did it really poorly on like, you know, like the I'm old. So the early 2000s camcorders that were on.
Tape not even like a digital. And I would be editing on a VCR. So yeah, I'm old. So that's how like I really always enjoyed that. And then when I moved to Germany for the internship.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 3:28

Aye.
Wow.
Yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva 3:44

I had just sort of like, you know, quit. You know, you quit the job. I was working at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto. Just kind of doing, like, just like membership work and then volunteering with the registrar on the side and also volunteering with the.
Conservator at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto trying to get more into like the heritage sector. But when I had moved to Germany, I quit everything. I didn't really speak the language. I had no friends. I didn't know anyone there and my cousin was actually the one who sort of suggested it to me.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 4:20
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 4:20
To sort of start this YouTube channel because he and I always really got along really well and talking in, like talking about archaeology and history and stuff, and we were the only two in the family that would do that. And he was always like you would be really great with that. And I used to be.
Like a teacher like a like a swim teacher, * **** and taught kids to read. I did all that like community stuff so he'd be like you'd be really good at communicating this. And so the channel was born.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 4:49
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 4:54
Out of that essentially, where after he sort of planted the seed.
I was like, well, yeah, like I actually, I was going to university at the the birth of YouTube. And like, Rebecca Black era university. And I remember, you know, the everyone we used to always say even back then you can find anything on YouTube if you need anything you want to learn. It's on YouTube.

MD Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 5:11
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 5:19
Was not the case for archaeology, especially if you're studying for midterm and want someone to just tell you what radiocarbon dating is in simple terms, so you can understand it and get through it. So I thought, OK, well, I'll do that then, and I'll make the videos that I wanted.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:21

Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 5:38

In my bachelors, for all my archaeology courses, and I had actually brought my Renfrew and Bron Bond with me over to a lot to journey with me for some reason. And so I started using that and.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:41

OK.

Nice.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 5:54

You know, experimenting and there wasn't any of that stuff on YouTube or on the Internet before. I think maybe that was so I I filmed the first video in 2016 and I started the Instagram around then.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:00

Mm-hmm. What year was it when you, when you started the channel?

Miss you?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 6:13

But I didn't fully post the video until 2017 and I think by then someone had like beat me by 6 months and was like starting it and it was like RKO Duck. It's Chloe Duckworth. I don't know if you've seen, like, the great, Great British ****. She's a professor.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:18

OK.

Ha ha.

Yeah.

Right. Yeah, yeah. I mean, I've read their publication, the channel, it doesn't exist anymore. I'm pretty sure 'cause I look for. But like, yeah, I read the.

R aven Todd Da Silva   6:29

And then there was this other guy.

Yeah.

No, it doesn't. And then there's like the RKO SOUP guy. And he's been doing it forever. And he was like, the only one. And then so like, there was that and then like, Stefan Milo was just starting. So we all sort of ended up starting around the same time except like, RKO soup, it was a.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   6:40

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva   6:54

Weird little bit like people finally were like, let's do it, which was kind of cool. And then I was. But I was doing, I think, Instagram for about the year, a year before just sharing like my conservation stuff and like, little history bits here and there. Museum visits.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   6:58

Aye.

R aven Todd Da Silva   7:10

And then, yeah, and then it sort of, yeah, all kind of kicked off August of 2017. And here we are now, yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   7:18

I see you. Awesome. So what would you like general goals as a content creator back then and if they have changed maybe over time because I've understood they started more or less a sporadic.

Thing and then by a year after it became more of a consistent and planned thing, right.

R aven Todd Da Silva   7:41

Yeah.

I wanted to film a few more videos before I went live with just one, and like, you know, you don't want to post one video and never post again. So I I wanted to like, get that momentum up and then have like a Bank of videos. Before I started my masters in Amsterdam, so.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 7:50
Yeah.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 8:00
That was that bit, and like Germany was really tough. It was a very physical internship, it was stone conservation. It was on scaffolding every day. It was exhausting. So I didn't film a lot of videos during the year as I expected, but like I had spent a lot of time, like, making my own website, like, make learning a lot of new skills.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 8:08
And.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 8:19
Because back then you needed a blog to go with the YouTube channel and like SEO was everything and it was a whole different ecosystem than it is now. And that's what I kind of. So the whole goal was to sort of make this.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 8:25
Yeah.
Hmm.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 8:35
At the beginning was the homework helper ecosystem of you have a midterm. You need to learn stuff quickly. You don't want to read a book, you want someone to just tell it to you and not so many academic ways. And then I was what I was going. I did at first was always write up like under 500 word.
Blog post essentially summarising everything in the video for people. I stopped that very

quickly. 'cause just not sustainable and I was in school. So that's how. Yeah, that was like the main goals of it then. And it was just sort of, you know.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 9:03
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 9:10
Educating and inspiring and.
It was very curriculum heavy at the beginning and very hit and miss because I was in school and it was, you know, you're still experimenting with what to do. And I was very broad at the time. I was like, I was doing conservation and history and archaeology and I was like.
Just way over the place and it wasn't growing very quickly and I did want to see it grow. And of course, if you want to see it grow, you kind of have to be a slave to the algorithm and do what people want. And I now am trying to find.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 9:31
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 9:48
Guys have sort of been trying to find that that balance of making sure I still stay true to what I wanted to do and what brings me joy, but also.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 10:00
OK.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 10:04
Especially now that you know you can earn money off of it and it sometimes helps to like, pay the rent and you're like, well, maybe I it wouldn't be. It wouldn't be terrible if this video did well at the same time. So you have to sort of strike that. And so now I'm sort of.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:17

Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   10:22

I do really miss. I kind of strayed away from the academic stuff and I do really miss. I kind of want to go back and do like an archaeology theory series and I know no one will watch it, but I would love to do it because yeah, and.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:32

That would be very interesting, you know.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   10:39

And I know the people who will watch it will really appreciate it because no one wants to learn archaeology theory, and I I do actually find like even nowadays when I get a comment from a video I made five years ago on, like excavation methods, and someone's like, this really helped me, oh my gosh. Like for my midterm or something. That comment means more to me, and that view means more to me than the 10,000 views that a clickbait video would get. So it is interesting to try and like figure that out nowadays like now. So that's sort of where I'm I'm kind of stuck at the moment I guess.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   11:04

Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

I see. Yeah. So, I mean, it's an evolution process, right, like the.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   11:15

Yeah.

Yeah. It's been interesting to see the whole ecosystem shift in the last nine years.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   11:25

Yeah. And you always gotta adapt, right? Is always. And you gotta make sure.

R aven Todd Da Silva   11:28

The app is changing and there was the Tik tokification of everything and reels on Instagram. Instead of just sharing a a photo and the YouTube shorts and all these these quote unquote historians that pop out of the woodwork and just, you know, and I'm all for people.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   11:32

Yeah.

R aven Todd Da Silva   11:47

You know, doing things that aren't, you know, you don't need a degree to have that kind of credibility, but also maybe do your research before you start posting or stop and like maybe add context. I really hate the like context list stuff. So again, I'm like the old school purist where I must explain everything.
Versus like the 10 seconds of someone's face. And then, like, no context and like another picture to an image. And I'm like no one. No one really gets the gravity of that that point. But it is interesting to see how the, how everything's been changing over the last like 10 years.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   12:04

Yeah.
Right.
Yeah. Speaking of platforms, evolving and changing, do you use other platforms apart from Instagram and YouTube or those are the main two that you use?

R aven Todd Da Silva   12:20

Yeah.
Uh.
Those are the main two. I tried TikTok.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   12:33

Mm-hmm.

Raven Todd Da Silva 12:36

I hated it. Behind you, I make Instagram reels. So at this point I should just re recycling the reels and put them on TikTok. But I'm just I don't wanna go on it, but maybe I should. So I use mostly those too.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 12:39

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So it's something you have, but like not really use or you you closed it after a little bit.

Raven Todd Da Silva 12:52

Yeah.

Yeah, yeah, I still have it. I can tell you the last time I posted must have been over a year ago now.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 12:58

And.

Yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva 13:07

My Last Post was yeah, oh, it was actually in March of this year. Before that it was.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 13:12

OK.

Raven Todd Da Silva 13:19

December 2024 I gained like 5000 followers and I was like.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 13:23

All right, I see now, but I get it. It can get overwhelmed. Like I don't use TikTok myself, so

like, I mainly just use like Instagram and YouTube when it comes to social media platforms myself. You know, I never really. I use Twitter in my life. I never use TikTok. So.

Raven Todd Da Silva 13:30
Yeah, yeah.
Yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 13:42
I understand doing it, it gets a point that is too much and also you gotta find your balance. Some other creators find more success on TikTok for these kind of things and other on Instagram it's really it's not something you can control really. You know it's that's why I understand it.

Raven Todd Da Silva 13:42
Yeah.
Yeah.
That's it. And also I just don't like that everything is getting reposted on the same platforms and then everything's just full of the same content. And then what's the point? That's my thing.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 14:03
None.
Right, so you use basically different platforms for for different kind of stuff like Instagram and YouTube, right?

Raven Todd Da Silva 14:12
Yeah, yeah, I'll, I'll. There is some crossover like I'll do the ancient. I do like these little reels ancient site Sunday. Now I think I've been going for like 20 odd weeks and those will get shared on YouTube as well as shorts. But I'll post other things on Instagram that I don't post on YouTube like especially for stories but other reels and other posts like.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 14:19
Aye.

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R **aven Todd Da Silva** 14:31
Cell posts and things I did start a sub stack over the summer and that was really fun, but then life got really busy, but I really enjoy.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 14:37
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 14:45
That part of it as well, where the you're seeing more of that, you little like a different format of writing and communicating and with people that way and sort of doing these longer thought pieces, especially for videos on like YouTube videos. So some that I just know that I could never make into a video.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 15:01
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 15:01
That I could then just like pound out 3000 words and people won't be bored by that or something in that sense. And so I've had that where I filmed the whole video actually, and I went no, this is a sub stack.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 15:14
Yeah. Interesting. And you have a favourite platform you prefer Instagram over YouTube or the other way around?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 15:16
Yeah.
Yeah.
Like, I feel like I should say YouTube's my favourite because that's obviously my meat and potatoes, but I really love Instagram. I do. It's more fun. And it's like you can connect with people a little bit more like friends are on it, so you can DM and the stories are always

quite funky. You don't have to worry too much with YouTube, it's very much like your video. You the next video you you put out.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 15:32
Yeah. How come? What do you. Yeah.
OK.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 15:51
Is ranked, you know the the analytics which are really great and like you can I think for me like a piece of content on YouTube is worth more both for me but also for the person watching it content wise and valuable of like you know what they're going to learn.
And the audience like I would say, like it's much harder to get a subscriber on YouTube than it is to get a follower on Instagram. I've seen that where I've seen people try and move their huge audiences from TikTok and Instagram over to YouTube and it does not work.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 16:27
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 16:27
So like because of that it's more trivial I think on Instagram, but it is more fun. As a user I would say.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 16:37
Right, right. I mean, I I agree with this personally. Like so when it comes to posting, do you plan your post strategically like or you like follow trends or you try to be more spontaneous with that?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 16:38
Yeah.
Yeah.
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 16:55
Why? How do you go about that?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 16:57
For YouTube I I usually have. I have a whole Excel spreadsheet. I got everything planned out for like. I think I started it back in 2020 and I have like it's very organised, it's colour coded. There's like a million tabs. It's got everything of like.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 17:10
None.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 17:17
Written, filmed, edited all this stuff and I am quite like it's. I leave it to be flexible, but then you know, planning the content really does help, especially for YouTube. And I like knowing that because it is more work.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 17:33
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 17:36
Instagram.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 17:36
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 17:38
It's very laissez faire. I used to plan out Instagram as well right now. Like I know that on Sunday I need to always post about an ancient site and I do plan those in advance, sometimes by like writing the scripts, but everything else in between.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   17:48
OK.

R aven Todd Da Silva   17:54
I'm kind of like, oh, should post or I'll start going through an old archive of like, oh, I need to do something with this and I'll post it or I think also with Instagram, there are certain trends that I don't like to hop on them. I don't like to follow them, but if there's one that I'm like, that's quite cute and it's easy and I can fling it together.
See how it works fine, but I still prefer having not a trend because again, for me, the trends you don't really get a lot of info and I am very much I love providing much more nuance and context than I think a lot of the other short form creators, which is also probably why I'm not as big, but hey.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   18:14
Mm-hmm.
No, that's understandable. Everybody makes his choice. And so like, between, for example, I guess it's also a difference between Instagram and YouTube. But like, how many? How much time do you spend to on the pages to?

R aven Todd Da Silva   18:32
Yeah.
Exactly right.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   18:48
Like I don't know if it's easy for you to quantify them in hours or you just want to like just briefly describe like how much work does it get to to move forward the Instagram and for the YouTube page.

R aven Todd Da Silva   19:02
For like the creation of the content, yeah.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 19:05
Yeah, and managing the page in general, please.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 19:09
I think Instagram takes more man page management, especially 'cause. You have to like make a story every day and at least at the minimum make a story every day right? And replying to comments to help keeping it boosted.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 19:13
Hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 19:26
But in YouTube is the largest time suck because it's the the researching of the script, the writing, the script, the filming, the reshoots. I do all the editing myself as well.
And the thumbnail and the just like it's it's. It's a whole ecosystem, right? It has you need to do the SEO you need to do the tags and the hashtags and you have to optimise everything and then you have to sort of do community posts here and there.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 19:47
Hmm.
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 20:07
That would take me.
If it's a easy one.
Maybe 20-5 hours.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 20:18
OK. Well compared to like like a minute video for Instagram, how much time does it take like an like ancient site Sunday for example?

R aven Todd Da Silva 20:20

With the editing, yeah, unedited.

A minute video.

Like an ancient site Sunday. Yeah, those are about on average, let's say 2 1/2 minutes. It'll take me an hour. And that's like, you know, a little bit of the fixing of the script, the editing, the filming, the editing, the posting that takes. Yeah, I would say it's about an hour of my Sunday.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 20:36

Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 20:47

And then YouTube can take.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 20:47

OK, including the research and the scripts together with the editing an hour, yeah.

R aven Todd Da Silva 20:51

Yeah, they're they're quite short, I would say, like if I if if it's a site that I'm not familiar with, it could take a little bit longer.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 21:01

Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 21:02

Like Max 2 hours, it wouldn't take me more than two hours because they are quite short, right? It's more like, OK, how much can I really say about a place? Which is why it really bothers me sometimes, like how much can I really say about something in in 2 minutes so.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 21:06

All right.

Hmm.

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   21:18

That does it is quite quick in that sense because it's like, OK, gotta keep it snappy, find the highlights, boom, boom, boom, good to go. Whereas YouTube, it's much more in depth and then filming itself will take.

At least an hour, not including setup and teardown time and then editing will take at least.

At least eight hours minimum, usually because the filming the content itself is about an hour long, and so then you have to edit that, and that takes about a long that takes a lot longer than you think. And then there's always some sort of issue with the export. And then there's a sound issue and then you add a colour grade and then.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   22:02

Yeah, it takes a lot of time.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   22:02

If you want to make the yeah, make images move or do things like that. Yeah. But like the I posted a reel today which surprisingly took me way too long. It took me like 3 hours to make and it's only like a 15 second reel 'cause. I had to like find all the footage and cut it and like it was a lot, but.

Yeah, definitely. YouTube is the biggest time suck between the two, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   22:22

Mm-hmm.

Right. Makes sense. And so I'm talking about, let's say, communication strategies you adopt regarding the kind of content you post for example.

What's the tone of voice you usually try to have you try to be more professional, more informal, or more expressive, or do you? Yeah. Let's start with this.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   22:54

Yeah, tone of voice has changed quite a lot over the years. I think at the beginning I was

very much trying to emulate the vlog brothers and crash course. And just like talk really quickly and be, like, really enthusiastic and like, get real close to the camera and be.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 22:59
Mm-hmm.
I.
Alright.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 23:10
Very expressive. And now I I get tired. I'm old. I'm. I do. I love. I like to keep it.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 23:21
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 23:26
Approachable. I don't want to be formal. I want people to feel like they can, you know, have a conversation and they're not afraid to engage with the materials. So using, you know, taking out big words and jargon, or if the jargon needs to be used.
How's the best way that I can just like explain it without being like the definition of and so that way people like get it, you know, try and find an example in pop culture or something that people can understand. Great use that. But always sort of having that angle of.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 23:55
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 24:01
Of approachability and inspiration to give them, like almost like a jumping off point of oh, this was interesting. I want to learn more. I want them to go away with that and then on Instagram it's a little bit.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 24:04
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 24:15

Quippier, I guess sometimes I always be like, yeah, you guys guess what? You know, I'm trying to be like, come with me or you'll never guess. And you have to be a little bit more sensational. But I would never do that on like a longer form video.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 24:24

Mm-hmm.

Right. So when it comes from to short form video on Instagram for example, you say you you try and use the like this kind of narrative framing like storytelling more.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 24:27

Yeah.

Yeah, you need a hook. You know you need, like a what if I told you this? Or did you know that? And for instant, like, sometimes for a YouTube video. Sorry. That was for Instagram. For a YouTube video sometimes, like, yeah, you have to kind of.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 24:42

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 24:55

Get a bit of a hook, but it's more of a.

Come with me, hook instead of a quick I need to grab your attention in 0.3 seconds. It's more like, hey, we're going to go on an adventure. Let's like you know, I draw them in more in that way, but everything is always storytelling. And how you can weave a narrative that people are going to want to be interested in.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:03

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

Right. And what about the emotional engagement? Do you tend using emotions like sadness or humour in your videos?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 25:26

Yeah, I'll make a joke here and there. Usually on YouTube, it's really awkward filming those because you're just the only one making and no one's laughing back at you. So I do some nice poke fun at that. I'm more like, huh? And then.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:29

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 25:43

I would, yeah, I do want to try and make it like funny you Instagram.

I used to try and be really funny on Instagram. It didn't work so well for my content.

Anyways, if there is a joke sometimes it more is like you know I'll do various the kind of like a suggestive, like a deadpan type thing. So it's different sorts of humour, I guess in that sense.

Since.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:10

Mm-hmm. What about, like, other kind of emotional engagement? I don't know. For example, I I saw on your profile once you posted something about.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 26:11

Yeah.

I learned that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:22

It was some art. I don't remember. It was like an specific exhibition, but it was like artefacts like made me fall in love with archaeology or something like that.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 26:28

Hmm.

Oh yeah, that was me trying to like trying out that trend of the like thing.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:36
Yeah, I feel like it was the sort of trend that was popping up.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 26:39
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:42
How did that go? Like? Did you enjoy doing something like that or?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 26:45
Umm.
I definitely had to really curate what I was.
Writing on there and I found that difficult because again, I could have made like a whole video on each of those things.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:58
Hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 27:03
It's.
It was this one I would say, like I'm looking at it now. These are the pieces that actually, so I study my area of focus is the that, the plastered skull at the end. That's like, that's my specialisation from UCL.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 27:19
None.
No.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 27:24
So I did cry when I saw them because I was doing my my research during the pandemic, so

it was like an emotional response for me to see all of them. But of course everything that you've put on Instagram is curated. It's always Instagram versus reality.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   27:35
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   27:41
So this was a way for me to show them essentially without and especially there's always drama with like human remains on on social media. And I'm I'm and I try to respect that as much as possible. It did for me that one I think for me that's not as much as a me that I would normally post I try to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   27:49
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   28:00
Again, I think with the Sutton who, yeah, made me fall in love with archaeology again, that one, I actually did. That one actually was a real, like, emotional one for me because, like, it did, it was my first site that I studied in undergrad, and it was sort of like a surreal experience to visit it. And cuz we did like a whole two or three classes just on Sutton who.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   28:05
None.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   28:20
So all of a sudden you're like, oh, it's real. And so, yeah, like that one, I could say, like, that one was very truthful. And, you know it you have to do those sorts of things you need to play with emotion on Instagrams, especially I find you need to sort of.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   28:22
Yeah.
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva   28:37

Give them that sort of intrigue of like, oh washy out and then it. It doesn't always feel super genuine coming from the person posting it from people that I've spoken to as well, but you have to try and find one that feels.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   28:48

Hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva   28:53

I would say like as genuine as possible to you, because there has to be that separation as well between who you are online and who you are in person. Like I I would say I'm very much like I'm I'm very much an open book. I don't actually like have a brand curated of like this is the meal on the Internet and this is not. But there is still you know you still need to keep some things for your.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   28:57

Right.

R aven Todd Da Silva   29:13

Yourself and you still need to have you know that a little bit of separation and some privacy.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   29:19

OK.

R aven Todd Da Silva   29:21

So yeah, like I'm, I wouldn't say that I'm the master of the emotional heart pulling. I think, you know, you see a lot of I think it's Steph, the archaeologist. She's very good at the like the making you the sad girl archaeology and.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   29:31
Yeah. Sad archaeology girl. Sad girl. Archaeology.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   29:37
Yeah. And I I have my own opinions about sad girl archaeology. I think there are. There is a time and place. Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   29:45
Yeah, I mean, you were kind of saying it before, like beforehand. You like you prefer, always give more context in the in your videos etcetera etcetera. So makes sense.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   29:56
Exactly.
Yeah. And like Steph and I are friends and I, you know, we meet we we meet up and stuff all over it at events and things and conferences. But yeah, we just make very different content and have a different idea about what science communication I guess should be.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   30:01
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   30:16
In certain ways, and you know, I think I'm. I'm a few of us, like I've never aren't really in it for the for the money and then some things make more money and that's fair. Some things get more views and again that's fair too. And it's a very I think it's also a generational thing.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   30:25
Mm-hmm.
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   30:34

I am very much millennial. I can't. I've tried to do the things that the Jen's ears are doing and I just like it hurts my soul a little bit. I'm like, I can't do it. I just so yeah.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 30:35
None.
I see.
Yeah. Do you think also your audience maybe see that? Like, it's weird for your followers to to see you doing that kind of stuff or or not really?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 30:56
Yeah.
I think so. Like I've tried to sometimes I've tried one where like I'm. I'm like, alright. Am I gonna do it? Am I gonna like, quote unquote sell out? And just like, you know, sell out to the algorithm and this is what everyone's doing. Do I need to do it and it?

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 31:12
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 31:14
It didn't perform very well with my audience, which I think was really nice to see. I was like, OK, like, yeah, like.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 31:19
Gov.
It was an experiment to say.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 31:24
It wasn't I I would always try. I did want to try it. I think there's one on my TikTok where I did it and I was like Oh no, I didn't and I just didn't like doing it and I found for me personally, I found that.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 31:28

Yeah.

Hmm.

Mm-hmm.

Raven Todd Da Silva   31:41

When I tried to do what everyone else was doing and try and like be hip and stay with the times, it wasn't working. You know, if you're trying to like, chase it and then when you're being a little bit more authentically yourself.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   31:53

Yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva   31:58

And doing the content you want to make, you will find the audience that you want and that's quite nice to have that really like to be like affirmed about that, which is good.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   32:10

Yeah, right. So yeah, going back to your identity on social media, you said you you really try to to to be as authentic as possible, basically like you are in real life like you also are on social media and and speaking still of your identity on social media.

Raven Todd Da Silva   32:21

Yeah.

Definitely.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   32:27

Umm.

Would you consider yourself?

Like as an influencer, as a as a term or like would you more describe yourself as a the content creator or cause for the for the purpose of my thesis, I'm coining this term. I'm calling it like archeo influencer.

R aven Todd Da Silva   32:48
MMM.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   32:48
To like sort of like describe a very like specific of like communication on platforms like for example Instagram. That's more. I'm focusing on my like actual like analysis because I couldn't do all platforms unfortunately, but I decided to focus on Instagram because it's what I'm more the most familiar with.

R aven Todd Da Silva   33:04
Hmm.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   33:08
And so, you know, I really want to find a term that describes as a whole this, this kind of a communication short form, you know, so how, how do you feel about that? Like describing yourself as an influencer? Like arc influencer? Is it something resonates with you?

R aven Todd Da Silva   33:09
Yeah.
I really don't like the term personally, maybe it's maybe it's like an imposter syndrome thing or some sort of, like, masochistic thing where I'm like no, like I I would never call myself an influencer.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   33:29
Right.
That's fair. That's fair.
No, it's understandable because a lot of times there's a negative connotation tied to it because the first thing you think of an influencer is somebody like Kim Kardashian or something like that. You know, like, that's the first, you know, a lot of people first thought of an influencer is is that, you know, it's not.

R aven Todd Da Silva   33:40

Umm.

Yeah.

Hmm.

Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 33:57
More of the general term. So so I understand it.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 34:00
Yeah, I would say like, yeah, content creator, I would like a science communicator at times. Like I know it's not. There's always that debate, you know, is archaeology a science, blah, blah, blah. But we don't really have a term.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:09
None.

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 34:17
Other than science communication like, I can't just be like I'm a history communicator. That sounds weird. So I would say more of that side of, like, the communication area.
If I always feel weird using the word influencer cause and every time I do it in person to more is like influencer like, I have an audience. I always say that to him like I just I have a following because I don't know how to say it.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:30
Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

Right. But in sort of way we could also say maybe I don't know, the way you present archaeological information like has an influence on like then what the people's perception of archaeology.
East, would you say that or?

Raven Todd Da Silva 34:57

Yeah, 100%. Yeah. Like I would say and not some things of like, Oh yeah, I can hopefully like, you know, change someone's mind about something. And that would be great, especially like a perspective of of some like debated, you know, especially like the the pseudoscience people.

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 35:00

Mm-hmm.

Yeah, like, do good, you know.

Raven Todd Da Silva 35:16

People and the aliens and the whatnots. And so in that sense, yes, of like, can I get people interested in in learning more about history and can I?

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 35:20

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

Raven Todd Da Silva 35:33

You know, get people to maybe think about something in a different way. Great. Then yes, I will call myself an influencer on that side of things. But I you're right. There's definitely need to be a different term for people who.

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 35:41

Yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva 35:49

Aren't just like, oh, here's my favourite lipstick, yeah.

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 35:53

Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. No. Because it's interesting, because actually this something like,

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say, I related from a main interview that I wanted to ask you because I was reading the introduction to this book, new ways of communicating archaeology in a digital world that.

R aven Todd Da Silva 36:11
Mm-hmm.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 36:12
Not 2024. And so the the in the introduction, the authors are talking about.
Like new ways of communicating archaeology and, you know, they're talking also about social media and in the.
Say characteristics of social media, they also discuss influencer and proposing a possibility you know of, like using or collaborating with influencers to share archaeological knowledge online and then.
They also talk about what, if you know that role is covered by an archaeology itself, and they actually make your name like they discuss? Like, one case studies, which is you like they discuss in real brief. I don't know if you know, like, I was really curious to ask you.

R aven Todd Da Silva 37:06
No. Am I in this book?

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 37:09
Yeah, because I was curious to ask you because I thought you had, I don't know, our role or you knew some of the author because this is stuff that got discussed in the EA meeting 2018.

R aven Todd Da Silva 37:11
Oh.
Oh, the 2020. The 2020 meeting, when I present I presented. I was supposed to be part of the book, I think. And then pandemic. I was like, I'm too tired. I can't do it. I'm sorry.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 37:26
For 2020, I think so.
Right. OK.

R aven Todd Da Silva 37:36
Is it they were. She was Italian. Is she Italian?

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 37:39
Sofia Fonseca, Ben Thomas and Aurelia bus.

R aven Todd Da Silva 37:42
Sophia. Yeah. And it was a really long name. And I was like, yeah, she was lovely. I didn't realise that. She. I was. I was still mentioned in it. OK.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 37:46
Right.
OK, OK.
Yeah. You mentioned in the introduction of the book. Yeah, as an example of an archaeologist that communicates on social media quite successfully. So, but like, that's also why I was asking, like, it's like under the section of like, you know, influencers.

R aven Todd Da Silva 37:56
Wow.
Wow.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 38:09
And you're not described as such, but like you know, it's, it's in the paragraph. When discussing, you know the the the intersection between an influencer and an archaeologist online. So that's why I wanted to to ask you about this.

R aven Todd Da Silva 38:09
Hmm.
Yeah. No, no, that's kind of fun, yes.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 38:27

And found it. Very yeah, I found it very, very interesting. You know, it's also because again, you know, since this topic is not quite covered in literature like that was like one of the very few mentions and not the only mentions of like you know.

R aven Todd Da Silva 38:31
Hmm.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 38:43
Uh.
Recent current content creators about archaeology and social medias, it was very interesting to include also in my my piece.

R aven Todd Da Silva 38:51
Mm-hmm.
Yeah, it was a really interesting conference and there's a I've done a few papers now with. Have you spoken to anyone on the? I don't know if this is part of maybe part of your research or not, but like the Archaeology podcast network.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 38:56
All right.
None.

R aven Todd Da Silva 39:10
Yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 39:11
Umm.
Did I? Oh, yeah, I think yes. Is in is the what's his name? David. Ian Ho on the he's on the network. Right. He's part of the network.

R aven Todd Da Silva 39:19
Matilda.

Oh, David's great. Yeah. So he's part of it. But if you want to speak to. Yeah, he's amazing. Absolutely lovely. Human. But if you want to speak to someone who, like, runs it 'cause I do a lot of presentations with her. She's quite.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 39:30
Yeah, because I contacted him specifically.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 39:44
Enthusiastic about communication, but not on like she's she manages the Instagram for the APN but she doesn't. It's not all Instagram. I know if you're focusing on Instagram, but it was Matilda Seabricks, yeah?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 39:49
Mm-hmm.
Right. Umm.
Right. Yeah. I'm really focusing like I, I I did look at them also at their page, but it's because I'm not really discussing podcasts and also seen some basing my methodology of like the actual like analysis part of like other papers I was like using this benchmark of just.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 40:02
OK.
Yeah.
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:22
Just you know to make selections and make my life easier, but that's why. But I I definitely considered it when I was like, you know, making a list of, like, all the archaeology related content I could find on the on on Instagram specifically, but also another platform, you know.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 40:25
Totally fair. Yeah. Yeah.
Yeah, there's a lot now, actually. Yeah. Nice.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   40:40

But yeah, but I thank you for the suggestion. Yeah. Yeah. So Speaking of your audience, you were mentioning, you know, how, like also what sometimes you when you posted something that wasn't really you didn't, like, resonate quite well with your followers. So. Who is your audience? As in like, who are there any specific population groups in or is it more general varied?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   41:06

None.

I haven't done a deep dive into my Instagram.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   41:14

OK.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   41:14

Audience.

Thing in a while. Can you even find your audience anymore? They used to tell you.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   41:22

Hey, I feel like it's a part of like the the analytics, but I think it's for the same for YouTube should always give you the possibility of looking at age demographics and sex and geography and this kind of stuff.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   41:27

Yeah.

Yeah.

I know YouTube is very different than Instagram.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   41:41

Uh.

There.

Raven Todd Da Silva 41:47

None.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 41:49

What? Yeah. How is it on YouTube?

Raven Todd Da Silva 41:52

YouTube let me get my analytics up here.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 41:55

They don't have to be specific, and I also, if you would just, I don't know if you want to say like, what do you feel your audiences or like what I don't know from all right.

Raven Todd Da Silva 41:56

Yeah.

I honestly don't even know what my audience is in and on Instagram because it's been. It's been an interesting like 3 months of, like intense growth on Instagram. So I don't really know who the audience is. I had like a a real sort of go viral in India.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 42:15

Mm-hmm.

OK.

Raven Todd Da Silva 42:23

So now I have, I think a bit of a skewed audience from India in in the last three months. Everything you know, everyone was like, oh, everyone's watching it over there, which was great. But then it's, I don't know what it would it be like now for example, because I haven't posted anything.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 42:27

Yeah.

Right.

R aven Todd Da Silva 42:39
From India, the last little bit but like audience wise on YouTube I can tell you mostly male.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 42:44
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 42:47
Between 25 to I'd say 50 is like the maiden age group.
30% United States next is UK, Canada, India, Australia.
So far, apparently 83% not subscribed. Interesting. Yeah. And I think my audience on Instagram skews more.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 43:09
Good.

R aven Todd Da Silva 43:17
Female actually.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 43:19
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 43:20
Let me see Instagram audience insights. How do I find it? Tell me where to find it. Here we go.
So if you just so you can have it.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 43:31
Yeah. Thank you.

R aven Todd Da Silva   43:33

No worries, I know what it's like to to need the data.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   43:37

Yeah.

R aven Todd Da Silva   43:41

Where to find?

There we go. Show me profile tap professional dashboard. I did that. Now what?

I don't have the menu icon. Well, that's terrible.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   43:57

Hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva   43:59

They're not being very good on this and say select insights.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   44:11

If it is too much work, it's OK like it's not a problem.

R aven Todd Da Silva   44:11

OK, I can show you. No, no, it's so my audience in the last month, we'll do it in the last.

90 days.

Just because of that one from India that shifted everything, yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   44:31

Yeah.

R aven Todd Da Silva   44:35

Oh, I lied. Apparently you can't do that. For audience. It's only 30 day period. Fine. In the

last 30 days. Sorry, my top, my top city was Bangalore and then it was Berlin because I also

posted about a German site. It. That's The thing is, I post about regional bits and so it shifts and then luck in New York.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 44:39
Oh, alright, no problem.
Mm-hmm.
Right. Makes sense.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 44:55
Top countries still the US and then India, Germany, UK top age range 25 to 34.
And now it skews 66% men. But I do think there were more women last time, but I think YouTube itself was, I think like more than 60% men.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 45:10
Mm-hmm.
Right, I see and. But when you make content, do you aim for a specific population group or you just really make content for everybody?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 45:17
Yeah.
I make content for, I would say anyone over 18 because you know you don't want to worry about kids content and stuff. Whoever's interested, whoever wants to engage with it. Come on over. I'm not really worried about, like I know some people are like, I need to be the voice of.

MD **Iitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 45:29
Right.
Right.
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 45:44
This community, and I'm like I feel like for me, I just want to make it as accessible and interesting as possible to as many people as I can.

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MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:51

Right. And and before you were saying also something about adjusting your content to meet your audience expectations. Is it something you do often or like you're you said you're trying to like you know just?

R Raven Todd Da Silva 46:06

Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 46:07

Make something that you enjoy first or.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 46:11

Then when I like if I get a lot of requests like if people are going oh, you know, I'd really love a video on this or. Oh, and then, you know, OK, like, that's actually a really good idea. I never thought of that. Then I'm like, yeah, sure, if that's what you guys want to see, I'm happy to make that or, you know, especially for the ancient site Sundays, they're like, oh, can you do this one? Can you do that one?

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 46:16

Oh.
Right.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 46:31

I'm like, right? Give me. Give me ideas. I'm running out of ideas, so that's always fun. And then sometimes just getting their opinions. You know, if I if I, I usually curate the list again. I don't want people to just throw things at me.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 46:34

Yeah.
Mm-hmm.
Yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva 46:47

And I always in my mind, I'm like I reserve the right to say no 'cause. I'm always like people, like go. Oh, you should do that. You should that, like, I just, I don't want to. And then I won't do it. But if I go oh, which one should I do X versus Y? And I do like a poll or something.

I will usually listen to the poll just because they got it is a video I want to make anyways, but then it's like, OK, I'll just move it up my calendar so I know that that's because then you know how you want to. You want to make sure that the audience feels like they're.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 47:04

Mm-hmm.

Raven Todd Da Silva 47:17

Part of the community. It's part of, like the community building, right, like they're part of something and it's. I used to be a community manager. And so like, you know, you can understand that bit of wanting. You wanna keep the audience. So you wanna make sure they feel like, yeah, you care about them. Yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 47:20

Right, yeah.

Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

Mm-hmm. And is there other ways you interact with your followers? Like, do you tend to respond to a lot of comments or not really? Or you do lives, these kind of things?

Raven Todd Da Silva 47:33

Yeah.

If it's a if I have the time I started getting into it this year and I really liked it. It was whenever I post a new video, I said it as a premiere, so there's a lot. There's the chat and I loved the chat 'cause. It was like every other week on a Monday at sit. This time people knew.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:51

None.

Nice.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 47:59

Okay. And then you just start having. You don't and you're not even really talking about the video. You're just chatting and that's really nice. You get into some weird topics depending on how long the video is and some people will stay the whole time. Other people will pop in. And that was always quite fun for me.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:11

Aye.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 48:16

I haven't done that in a while. I need to do that. Yeah. And then on YouTube as well. I'll do like community posts on Instagram. I recently just did like an ask me anything when I hit 40,000 Subs. So that was quite fun.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:18

Nice. That's for YouTube, right? Yeah, for the.

Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 48:36

I will reply to comments that are, you know, sometimes people get really irate and ridiculous. I won't, I don't engage in those ones, but if there's like genuine questions or someone's like, actually you miss, you missed something by accident or you.

You know there's an error. I will always be like I made a mistake. I like. I don't want to ever have to like, shy away from that. So I'll reply to those ones if people ask, like genuine questions. Yeah. Like I'll reply to as many as possible, but I am only human. And I have a full time job.

So I do what I can and like sometimes people will send me DMS with like really, you know, really important questions that I will feel like I need to reply to. And yeah, things like that.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:09

Yeah.

Mm-hmm. And what's the kind of interaction like, let's say, level of interaction you get to your followers? Usually it's mostly about them expressing curiosity. There is. Is there more debate? Hostility.

Or.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 49:39

I think it definitely depends on the type of content.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:43

Hello.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 49:47

I made a video, the one I made about a site in India. I pronounced the site wrong or they didn't hear me pronounce it correctly. Like there's an A and I. If you really listen. I do say it and not in the way that people are not are hearing it and they keep posting like she said.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:57

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 50:06

What now? And I'm like, I didn't say that if you listened and people get really mad and then there there ended up, there was all of a sudden like a religious argument going on about like Muslims versus Hindu. And I I went. I had to stop reading the comments because I was trying to hide and delete as many as possible.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 50:09

Good.

OK.

Raven Todd Da Silva 50:26

But you you can only do so much and I don't know what you know. So people were getting very mad if I if I do see there's like a long like argument thread I will delete it. I'm like, that's not I'm not OK. I personally will never.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 50:29

Yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva 50:41

Engage in an argument. It's not worth my time. It's not worth their time. Someone on the Internet, if they have an opinion, their mind is made-up. It's that's it. They're posting it. They're engaging in the argument to get a rise out of you. It's that they have their fun. I refuse to engage into that. And I don't want to, like, give into that, essentially.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 50:45

Right.

Raven Todd Da Silva 51:00

So I will only I like. I guess I championed the ones who are like excited and interested and have genuine questions to try and then foster that community of like there is no hate speech. There is no tolerance for anything like that on my page. I will block you. I don't care about losing followers at that point.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 51:00

Yeah.
Right.

Raven Todd Da Silva 51:22

So.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 51:22

And speaking still of like negative comments, something that I noticed, I think all the creators I interviewed so far, which is like and also in just in general, you're like it's mostly women creators.

R aven Todd Da Silva 51:25
Yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 51:38
And it's something that I know is with everybody is that there tends to be like a lot of like misogyny and like sexist comments like sent towards them. Is it something sometimes even like really bad stuff? Like is it something that you also relate to it?

R aven Todd Da Silva 51:38
Hmm.
Yeah.
I don't get a lot of that on Instagram. Yeah, it's my little happy place. No one's been like. Yeah, like no one's been like, you're a woman. How dare you? Like, sometimes people will get mad at, like, I use BCE instead of, you know, BC and AD. And I, you know, I use.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 51:59
OK. Interesting.
Wow, OK, usually it's the other way around.
Yeah.
Hello.

R aven Todd Da Silva 52:16
I'm an air. Oh, no. And Neil deGrasse Tyson says he uses AD because he wants to, like, respect the thing, and it's always a man that says that. Oh, Neil deGrasse Tyson says this. I'm like, well, I'm not Neil deGrasse Tyson. Like, I don't know what you want from me. So I've never had anyone not that, not to my recollection, that I've seen anyone comment about. Like, oh, she's a woman on Instagram. There was a video. Whenever a video goes quite big on YouTube in the last little bit, especially this year I found.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 52:41
Aye.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 52:51
Especially if it's an Egypt one. I did a Joe Rogan video. That's when it gets bad that Joe Rogan video accidentally went. It hit a million views.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 52:57
None.
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 53:07
And yeah, it ended up on the trending page on YouTube. And I was like, oh, my God, what's happening? What's happening? I didn't expect, like, that's a video I spent, you know, you know, before I think just a few weeks before I'd made this whole half an hour video on the Romanovs and archaeology and how we found the family and.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 53:08
I might have seen that I don't remember. Probably, yeah.
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 53:26
It took me forever and I worked so hard on it and it tanked. And then this video I created this script in like 11 minutes and it's always the ones that you just don't put any effort into that just and that one was so much of don't listen to this woman who are you you.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 53:39
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 53:45
Don't even have a PhD and I'm like, does Joe Rogan have a PhD? And oh, she's so braggy

about her things and she's just, like, throwing her education in our faces. And I was like, I wasn't. I was just kind of, like making a statement. And then I have a nose ring. I have a septum piercing. And apparently there's this whole online septum piercing.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   53:49
Yeah.
And.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   54:05
Theory that I didn't know about and so there is about, I think about 10,000 comments just about my nose ring. I've just nose ring detected, opinion rejected. I can't take you can have all the degrees you want. I stopped listening after I saw your nose ring. I couldn't hear anything because I could your nose ring.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   54:15
Umm.
Oh my God.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   54:25
Glaring at me. I'm like it's not even a big one. Calm down. Yeah, and, like, one guy. I just. So that's what I get.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   54:28
That's terrible. Yeah, but let's say with that in that case also you attract a lot of people. That is not your usual. Like like audience, I guess, yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   54:37
That's it, yeah.
That's it. If it's you, when you get people like I know Steph's content because she does go quite viral quite a bit. You know, she then you'd get people who aren't your typical audience coming in, who just want to be mean for being mean.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 54:48

Hmm.

More often, yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 54:57

So there is something to be said, I guess about being small and staying that way and curating your audience and having that that dedication cause also it's a little bit I find they're more supportive and they're more receptive to things.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 55:05

Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 55:13

And you kind of get to know certain ones and you they you know, you kind of become a human rather than just a person on the screen. Sometimes I do reply going hi. I'm a real person reading these things and just to just to get as you people say yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 55:26

Yeah.

No, of course. So considering all of this, how do you measure more or less the success of your communication? Like do you follow metrics that much or is it more about the actual engagement you get with your with your followers?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 55:42

Yeah.

I.

How do I describe this?

So for YouTube with those like I mentioned, like for me like if someone says like that really helped me and it's a video that has maybe 1000 views, I think that that's the more successful video out of anything that could have ever posted. Is that like someone who or someone I get emails sometimes being like.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 56:10
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 56:14
You know, this is exactly what I needed for this, or oh, your video on this very weird curriculum based thing. Help me decide to stay in or like, help me with this. Or I saw this video and I really want to go and do archaeology like that for me is the success metric that I.
Value above everything else and I have to remind myself a lot because because you see that you know debt comparison is the death of anything creativity, of, of everything and it just kills your soul because you see how other people are doing well and you go why not me? I'm putting in more work and this and that.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 56:44
None.

R aven Todd Da Silva 56:52
And you know the other person says the same thing about you, and then it's just a whole terrible cycle. So I do get caught up in a lot of the numbers. Like for me, like, a successful. I love a good number. Like, if, you know, the numbers are what gets you.
Unfortunately, other opportunities so you would need to care about the numbers and you need to care about that. So like for example like yeah, say the one I the where I kind of started like a culture that everyone was like arguing about religion in the I1 I would say.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 57:12
Hmm.
Hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva 57:28
It's successful for views. I would not say it's a successful post. It's not one that I would share with people to say because it has 900,000 views right now. I'm not one to be like, Oh my

God, I got 900. I would never say that about that one. For example, if it's one that I, you know, that has really good engagement of people, really excited about stuff and it's.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 57:32
Yeah.
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 57:47
Doing well, then I'll be like. That was a really successful one. So I think I need. There's a there's a marrying of the the quantitative and the qualitative that for me makes it a success versus just looking at straight data.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:05
Right. That makes sense. OK. So going a little bit back also on your identity on social media and your identity also as an archaeologist. First of all, I want to just to clarify because I'm I'm gonna miss something on your back.
Is your current job. Like you say, you have a full time job. Is that in archaeology or no? Like are you a practising archaeologist or or no? Or you're within academia? I don't know. So.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 58:30
So currently.
I I practised on my.
I practise on my holidays. I use my holiday days to do it because an archaeology job in the UK will pay less than you could make essentially at a grocery store, which is really depressing and it's very difficult field obviously so.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:39
OK.
Yeah, yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 58:54
I work in heritage. Still I work at the Natural History Museum in London.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:58
Oh, awesome. OK, super cool.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 59:00
Yeah. So it's it was a little bit of a pivot, but I'm still quote unquote in the field, it was a very difficult decision obviously to do that. But you got to pay the bills somehow.
And so instead of working for a commercial archaeology, I now do product management and I actually do I manage and I spearheaded all of our online course platform development. So I kind of do that as my day job as well as I work in the science communication. But on the like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 59:29
Go ahead.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 59:35
Higher inside of the like the product management side of it, so organising it, making the website, helping with the production and the editing. So it's sort of in the same field but not like we're doing a Neanderthal course right now, which is quite I'm excited about that one finally because I don't want to do another one about snails.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 59:39
Right.
Mm-hmm.
Right.
Thanks.
Yeah, of course. All right. So taking into consideration also these aspect like how do you balance your identity as an archaeologist with your role on your social media pages and in this sense that as your?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 59:56
So.

Yeah.

Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:00:12

Let's say credibility as an archaeologist, like the perception of your credibility as an archaeologist is that different from your, within your public and the people you work with, or other archaeologists.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:00:20

Yeah.

That's a very good question. I struggled with that a lot in previous years because.

You know, if you're not a practising, you know you know how it is in the field. If you don't have a job title with the name archaeologist in it, or if you're not actively in it, you're not a real archaeologist, you're not this you're not that. And when you're studying archaeology, I made a video about this, I think on my YouTube channel.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:00:46

Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:00:55

I haven't when I had, like, taken a year off or something and I had to like, I came back and I was like, I owe you guys an explanation why I disappeared. 'cause. When you're in school and when you're studying, they kind of make it like your whole personality. I don't. Maybe it was mostly that and especially in North America a little bit.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:01:11

The.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:01:13

In other schools I had been to, but very much so North America was like you are an archaeologist. You're not a person who has the job of an archaeologist. You know, it's like people who.

I would say it's very similar, maybe to teachers where it's very much your identity versus

someone who works in an office who's an accountant or who's, you know, an executive assistant. You wouldn't think that that's like your whole life. But if you're an archaeologist, it's expected to be your whole life.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:01:33
None.
Right.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 1:01:46
And I have an issue with that because in a field that's like so difficult and you know gatekeepy and unstable and underpaid. Most of us can't sustain that, you know, and it's all physical on your body. What if something happens to you?

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:01:49
Mm-hmm.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 1:02:05
You know, at things and funding runs out, so you need to be creative and find a way. It's like being an actress and everyone does other things on the side, but people will still say I'm an actress, right. And I wouldn't. And there is that stigma of if you do anything else, especially again, if you're an actress or something, right, where if you're not.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:02:14
Yeah.
Yeah.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 1:02:24
You haven't made it. You're not successful and that really bothers me. And so actually, half of the reason I went back into school and got another MA in archaeology was that I could almost feel like I felt a little bit more like.
Qualified just for doing what I'm doing, like that's how toxic the the academic environment is, where I had to feel pressed to pressure to go back into debt, to go get a third degree, just to feel like I could, like, call myself an archaeologist.

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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:02:45
None.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:02:57
I have dug quite a decent amount like I've worked in archaeological conservation. I've done excavations in like Greece N Macedonia, Italy I worked at. I went to Troy in 2022. I was just in Portugal over the summer, out of sight as well, and I was.
Not only digging like there's it's a field school and I was part of the like I was there to do like an A conservation assessment on the walls and on the site itself and then set up a field school for conservation students so they can come in and like, you know, do some conservation work on site and.
So like I'm still active in the field as much as possible, I'm prevent. I'm presenting at conferences and I'm engaging in in current discourse and study.
And it's very. It still feels sort of fake, but in this day and age, I feel like that's changing quite a lot. At the beginning it was very like difficult to have that identity as an archaeologist online because of that imposter syndrome and because of the, oh, you're posting on social media. What is that? That's not, you know.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:04:01
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:04:07
And even today, people comments like are you actually a real archaeologist? And I was like, guys, my my LinkedIn is public. You can see whatever you want. I don't care. Like girls gotta eat and you know, and I I still.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:04:10
Yeah.
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:04:22
Want to stay as active in the field as possible, to the extent that I can. So yeah, I use like

more than half of my holiday days every year just to go and excavate and to do something and online I don't. I recently have started to not shy away from that.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:04:33
Right.

R Raven Todd Da Silva   1:04:40
So beforehand it was very much like you had to sort of craft the persona of, like the archaeologist who goes all over the place. And, you know, this is not quite Indiana Jones, but like, you know, the the non colonial ethical Indiana Jonesy character.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:04:51
Mm-hmm.

R Raven Todd Da Silva   1:05:00
There, who's just really excited about getting their hands dirty.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:05:01
Yeah.
Yeah. Well, it sounds to me that you still have a plenty of that, you know, like, I mean, you know, you're saying it's makes sense from your own perspectives to to be a conflicting thing. You never really know. But, you know, when when I I hear it as a.

R Raven Todd Da Silva   1:05:05
But yeah.
Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:05:22
As like I said, outsider, from your experiences, it sounds to me that you're more than archaeologist than I am. You know, just for, I don't know for for share experience, you know, just just for that. And then a bunch of other things. So and.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:05:25

Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

In.

I think it's. Yeah. Thank you. It's I think it's one of those things. I'm just never feeling good enough or like, experienced enough especially in the field because there was always someone that's always saying, but you don't. You're not this, but you're not that no matter what in academia, right?

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:05:39

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Yeah, but you know.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. But, you know, if your your preparation is that you have a background in that, I mean, I I feel like you have all the right to, you know, to define yourself as an archaeologist or define yourself whatever you want. You know, I will call myself an archaeologist because, you know, I haven't spent.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:05:55

But.

Yeah.

Thank you.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:06:09

Five years of my six years of my life studying nothing, you know? Of course that's, you know, it's part of my background. So feel like it's.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:06:14

No, exactly right. So yeah and.

Yeah, I think so. So like it's now I'm a little bit more, Les, I fear about it. I think once you hit your 30s, you just stop caring and it's really nice. Yeah. So that that's helped a little bit and also kind of being able to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:06:21

Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

Nice.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:06:37

To reclaim it on my own terms, I think that's the main thing is being able to do this. This sort of X, this communication, he's making these videos and still maybe doing a conference presentation or still maybe going to get my hands dirty.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:06:40

Right.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:06:54

I know that there's still so much more to learn and so much for me to do. I'm not like, you know, a professional digger, but I I have had a lot of fun, I would say, in the last year and a half trying to re.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:07:01

None.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:07:10

Redefine what it is to be an archaeologist on the Internet.

And that's been quite exciting and very liberating because it it because I think of what I guess Gen Z is doing, all these people coming out online just being like, I want to be a historian. And I'm like, you know, at the beginning you kind of go, who are you? And then you realise, wait, if they can do it, why can't I do it?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:07:34

Yeah. So let's see.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:07:35

Yeah, I've got three pieces of paper to tell me that I can do it, but I still don't believe in myself. Come on. So yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:07:38

Yeah.

That's really nice. So as a let's say summarising, we'd say like that maybe at the beginning you found more conflict between you know, I mean the identity like identifying as an archaeologist itself and then also the way it's related to your.

On social, on social media, while now it's you find way less of a of a conflict. As I understood in it.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:08:04

Yeah.

Yeah, I think so. Like it's very much now like kind of going OK, I can I can choose because it's the Internet and everything's curated. I can choose how I want to express who I am as an archaeologist online rather than trying to adhere to.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:08:13

Right.

Right.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:08:26

What some you know, antiquated person in a tower in an ivory tower defines as what what an archaeologist should be. And that's quite nice to see, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:08:37

Right. And as you're on social media being perceived negatively or positively by your peers?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:08:48

Hit and miss hit and Miss Peers who understand it and who are younger. Totally get it like

the when I worked at Troy, they wanted to do a lot more social media output. It was. It was the Dutch excavation of the Archaeology of Archaeology at Troy. He wanted to do a whole PR.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:08:50
None.
Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I heard met people from there.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:09:07
Thing I was in charge. I ran that whole Instagram. Yeah. Yeah. So all that Instagram posting was me, and that was quite fun to do. And you could tell he didn't take it as seriously, like he knew that it needed to be done, but he didn't like respect it enough. I guess in that sense.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:09:11
Yeah.
OK.
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:09:25
So there's still like some minds who need to be changed and they they know it's important and they know it needs to be done, but they don't understand the extent that it needs to be done too. So there, you know, it's as with archaeology, it's very slow moving and we're trying our best. Some people like, I was at the side I was on in.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:09:40
Right.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:09:43
July. She's always on social media with your posting. Like if it's if people find something cool, as long as it's not like a coin or something valuable to like, encourage looting in the locals. They're like, let's post it. Look what the student found, how fun, how cool this is, what they're doing over here and.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:09:57
Yeah.

R aven Todd Da Silva   1:09:59
I think that that needs to be a lot more. I think that needs to be emulated a lot more with other sites and I know that there's always the drama with publications and safety of sites and whatnot and so you need to find a way around it. But we need to show people what the real archaeology is and what's going on and.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:10:10
Yeah.
Mm-hmm.

R aven Todd Da Silva   1:10:18
OI find like, yeah, some people really get it and they they love it. They understand it, others they turn their nose at it because they don't go. That's new. It's different. They don't care. Yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:10:39
Yeah. So I I I understand that and I do ask you another question regarding your followers and your perception. Has the growth have you noticed if the growth of your followers over time changed the way you're perceived?

R aven Todd Da Silva   1:10:39
And.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:10:56
By both by your public and also by like other people like your peers.

R aven Todd Da Silva   1:11:03

I think it's difficult when it's when it's been, when I've been doing it for so long and I've had like a very weird growth trajectory in comparison to other people.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:11:08
Hmm.
Right, because I mainly asking this question because on like social Media Research, there is this one paper about influencers and you know and their public and the way different factors affect their their perception and basically.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:11:15
None.
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:11:34
One of the results was that usually there is a correspondence in between the the number of followers and the number, and then the perception. So the higher is the number of followers the the worse the perception gets and the engagement also gets.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:11:43
No.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:11:51
So I don't know if you noticed anything like this with you or not.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:11:52
Yeah.
And.
I guess in the last few months when like.
I think like back in the day when it was like very minimal and you would tell people about it, they just didn't care.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:12:11
Hmm.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 1:12:13
I think nowadays it's changing where, like. Yeah, sometimes if you have, like a crazy amount of followers like look at like was it Alice Loxton. She's got like over a million. I don't even know if she has too many. I don't know. Something crazy. She does history instead of archaeology but like.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:12:22
Or.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 1:12:29
I think within the society like it depends. I think it really much depends on like how you interact.
With other people in your field like so for, there's two different. I would say there's two different views, like modes of being perceived, right. So there's the people who are in your niche who are also creators. And then also I would say adjunct like on top of that, there's also the people who.
Like in academia, for example, I think the people in academia.
I don't think they care, no matter how many followers you have, unless it's something that they need or they find valuable 'cause I like. I remember just like talking about it at UCL sometimes and professors are just kind of move on, right? Like they didn't care.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:13:12
Aye.
Aye.

R Raven Todd Da Silva 1:13:22
But then within the people who are also doing their content, you could have the most amount of followers ever, but if you're not like a nice person or engaging.
Humbly with other creators or just like being, you know, oh, let's make a community out of

this. You will. No matter like the the more followers you have, I think the more you are despised of.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:13:52
Yeah.

R Raven Todd Da Silva   1:13:52
Better word, but then publicly.
It's difficult. I wouldn't say like if someone has that many followers, there's usually like that automatic.
Trust for a lot of people like oh, they have a lot of followers. They must have something important to say and they must know what they're talking about. But then there's also that, Elsa, when I in my mind in it, invites a lot of extra negativity and faff that you don't need to like from from people who coming in and say like, oh, you're.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:14:11
Mm-hmm.

R Raven Todd Da Silva   1:14:25
Especially, I would say that with the feminist side of things and like just being a girl on the Internet, if you have more followers and stuff, a lot of I've seen a few people, they get comments like, Oh well, they just got a pretty girl to say XYZ.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   1:14:30
Yeah.

R Raven Todd Da Silva   1:14:41
Instead of her actually having any of the credentials, and I think that the bigger you get, that gets more into question because especially as a woman, no one can believe that you can actually get that.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:14:51
Right. So.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:14:52
Yeah, I don't know if that answered your question at all. I'm so sorry. I just want like a weird rant.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:14:55
No, no, of course. Like it's there's not something you can really know unless you know you do like an actual like, like, very like specific study and analyse all the analytics. You know, it's just something I asked about, you know, it is something about like a sensation or like a feeling you you or something you just notice by your interaction.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:15:04
Yeah.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:15:15
It's in your engagement, so you know it's just slowly.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:15:16
Yeah. If I see like a. Yeah, sorry if I see like a big site and like a big one, that's like gets a lot of, you know, millions of views. And I it's for me, it's the quality of the content, right. If I'm watching that reel and I'm like, how did that get?

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:15:28
Yeah, yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:15:33
A million views. That's terrible. You know, like this is it's not accurate or it's just sensational or it's trying to just get a rise out of somebody. Then I'm like that. Like, I know why I got.

But you're also like, why is this person have so many followers when, like, you're not actually walking away with anything?

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:15:35
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:15:50
Again, I'm. I'm old, so I'm like you don't have anything of value coming from this. How dare you even people just want to brain rot maybe. And that's fine too. But in my mind, if you're there to do educational content, try to do something, you know and.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:15:51
Right.
Yeah.
Yeah, yeah.
Right.
So.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:16:06
Yeah.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:16:07
Yeah. So talking about establishing trust and for the ability with your audience, apart from, you know, like trying to, you know, always provide context about the things you say and also you know.
Showing your authentic self any other way you try to establish trust and credibility or that's about it.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:16:35
I don't. I wouldn't say it's something that I like actively try to do anymore. I used to really try and then I would be really hard on myself if something, you know, you make a mistake and or you know you do something human.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:16:41

Right.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:16:52

And something happens and it just having to always feel like you have to prove yourself to somebody is exhausting. And what I want people to do is do their own research.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:17:02

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:17:09

Come up with your own opinions in an age of AI, that's probably impossible now, but you know I am who I am. I am who I say I am. I have the credibility. I have the experience. I know what I'm talking about. And for me, that just means if you want to like.

Post like put that credibility out there, you just speak with confidence. You 'cause I had. You have to remember that you are coming from a place of confidence as a creator who has X amount of qualifications. You know what you're talking about.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:17:40

Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:17:42

And then if you kind of.

Present that information in that way of like that. Just calm collective of like, yeah, I know not cocky, not like, oh, I'm just smarter than you. But more in the just like, let's talk about this stuff.

I've done the research, I know what I'm doing and then you just that can that kind of just builds trust inherently, right? People just go. Yeah. OK, cool. I'm gonna come along with this journey because of the way that you speak about it all. It's all within, like, the just the delivery of it, I would say.

So it's not something that I actively think of. Oh, how I how will I be bringing across my credibility? It's more just like I am credible. And I'm gonna make sure that you don't

question that like there was that in the Joe Rogan video. I did kind of go. I just don't have all of that because.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:18:16
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:18:36
It was part of the bit about Joe Rogan and just as a but that other than that I don't think I've ever. I've never actually said my degrees out loud on a video.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:18:40
All right.
Right.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:18:49
Yeah.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:18:50
And so.
So maybe we discussed before some things like dealing with controversial topics, stuff like that. Do you face or like negative comments?
So do you face other, let's say, dilemmas when creating content and publishing content?
Or like also like ethical nature, like simplifying too much or, yeah, monetization like this, kind of like things that can become like.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:19:16
Hmm.
Definitely.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:19:27
Like a dilemma of some sort.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:19:31

I never really worry about monetization, especially for like YouTube. Like if it is something that I really want to post. If it doesn't get monetized or whatever, I just take turn off monetization like it's again, like I'd rather have the video out like a lot of the reaction videos with.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:19:41

And.
None.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:19:46

You know, content from movies. Sometimes they're getting a lot stricter now too, and they go and I'm like, whatever, I don't care. But yeah, like, ethically, I've had to, over the years sort of come to decisions myself of, like, am IA person who posts human.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:19:50

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:20:06

And remains online, and so for a while it was like absolutely not never. And like you know, you then become like a weird martyr of you see people posting online with human events. You're like, how dare no coffee. See, that gets people really excited. It gets people. You grow really quickly when you start posting skeletons and.
You have to kind of come to terms with do I do that and now like you know, now that we have carousel posts because I'm older than the carousel posts on some of when I started.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:20:24

Hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:20:38

I was posting and now you can say things or like you know in a video you can start putting a warning so that way people can choose to interact with the content or not. And so you

know kind of having to shift things throughout the years of. At first I was like absolutely not never, ever ever. But now that there's the opportunity to have people choose to interact with it, even then I'm still quite.

Hesitant like the latest one I did, was the plastered skulls, and they're they're plastered. You can't actually see a skull, right? So I still always navigate that. I still had. I don't think I've posted on Instagram.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:21:05
Right.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:21:14
Anything with human remains in years.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:21:16
Hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:21:20
Umm.
And then YouTube again, it's different if I'm making a video again for educational, respectful purposes, I'm always tell I do right at the beginning of the video going, we will be discussing and looking at photos of human remains. We will be discussing them academically only.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:21:38
Right.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:21:39
If you don't want to see them, don't watch the video and that way. That way people know what's going on with them, other ethical things.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:21:44
Yeah, it's very nice.

Or also like negative aspect you noticed about just using social media for stance communication. I don't know if there is anything else anything else apart from Yahoo we discussed already.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:21:53
And then.
Oh, it's just.
Yeah, and negative things I do. Sometimes you do have to just kind of sell your soul a little bit for the algorithm, and it's the worst thing and it feels terrible. And some people are. That's for me the most negative. Some people are much better at it than I am. And they're just, they don't care.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:22:12
Yeah.
Yeah, just to specify when you say that, you mean like following trends, these kind of things or also are in other ways?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:22:22
Yeah.
During a trend I did a video about like one of a new like archaeology discovery on like the the knots of like the Inca. It's now become an inside joke with a friend of mine. You can if you look close enough you can see the first bit where I went. Babe, wake up.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:22:37
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:22:45
I think I filmed that nine times and I am dead inside. You can see it in my eyes. I'm just like, hey, wake up because I knew like, you need to say something like that to get people's attention. And then I was like, just and that that for me is the worst. But because it just it means nothing. You know, one solar flareness is all gone.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:22:49

OK.

I.

Yeah, I hear. Yeah, right.

No.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:23:04

And then people like you can't. Yeah, I just like guys, like, just. I'm gonna tell you something cool. Just listen, please. And I. But you have to, like, pander to this audience that will scroll away from you within half a second. And you have to do these things that I just don't want to do. And I don't like to do. And for me, that's the most negative bit.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:23:23

Umm.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:23:24

Just having to be like guys. Babe, wait, so now it's a joke about it. Every time we yell, they wake up and think so. She's also a content creator. And we're like, oh, God like, I can't believe I said. And then it did. Well, and that made it do like it made even worse because I was like, it's got, like, over 300,000 views now. And I'm like, *** **** it, like, it does work and it's terrible.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:23:33

I see.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:23:44

I hate it, but you have to do it, yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:23:45

Right. No, I I fully understand. That's a very funny story. OK. So, yeah, I'll go for it.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:23:52

You're gonna go watch it now. You can see my eyes. Just like, hey, wake up, please. I can't believe I'm doing this.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:24:00
All right. So going towards the conclusion I'm gonna ask you two final questions. The 1st IS, would you like to see more communication like yours from other archaeologists or even institutions like universities like like archaeology departments?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:24:05
Right.
Yeah, 100% like everyone talks about the competition, whatnot. There's room at the table for everyone and I think we all need to be a little bit, a lot more inclusive about that 'cause you you only get better at it when more people are doing it.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:24:19
Mm-hmm.
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:24:34
And especially digs and institutions and universities.
You got to make it more exciting, you know, like I it is a lot of work and I know that. And I know it's another thing for students and professors to do. That's like, kind of unpaid labour and this and that and whatnot. But I think it is right now, unfortunately, the best way to reach.
An audience. And to get people excited and to get people like, make people aware of what you're doing. And it is such a great way to show things visually, to get people excited to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:25:05
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:25:18
Engage potential students to get engaged. The public who you know there's always. I love the comments that I get of like the old people that go, oh, I always wanted to study

archaeology. But I'm like, I went and I became a lawyer. And I'm like, I'm so proud of you. You have a house.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:25:26
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:25:34
And but you know like, but I'm retired now and it's just some, you know, I watch your videos and it just makes me think, oh, like, what could have been and, you know, like you're getting those people that are inspired about it. And so, you know, we maybe eventually, in my mind, the more communication, the more people care about it. The more funding we get in a society where arts programs are getting cut, especially humanities and archaeology, we need to have the widest possible audience. We need to have as many people caring about us as we can, because if not, what's going to happen?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:26:10
Yeah, that's one of the points. I'm also trying to make in my TV's like, that's not even general point. Yeah. Yes, exactly. That's kind of perfect. Amazing. So. So do you think then still going on this question of this question?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:26:16
There you go. There's a sound bite just for you. You can quote me in there.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:26:29
The archaeologists and institutions should seek more collaboration with creators like you. Or should they actually start and doing communication on like online on their own.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva**   1:26:42
I think they need to do both. They need to have their own pages because without that you're not going to be able to send them to you to your site, right? You can collaborate with the influencers and the creators all you want, but you need an onward journey. This is where my real job experience comes into play.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:26:44
OK.
Right.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:27:01
Things like. So you need to have that whole like customer journey, that customer experience especially for universities. Maybe you want them to sign up for a free webinar about the programme or maybe you want them to get on a on a mailing list so they can get updates about the the about the site during the field season, right? You need this onward journey you need.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:27:03
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:27:21
Need somewhere for people to go, right? You don't want someone to just watch one real go. Oh, that was interesting. Next cuz now it's one in the next 100 that they're gonna watch in one hour. Right? 100% working with these creators.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:27:23
Mm-hmm.
Yeah.
Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:27:37
We are all chomping at the bit, raring to go to work with actual projects like I think there's like the Theben necropolis. They've been on Instagram for years and they post little bits here and there. I've been like, can I just come and make content, please at your bit? And I know it.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:27:50
Mm-hmm.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:27:55
It it costs them money, obviously to to get you there. But like if there's any sort of way to collab, I would say that I don't know about the history people 'cause they're. I feel like their bit is very much more like am I getting paid?
Where am I going for this? They all have, you know. But the archaeologists, we're all just big nerds. We're all just big nerds, and we care. We know what it's like to struggle. We we do stuff, probably that we shouldn't do for free. And we're also just. We just want to be there and touch the stuff, right? Like if someone like.

Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:28:15
Mm-hmm.
And.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:28:28
I don't at a random site in the UK's like take the train, come and like play with these objects that we found and make a real about it. I don't. I don't. You don't even have to pay me. I'll go. I'll pay for the train myself because that sounds really fun. To my detriment. I'm sure like I did one with.

Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:28:47
Right.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:28:48
English Heritage. I did a whole like YouTube video and then I think it's the pinned post on my Instagram as well.

Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:28:51
Uh-huh.
Oh yeah, yeah.

Raven Todd Da Silva 1:28:58
And that was honestly one of the best days of my life. They paid for only the hotel and the

trains and like, because it was a collab with Craig Hoppers. Because Craig Hoppers is the clothing company that makes all the uniforms for English Heritage.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:29:02
Nice.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:29:17
I got to go shopping on Craig Hoppers and make I got an outfit. OK, that's all I got paid. I know. I was like free Craig. Fine. And they weren't go crazy. I start. Got a water bottle in the back. But, you know, I was like, let's go and we're hiking. And so that was cool.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:29:17
I see.
Nice.
Yeah.
Nice.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:29:33
And I think maybe they paid me £100. I doubt I even doubt that. But if I did get paid, it was maybe 100 lbs for like the whole day of filming and the prep and everything. Honest. Yeah, one of the best days. It was so fun and magical. I would do it again in a heartbeat.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:29:34
Mm-hmm.
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:29:53
So I think that a lot of institutions are missing out on the, you know, everyone's pushing the history history creators, everyone's missing out on the archaeology creators because we are just we're just there for the vibes and like I know we need to get paid and I know people are very good at getting paid. Maybe I'm not, but I think we're more willing to be there for the vibes than other people.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:30:08
Yeah.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:30:12
Yeah.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:30:13
Right. I see. It's an interesting perspective. Yeah. And then the last question I would like to ask you, how do you see the role of social media evolving in archaeology in the next few years?

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:30:14
Yeah.
Yeah.
I would really like it to be a part of like all grant applications or like, you know, like the stipulations, you know, especially getting a grant for excavation or some sort of project you need to publish a paper. I think there should be at least some sort of social media outreach involved in that.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:30:39
Mm-hmm.

R **Raven Todd Da Silva** 1:30:46
Because the papers are not accessible, you know they're behind a paywall. You need to be able to make that information, especially in this day and age, with ChatGPT making stuff up and all of that, we need to make sure that the information that is widely available on the Internet, especially on the social medias that people are just.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:30:46
OK.
Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:31:05

Growing mindlessly is reputable is from the actual person who's doing the research, and I think that it is a skill that most people should be learning. There's a whole field, not, not an archaeology, but like, you know, of science communication.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:31:12

Mm-hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:31:20

For a reason, and it's now moving. I think we need to move it more into into archaeology and into these fields. That sort of split the humanities and science because we're we don't really fit anywhere, you know and like.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:31:23

Yeah.
Hmm.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:31:36

History. And so that's something I think that needs to be a lot more.
Like more widely discussed, I think more ethics need to be involved as well, especially again with human remains with indigenous sites, indigenous artefacts, we need to have these conversations. Unfortunately, I find like a lot of the people who are posting are not engaging in the academic conversation. So I think we need to find a way.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:31:55

Yeah.

R **aven Todd Da Silva**   1:32:03

To converge the two, which will be difficult, but yeah. And I think that especially with ethics, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:32:05

Yeah.

Yeah, there will be.

Yeah, I know. I especially this conversation with academia would be very interesting because, you know, I don't see really a lot of that.

Umm.

On social media specifically, you know? So. So that'll be very interesting to to see in the future. Is there anything that we didn't cover that you would like to add or?

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:32:24

Yeah.

Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:32:38

You think we we covered quite enough.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:32:42

I think that's I think that's everything we have very in-depth conversation. So yeah, just great, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:32:48

Yeah, it's very, very interesting.

Yeah, I'm gonna stop the record.

R **aven Todd Da Silva** 1:32:53

I hope it was everything that you needed.

Interview with Annelise Baer

11 November 2025, 06:05pm

59m 0s

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 0:03
All right, recording now. All right, perfect. Thank you for joining me in this interview. I will do a brief overview of the topics and then I'll start with the questions. So I'm gonna have a part on your background.

0:03
All right.

Annelise Baer 0:06
Yay, there we go.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 0:19
Background, the platforms and content you produce, your identity on social media, the your audience and the way you engage it, the credibility, trust and ethics of doing your work on social media, and then we'll finish with some concluding points.
Um, so if you have any questions, I will start now.
All right, so can you tell me a bit about your academic and professional background and how you became interested in communicating Archaeology on social media?

Annelise Baer 0:43
There you go.
I have a bachelor's and a master's degree in Archaeology, so that is that is my formal academic background. I got my bachelor's degree at Loyola Marymount University here in Los Angeles, and then I got my master's degree in Archaeology for Screen Media from the University of Bristol in England.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:01
Mhm.

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AB **nnelise Baer**   1:12

So there's always been an interest, at least in my world, in the portrayal and communication of archaeology and history in a media format. I've always loved a good documentary, and I thought it would be fun to learn how to make those documentaries. And unfortunately, that's where my degrees end, because I graduated in 2008 and there was no money for anyone anywhere doing anything thanks to a wonderful economic depression. But because my home and my family is here in Los Angeles, it is.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:32

Mm-hmm.

AB **nnelise Baer**   1:52

Media capital. So I was able to start getting work in television and specifically in production and I have ended up with a career, I guess like 15 years at this point.

In television production and every so often there is actually a show that I get to work on that is a history focused or archaeology focused documentary program. Granted, it is American style, so it has its own its own sorts of caveats with that, but.

Every so often I have been able to actually properly use all of my degrees and my knowledge and connections and skills to make a history focused documentary for broadcast television and things like National Geographic, Discovery Channel, all of that jazz.

And putting all of that into its current form now was a product of COVID and COVID lockdown, because for a while there was no work and I needed to keep myself entertained, so I thought it would be fun.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   2:55

Yeah.

AB **nnelise Baer**   3:00

To do essentially what I called the No Budget Archaeology show. And I made videos that I posted on Instagram and it was just me in my home using whatever books or things I had available, whatever information was in my mind. And that was.

That that was the baby steps that I took to put myself in front of the camera because I've

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always been behind the camera and making shows happen. I was never in front of the camera and yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   3:28
That around what year was that when you started on social media?

AB **Annelise Baer**   3:31
I.
I've been. I've been on social media for a very long time. I've grown up with social media, but putting myself in a sort of camera facing position started in 2020 during the COVID lockdown.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   3:48
OK, I see.

AB **Annelise Baer**   3:51
And then yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   3:51
And yeah, yeah, like, how was the the, the, the process, the your evolution on the on social media?

AB **Annelise Baer**   4:01
It's, you know, it's been, it's been interesting because again, I I'm used to being behind the camera, used to just existing, existing online, you know, as an Instagram profile for myself and just my personal life or on Twitter. May it rest in peace.
Back in the day and.
Putting myself on camera was an exercise for me, both in a production sense because I have been part of productions for a very long time. So I know how it works. I know it needs to be done. I just needed to take the steps to get myself comfortable with that and learn how to film myself be OK.
OK, hearing the sound of my own voice, learn how to do any quick edits. I learned formal editing when I was in grad school, and so if I need to actually sit down and edit a program,

I can do that. I just don't like it because it takes a long time. So figuring out a filming style and an editing style that worked for.

For me, and you know, essentially my attention span, you know, how much time do I actually want to put into a, you know, couple second, couple minute video that's going to be on social media to make sure that it's still a decent enough product that is going out into the void of the Internet and hopefully entertaining people.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:19

Right. So, So what were your goals in mind as a content creator when you started and if I don't know if they have changed maybe over time?

AB **Annelise Baer** 5:30

It stayed the same, which is that I just really like having an opportunity to talk about the ancient history and archaeology that I love so dearly. And this gives me an opportunity to do that. And it also then takes that information and sends it out into the world so that hopefully people can learn a little something because.

As I think we have all seen, there is a gulf when it comes to knowledge of the general public about certain ancient history topics, and then the actual people who do the work in those topics, whether they're professional archaeologists or professional historians.

There again, huge gulf of missing knowledge and missing communication because for the people who are full-time academics, you know, whether they're professors or within that academic environment, that is your world and you are communicating almost exclusively with your peers and you know how to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:13

Right.
Yeah.

AB **Annelise Baer** 6:30

Speak that specific language to communicate information to your peers about your work or their work or related work. And then every now and then there is someone who has enough time and perhaps enough funding to write a book, a popular book specifically about whatever that topic is to then be.

Distributed to the public. And if you have access to those books, for example, then great,

you're up to date on whatever the latest information is about, I I don't know, Cleopatra or something like that. And if you don't have access to those books, the majority of people. At least ten years ago were getting that information from documentaries that they would watch on television. Now it's a bit more widespread between you'll have to excuse the slack going off between, you know, YouTube and podcasts and.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 7:21
Yeah, no worries.

AB **Annelise Baer** 7:28
Short form entertainment in the form of social media like Instagram and TikTok. But at the end of the day, it is still in essence a documentary and that is still the way that people like to learn things and like to discover things and they are constantly looking for more. Places more documentary sources that they can use, and specifically ones that are good, good quality and from good sources.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 7:56
Right.
It's a perfect sense. So when you started social media, what platforms were you using? And also which are the main platforms that you use right now? And if there is a reason maybe why you chose a specific platform over the other?

AB **Annelise Baer** 8:18
I started with Instagram because that's what was available or and also the platform that I use the most in 2020. And then I transitioned or after after the lockdown period, everybody went back to work, so I didn't have as much time to make videos.
And around late 2020, early 2021 is when I started noticing that TikTok was becoming a very, very popular platform. And of course at that point it was just a cute little video platform where people would post videos of themselves dancing and.
That was fine and a great way to keep ourselves entertained during lockdown. But as we transitioned out of lockdown and into that immediate sort of post COVID wave number one and wave #2 into OK, this is our new normal.
I noticed that because of that lockdown period, a lot of people began using TikTok as more of an information source because you could communicate things very, very quickly and a

very wide audience would see it. And I noticed that specifically amongst young people who had had part of their schooling during the lockdown period.

And got used to doing everything online. Kids, young people were getting their information, factual information from TikTok rather than from any other places on the Internet, because that was the sort of most immediately available platform for them.

So I noticed that more educational stuff was being taken from there. And I noticed that, you know, more people, some people started jumping on it and saw that it was a great place to do educational communication, science communication about, you know, school topics, topics that you would cover in your class and.

I kept waiting for somebody, somebody with a recognizable name and a PhD, to maybe jump in and be the archaeology person because we had, you know, history people and then history enthusiasts, science people, astronomy people, just general school education. Homework, help stuff. And I realized very quickly that the people that we associate as like the big names, the heavy hitters in the world of archaeology who have PhDs and recognizable names, they're very busy. They are often full-time professors and parents and. Understandably, they do not have any interest or willingness to do additional free work to just put something on the Internet so that there's good information out there. And I think this also kind of circles back to the disconnect.

Between the academic world and the public communication world and public communication is typically done in a very, very official way, and it still sounds like a lecture. And making it accessible and conversational is something that is not. It's not the thing that people tend to think of when they think.

Of communicating either nuanced or detailed or just any historical information in general, it's it's still done in a very official lecture like kind of way. And social media, Instagram and TikTok were making it very clear that this was a place that needed to be more casual.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   11:29
Yeah.

AB **Annelise Baer**   11:38
It needed to still be informative, still be well sourced and fact, you know, facts all over the place, but it needed to be casual. And so I I waited and eventually I just kind of said, screw it, I'll do it myself. And I did.
And here we are.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 11:58

Right. So what's your favorite platform to use personally speaking?

AB **nnelise Baer** 12:05

Personally speaking, even though it frustrates me on a daily basis and every day is kind of a Wild West adventure, I do really appreciate TikTok now. It is a really fantastic resource and just anthropologically, it's absolutely fascinating. It's just this, you know, lovely little rectangular wind.
Window into the world and all of these diverse people and places. And it is also a great way to get information out to a very wide audience very, very quickly. I I still appreciate Instagram because Instagram is a better platform for photos.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 12:38

Right.

AB **nnelise Baer** 12:44

And very, very short videos, you know, 30 seconds or so of just pretty, pretty footage basically. But TikTok is 1 where it is, it's the people, it is an app of the people for the people and you get genuine interactions on there that are really quite interesting.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 12:51

Yeah.
Right. And for this reason, do you maybe use different platforms for different like kind of informations you want to share or different audiences you want to reach or do you use them just in the same way?

AB **nnelise Baer** 13:17

Right now I am using, let's see. Well, TikTok is my main platform. That's the one where I guess things are kind of the biggest and the most active. And that is also the one where I will take time to interact with people in the comments. Whereas Instagram, I mean, I have two at this point. I have my original personal Instagram that I've made.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   13:28
Mhm.

AB **Annelise Baer**   13:37
I made private because far too many people look at me these days and it's a little weird. And so I made a public one. Then it's basically just a copy paste of the videos that I make on TikTok. I will put them on Instagram so that people who maybe only have that platform can see it there. And then I also use that to share.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   13:41
Understandable.

AB **Annelise Baer**   13:57
Share photos from the trips that I go on or photos of anything interesting and then share more day-to-day updates and things like that as far as promotion for any of the trips that I do or just again, anything, anything that's interesting and related to just cool things in archaeology, that's an easy way to quickly share.
Those things around as well, and the different platforms have different environments and a different feel to them entirely. It's again anthropologically very fascinating.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   14:25
Yeah, no, for sure. Absolutely. So Speaking of like the communication strategies you adopt, do you plan your posts more strategically? So maybe using like following trends or like you make schedules for yourself or are you more spontaneous when it comes to?
to posting.

AB **Annelise Baer**   14:46
I am very spontaneous and I found that that that makes me very different from a lot of the science communicator and educational creators as they call them on TikTok where.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   14:59
Mhm.

AB **Annelise Baer**   15:02

Everybody else I know plans things weeks in advance. They fully script out their videos. They it's it's a whole, it's a whole little professional production, whereas I am a person with a cell phone and some good lighting from a window or outside if I'm outside.

And I I kind of just see how I'm feeling that day and will make a video. It takes about, you know, maybe 30 minutes total, maybe a little bit longer if I need to do some more in-depth digging around on the Internet for information or specific photos.

It takes about 30 minutes and I have an idea of what I want to say. I do it. If I need to do a couple takes, I do a couple takes, edit everything, post it, done, get on with my day.

Because I have other things. I have other things to do. It's like I have a day job right now, so I have to balance everything.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   15:53

Right.

AB **Annelise Baer**   15:59

But if there are specific events coming up that I know I want to make a video to tie in with, I will, you know, sort of do a soft scheduling that way. Or if I notice that something has popped up like a, you know, just a 24 hour trend or something that has caught people's attention.

I I will hop on that if I can and make a relevant video to catch, catch that wave essentially as it's going. And other times if I don't feel like posting something, I won't because I make sure and I try to, you know, constantly remind myself that my.

You know, my my finances are not tied to social media and they should not be. And also my, you know, my self-worth and perception are also not tied to social media and algorithm and all of that and.

I try to in all things, and especially for social media, I try to keep in mind basically the the Heath Ledger mentality of it all, which is that the minute I stop having fun, that's that's when I'm done because it needs this is this is for fun and because it has gotten popular, that's a that's a wonderful bonus. But the whole.

Is that I am doing this because I think it's fun and I hope other people find it fun as well. But the minute I stop having fun, I'm done. Either take a break or be done entirely.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 17:24

Right. So you said also it doesn't take you a long time to when you when you make a video, it doesn't take you a long time between recording and and editing like how like how many let's say.
Hours a week you spend on your page like more or less.

AB **Annelise Baer** 17:42

Oh, hardly anytime. Like I said, it takes about 30 minutes for me to make a video just from start to finish. Maybe a little bit longer again if I need to do extra research to find better or specific photos or find additional information.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 17:47

Right.

AB **Annelise Baer** 17:58

And then, you know, 5 minutes if I need to do my own hair and makeup, if I'm feeling like it that day, about 30 minutes, 30 minutes tops. And I think that is because I.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 18:09

Interesting.

AB **Annelise Baer** 18:12

I'm an experienced production professional and I know how to move quickly because when you are actually working in production, you need to everything is an emergency. So you need to be able to work, work well and work quickly and fast and get whatever that thing is done. So I.
I'm used to working at that speed. It's not healthy, but I am used to working at that speed. And then it also ties in with the the spontaneity and the creativity that I have learned to work with because ADHD is kind of wonderful like that. It's like go with that spontaneity, go with that burst of energy and the creativity and whatever.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   18:34
Yeah.

AB **Annelise Baer**   18:51
Grabbing your interest right then, use it. Use that to your advantage and magically a video can be created in 30 minutes or less.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   18:58
Yeah, it sounds like a great way of working. If you're, let's say, you know you have that experience and all that. So when you make content like you're making a video about like a specific topic, what's the tone of voice you prefer to use like you try to be.

AB **Annelise Baer**   19:06
Yeah, mm-hmm.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   19:18
More sound more professional or sounding prefer sounding more informal or more expressive. Like how do you go about that?

AB **Annelise Baer**   19:27
I essentially show up as myself, just slightly more, slightly more animated, because the whole idea is that I'm speaking to you exactly the way that I'm speaking to you right now, just like two people talking or I, you know, I kind of present myself as like you're.

MD **Pitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   19:40
Right.

AB **Annelise Baer**   19:43
Your archaeologist buddy and you can talk to me, I can talk to you and we're just having a fun chat about this cool thing that we found out about or I found out about a cool thing. So I'm going to tell you about it as your very interested friend that that kind of thing

because at the end of the day that.

That sense of casualness and conversationality is exactly the sort of thing that people connect with the most on social media. It's like they just they want you to be yourself. At this point, people can smell inauthenticity a mile away.

And well, you know, run for the hills. Nobody wants that. They they want authentic, authentic self. And if you're in a position of being a communicator, you know, a science communicator, public communicator about a specific topic.

20:20
Yeah, of course.

AB **Annelise Baer**   20:35
They want to be able to see you and know that you are an informed source and a reliable source of information for whatever that field is.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   20:48
Right. And when it comes to other, let's say, communication techniques, do you usually implement like narratives or also have you ever tried with emotional engagements or using sadness or humor to in in your communication?

AB **Annelise Baer**   21:07
I go with humor always. I know that there is. Well, because I don't know. It's funny. It's fun. It's like, it's fun. It's funny. We're having a good time. And I will say 99% of the time, whatever I'm talking about, is fun. And I use that to help break down the existing and perceived barriers between ancient history, people, places and topics, and the modern world, because there is still this lingering perception for a variety of reasons, because it's been like 200 three hundred plus years of this style of thinking of, you know, the ancients as a monolith, a faraway distant pillar of knowledge. And you know the ancient people were so wise. The ancient, you know, our ancient ancestors were all this. Like our ancient ancestors made laundry lists. They had birthday parties.

Got mad. They were petty. They were just like us. We are just like them. The only thing that's changed is maybe the closing in the language and perhaps an access to a nearby river. Like we're we're exactly the same. Humans have been this way the entire time. And that's one of the main things I try to convey, which is like these people are just like us.

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MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   22:20
Right.

Humanization of the past, we could say, right?

AB **Annelise Baer**   22:24
You are just like them. Exactly. And that is one of the key things that allows people to then connect with a topic that maybe they were just casually interested in or, you know, they kind of spaced out when they covered it in class or and couldn't really figure it like, oh, this is, you know, 2000 years.
To go, why do I care about this? It's like, well, they're people, and I guarantee that you can find something that occurred 2000, three thousand years ago that is exactly the same or incredibly similar to a thought you have had, an experience you have had. So you can then. Get that little thread of connection to the past and humanize the whole thing.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   23:06
Right. So this is the importance of relating with our with our past. Totally get it.

AB **Annelise Baer**   23:10
Yeah. And I know, I know there's there's the whole community, there's the the small community of the the sad girl historians. And yeah, and it's like, you know what? Hey, like if if you found that that is.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   23:17
All right.

AB **Annelise Baer**   23:25
That is the niche that works for you and it's still and it continues to work. Do it like run, take it, run with it. Because you know, sometimes that is that that specific emotion. Sadness is a great way for people to also make those connections.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   23:32
Right.

Right. Absolutely right. And tying back to what we were saying about the way you present yourself, you said your try always to be, yeah, just present your authentic self, maybe a little bit more, let's say.

Like, excited. I don't know when you're presenting something, but it's basically just you, right? Yeah.

AB **nnelise Baer**   23:59
Yeah, I just like, I just turn the energy up like a degree or two, because that's what you need to do. If you are a host or a presenter of a television show, like hosting and presenting is is a job and it requires specific skills and not everybody is cut out for that and that's OK. Everybody can play to their strengths, but.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   24:05
Right.
Right.

AB **nnelise Baer**   24:19
When you do that, when you need to appear on cameras, on camera personality, you need to turn the energy up just just a little bit or a lot if that's what you want to do. But just like turn it up, we're in, you know, presentation mode and that's it.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   24:31
Yeah.
But it's not like you feel that you're performing a version of yourself that is that is different from from who you are.

AB **nnelise Baer**   24:40
Right. Yeah, I I do not feel like that. And and yeah, I think that was just a conscious choice from day one. It's like, it's just me. It's like, it's just me. This is who I am. I will talk at length about.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   24:45
Yeah, all right.

AB **nnelise Baer** 24:56

Ancient things. And if you like it, great. If you don't, that's fine.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:00

Right. And talking more about how somebody might define you or you might define yourself as your online personality. Would you consider yourself being like using the term influencer or the way I'm coining it for my thesis?
RQ influencer.

AB **nnelise Baer** 25:17

I don't consider myself an influencer because the only thing I am trying to sell you or anybody else on the Internet is the idea that you should go to a museum and you should buy more books.
And if you want to travel, I also encourage you to do that. But I I do not consider myself an influencer, and I am aware that I'm more in the public communicator, science communicator realm of things rather than influencer because.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:33

Right.

AB **nnelise Baer** 25:52

Again, I'm not trying to sell you things. I'm not presenting a highly or heavily curated version of either myself, my life, my lifestyle, or the things that I'm purchasing. And like, it's like I I tell people to buy books and that's it.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:10

Yeah, in a way we could also say that that's a way maybe of influencing people also like in the way of like maybe thinking about the past. Maybe that's also like a way of like influencing people because I know it is a lot like when I've been researching theory for my thesis that.

AB **nnelise Baer** 26:20

Mhm.

Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   26:28

In literature on social media studies, also from the sociological point of view, the term influencer you use a lot like I don't see often like content creator or other terms is, you know, because influencer is the term that has been coined to describe a personality on social media with a lot of following.

AB **Annelise Baer**   26:37

Yeah.

Yes.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   26:47

And you know effects that have on these following. So that's hence why my my question specifically for these for these interviews I'm I'm doing you know also to see how you react that.

AB **Annelise Baer**   26:52

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah. And and you're. Yeah, yeah, you're. And you're so right because, yeah, the term influencer was coined from that first rise of Instagram and true influencer culture, which was heavily curated.

Instagram profiles and pages of, you know, travel lifestyle, you know, Kim Kardashian and like, you know, famous just for being famous or just for looking pretty. And I found that there and and that is one of the things that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   27:18

Yeah, like Kim Kardashians and company, you know.

Yeah.

AB **Annelise Baer**   27:32

Still, to this day, contributes to the perception of social media as.

You know, is is just sort of like just a fad. It's just a fad. And so that, you know, one of those reasons why academic institutions will have an official Instagram, you know, an official Twitter, you know, they'll have an official presence, but they're not using it in the way that regular people are using social.

social media. And so when there is a science communicator who becomes very popular, they're immediately branded as an influencer simply because, you know, they have a very popular Instagram profile with, you know, hundreds of thousands of followers, millions of followers. And then same thing on TikTok. There are very popular.

Communication.

And educational creators who have huge followings and their videos are almost exclusively just educational content. But by the very nature of existing on social media, being public facing and having a large platform and large number of followers, they get branded as an influencer, which then.

Discounts the information that they are sharing in, you know, the eyes of the official institutions, which I think is very interesting.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 28:48

Right. Yeah. And we'll definitely talk about that more like in the in the later section of how the perception from like the world of like institutions or academia or you know, how does how is these.

AB Annelise Baer 28:55

Mhm.

Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 29:03

Presence online is view, but we'll talk about it in a in a second. But first I want to ask you something about your audience. So like, who is the your audience composed of?

AB Annelise Baer 29:05

Mhm. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Mhm.

My audience is primarily female and primarily American, and I think that is wonderful. And

the age range is the the the whole age range, which again is very interesting. I do get the most.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 29:23
Mhm.

AB **Annelise Baer** 29:34
Interaction, at least analytically from, you know, women aged 22 to 45. I think that's the age range, but I I get comments and see visible proof of interaction from people.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 29:43
Mhm.

AB **Annelise Baer** 29:50
From every age range, I get comments and DMS from students who are, you know, 1516 and then you know there are people in their 70s that are that are showing up in the comments as well and also showing up on my trips, which is fun. So it is the whole age range.
And again, primarily female, which I love because I've noticed that if for some reason I post about a topic that is more male skewing and my video reaches a more male audience, it's an entirely different experience and in not in a good way.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 30:18
Um.
No, I can. I can imagine it's also something I also heard from from others like negative interactions about, yeah, like maybe sexist comments and things like this, you know? So I totally understand that. And is and there is any.

AB **Annelise Baer** 30:36
Yeah.
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   30:43
Is there a specific population you aim for with your content? So for example, is it were you aiming for, let's say a mostly female population or is just like something that happened as a result of the of of what you were doing online?

AB **Annelise Baer**   30:56
That is something that just happened organically. I think I I wasn't aiming for a specific audience, but it just happened organically and I'm really happy about that because from my professional television background.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:00
Right, OK.
All right.

AB **Annelise Baer**   31:12
The perception of history, history and Archaeology is seen as very male and all of the major networks, so National Geographic, Discovery, all of them, they consider history documentaries to be male content and specifically for a male audience, you know, age. 18 to 45 or something like that, or 18 to 40, whatever that sort of a young man demographic is. That is where they continue, even to this day, to categorize history shows. And I I mean, I remember when I found that out or just like.
Are you kidding me? Like if you actually look at a university department for history and archaeology, and specifically archaeology, there's so many women like it is a hugely female dominated field, but we don't see that reflected in.
Television because hosts of these shows are always men in adventure shirts. And if you get a woman who is a host or presenter of a show, usually British, it's a, you know, it's the vibes are totally different. The presentation is totally different. You know, the men are out here adventuring and driving Jeeps.
And the women are wearing a lovely scarf and walking very calmly around an ancient site and telling you about the history of that site. And so, yeah, there's so many, so many rabbit holes to go down with all of this content and the perception of history and archaeology and on these different platforms and.

It's endlessly interesting, and I'm so happy that my audience is primarily female because it
that it just makes for a better experience.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   32:51

Right. And does that, for example, influence your content? Like, do you start capturing
your content when you start realizing that you had a more female audience? Did you start
at maybe like adjusting your content?

AB **Annelise Baer**   32:56

Um.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   33:06

Towards them.

AB **Annelise Baer**   33:07

No, I I keep it the same. I I keep it. I keep it exactly the same. If I happen to find myself
talking about a topic that has, you know, interesting connections to perhaps like the
present day female experience in the world, I'll.
I'll add a comment about that, but for the most part, people are able to see those
connections almost immediately, so I don't need to necessarily address them explicitly.
And whatever I'm saying, people just notice like, Oh my God, I do that too. That's amazing.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   33:40

Right. And and how how about the interactions with your followers? You said you interact
more on TikTok rather than Instagram. Like how does that work? Do you just, is it just
through comments or do you in other ways?

AB **Annelise Baer**   33:54

Primarily in comments. So on TikTok, I will actually take some time to respond to
comments within the first, you know, few hours after I've posted a video and sometimes
it's just answering a question or you know, just responding, you know.
If something is amusing, you know we're all making a joke about the same thing,
everyone's on the same page. And then I will also use the comments or questions that

appear in the comments as a lead for a following video, because I have the ability to reply to comments either just right there.

There with another comment or I can reply with a video and then it puts the whatever the original comment was like in the top and so I can use that to sort of like roll into the next thing. And that is something that I really like and it's really useful, especially if I've found myself kind of springing a couple of videos together in a related series or just.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:34
Right.

AB **Annelise Baer** 34:49
Continuing a conversation in that regard, for the most part, the people who comment and the types of comments that are left on TikTok at the beginning, they're usually, you know, they're great, they're informed, genuine questions.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:52
Mhm.

AB **Annelise Baer** 35:04
And then of course, if a video goes viral, then it that's just going out to the Internet. So then it's, I consider it a lost cause at that point. It's a mess, like it's too big. And it's like, look, if people want to fight in the comments, they can fight in the comments. I don't care the.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 35:10
Just a mess, yeah.
Right. So you don't really interact in that?

AB **Annelise Baer** 35:19
No, no. Unless, unless things start taking a negative turn. And then in that case, because I see everything, I get all of the notifications, notifications for everything. So I see every single comment that comes through and I do keep a casual eye on things just to make. Sure every.

Everybody's behaving. And if they're not, then I will go in, I'll delete things, I'll block people as needed. Just, you know, if people are coming in specifically to troll or to start fights, or if it starts getting, you know, really nasty, racist, you know, anti-Semitic, whatever, like just, you know, bad Internet times, then I will go in and make sure it's.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 35:54
Yeah.

AB **Annelise Baer** 36:00
OK, let's take out the trash, block the people that need to be blocked, get rid of these, you know, hateful comments if it ends up going in that direction. Because ultimately, I I try to keep my little corner of the Internet a nice place. I want every, you know, we're all adults here. We can all behave. And if you can't behave.
Then the door is right there. My block button is rated E for everyone. I will not hesitate to block people if they're, you know, showing up again, you know, trying to just be trolls or start fights or start leaving hateful cops.
Comments or anything like that. Just like Nope, Nope.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:36
Right.
For example, if it comes just to, for example, misinformation, maybe you do a video, let's say about the pyramids and you have the classic comment of somebody saying, oh, it was the aliens. So like, do you try and like argue against the case? You just leave it to the to the other.
Your followers may be answering those comments or like you don't really interact on that.

AB **Annelise Baer** 37:01
It depends. And that's one of the things that is a key factor in existing on social media these days. You, especially when you're doing archaeology content, you need to be able to recognize when someone is asking a good faith, genuine question, because maybe that's.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 37:03
Like.

AB **nnelise Baer**   37:21

Something that they've heard if they're coming in asking a bad faith question because they want you to fight with them or debate them if someone is just being a troll, just to be a troll, or if they are.

Coming in and trying to take that first step into a weird, racist dog whistle to lead further into the like, you know, the far right conspiracy. So you need to be it's it's kind of exhausting. You need to be up on all of those things and you need to.

Be able to understand what tone is being conveyed through the comment so that you can respond appropriately. So if it's just essentially a dumb question, I might leave it. If it's a bad faith question, I will take a check to see if the.

Person actually follows me, or if they're just sort of showing up in the comments and then see what kind of person they are based on their profile. And so if I go to someone's profile and they don't follow me, they've left a weird comment and I start seeing weird and questionable things in their video history.

Block, just immediately block because they they want you, they want you to, they want a reaction out of you. They want you to do the endless, you know, comment fight. They want you to debate them and they specifically want you to do all of this extra labor to try to.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   38:44

Right.

AB **nnelise Baer**   38:55

Prove them wrong. And at this point, at my big age, I have been on the Internet far too long and I do not have time for getting into arguments with people on the Internet and specifically people who are purposely coming into my space, like coming into.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   39:08

Of course.

AB **nnelise Baer**   39:14

My house to try to pick a fight just because they feel like it. So it's just like block. Get out of here.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   39:23

Of course, totally understandable. So in general, what's the kind of responses? What's the tone that you usually get? Is it mainly like support and excitement about what you're saying, or is it tends to be mainly about that?
Debate or hostility? What do you notice?

AB **Annelise Baer**   39:43

Primarily, primarily, the comments that I get are positive. You know, people being excited to learn something or wow, I didn't know that or just asking genuine questions about whatever the topic is because, you know, maybe they have a little bit of knowledge and now it's like, oh, well, you know, if this, if this is the case.
What about this? Or I heard this and in that case it's just a genuine question. And yeah, overall the general comments on a daily basis, weekly basis are over overall and overwhelmingly very positive.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   40:13

Nice. Really nice. And so how do you measure overall the success of your communication? Like do you go about the the the responses you get or you also tend to use metrics like views and likes to determine how successful your communication has been?

AB **Annelise Baer**   40:15

Yeah.
A little bit of both. I mean, metrics and analytics are the easiest way to see success. Like, oh, this video has 200,000 views. We did, we did good today. And of course that's a great way to say like the this, this video has spread widely. A lot of people have seen it and then there's usually.
You know, a matching number of comments to let you know that people are also interacting with whatever that thing is. So that's generally the easiest way to judge success of of a video in that sense.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   41:03

Right. And so talking about going back to your identity online, how do you balance it yourself, like your identity, like your academic background and your current?

Like job with your role on social media, like how he's maybe like your credibility perceived different by by by your peers for example.

AB **nnelise Baer** 41:35
That's interesting because my my identity, my perception of myself on social media is like, it's just me and I happen to have a bunch of different facets and at the end of it, it's all just me. But and and because of my existence on social media in a public facing platform, I have become a reliable source of information and a known source of information when it comes to history and archaeology stuff, which to me is crazy because technically and academically I am not like I you know.

I I have a master's degree, which is pretty, you know, pretty good, but I don't have a PhD, so I am not technically an expert. And that is something that, you know, discounts a lot of what I say, at least in an official sense and.

This is something that I ran into even even in my career working in production and doing, you know, research and things like that for these documentary shows. I would have to find someone else to say the information that I already knew simply because I didn't have a PhD and I was not actively employed.

employed full-time as a professor at or an even, you know, an assistant professor or an adjunct professor at any, you know, four year institution. Like because I did not have that, I was not an expert and I couldn't use my own information, known information from my own.

Academic life and my own studies as a source of information. I had to find someone else with a pH. D to say the same thing so it would be considered real.

So that's interesting. I I think it's frustrating. And it's one of those things that keeps me thinking at least once a year. It's like, maybe I should go. I can get a PhD. I can do that. You know, fueled purely by spite. Yeah, just to have the power. Just like, ha, now I'm an expert.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 43:18
Right.

Just to have the power to yes, exactly. And relating to these also the way you're perceived not only by your peers, but also by your own public, by your followers.

AB **nnelise Baer** 43:42
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   43:42

Has the growth of your followers over time changed the way they're perceived? Because I read an article exploring how usually the more let's say these were case studies with influencers, the more they their influence.

Their following would grow, their engagement would decrease and yeah, the just the quality of engagement would decrease and their perception by their public would just go down. Have you noticed like something like this with your with your profiles online?

AB **Annelise Baer**   44:05

Mhm.

Yes, in a sense, just because at a certain point it's too big and I literally do not have the time or the inclination to respond to.

200, 300, 400 comments about something. I mean that's that that is insane behaviour if someone is actually doing that and so I So what I do to try to you know maintain some. Amount of interaction and engagement is mostly on TikTok. You know, within the first couple of hours of posting something, I'll keep an eye on comments, I'll respond and be involved that way. But after a couple of hours and it's like, OK, we're done, that video's done. Off it goes.

Best of luck. And then on Instagram, I barely interact at all just because the vibes in the comments over there are very different. It's not good. I do not like it if I see a friend or someone I actually know.

Comment or say something on a video, I'll respond to them. But if it's just a stranger again, because the style and tone of comments on Instagram are wildly different, it's the the vibes are really unpleasant. I I won't interact at all.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   45:43

Right. So would you say that the perception by your public has like, let's say worsen overtime or no, like the perception of yourself? No.

AB **Annelise Baer**   45:50

I don't think so. I don't think so. At least not that I'm aware of. Yeah. And I mean, I.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:56

Right, right.

AB Annelise Baer 46:01

I don't know. I at this point I I again, I've been on the Internet long enough. I I fondly remember the early days of Instagram when it was actually, say, like an actor or something like that. And it was actually them. And sometimes they would comment because it was actually them on their phone posting the thing to Instagram. And of course now it's like it's all just the publicist and the social.
Media team. So and again, that's just because it's it's too big, it's the the concept and the platform itself and then whatever the profile is, especially for someone who actually exists at that level of public life.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 46:23

Yeah.

AB Annelise Baer 46:38

It's it is just simply too big. So you post what you post, maybe you'll do one, one or two comments, and then you call it a day because of it's completely unmanageable and unreasonable to think that someone would actually have the time to respond to each and every comment on a video.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 46:41

Of course.
Of course. So how would you say you make you try also to put an effort in to establish a level of trust and credibility with your audience, apart from what you told me already about just being yourself?
Basically online when you do a video. I don't know if you do maybe something else or it's just about that.

AB Annelise Baer 47:18

Yeah.

I think, I think that just ended up being something that came organically, simply because I showed up on the Internet saying, hey, I'm actually an archaeologist, here's what I know, or here's the actual information about XYZ, whatever the thing is. And so that sort of just established me as a credible voice for this one very specific area of information.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:48
Right, right. And do you, apart from negative comments, do you face other dilemmas when creating content? Maybe like over the ethical nature, like maybe simplifying your content too much or dealing with controversial topics?

AB **nnelise Baer** 48:08
Not really. And again, I think that's because I I don't purposefully go looking for controversy or I'm not trying to bait anyone with, you know, click bait or rage bait topic, so to speak and.
If anything, I actively avoid a lot of that simply because I don't want to deal with that. Like I I don't need to be.
I don't know, adding extra stress to to my day because I I I made a video about, you know, something hunter-fertial and and you know, usually those like conspiracy theory topics, that's usually the sort of thing and.
I mean, I I know lots of people who spend a lot of their time on TikTok, on YouTube, on blue, less on blue sky, Twitter, you know, people who are still actively on Twitter.
You know, actively engaging with the people who are the loudest voices in those like conspiracy things, like fighting with them on the Internet. And I've realized that not only is that something that I will just.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:09
Yeah.

AB **nnelise Baer** 49:24
Happily leave to the young men. That is a young man activity. I don't have the time or the energy to be fighting with people on the Internet, and especially those types of people. And I say that derogatorily because they are.
They are just simply the worst. They are the worst kinds of people, and they're only existing on the Internet to make you mad and to make you react. And it's just it's a cycle. It's a

vicious cycle. And I would much rather be over in my little corner of the Internet having a nice time talking to the people who are happy.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:45
Yeah.

AB **nnelise Baer** 50:00
To be there and we're having fun conversations about cool topics and learning and just having a nice time. So I would much rather put my time and energy into something like that than trying to for, you know, more views or likes or whatever, make videos and content about.
Controversial topics just to just to add to the noise. Essentially, I find it's much more worthwhile to try to steer people over here. Just like, let's let's just move the eyeballs over here and talk about this thing that is actually interesting, cool and worth your time as opposed to.
Just noise. Endless noise.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 50:40
Right. Like because also maybe you think more also talking in general about like the power of like science, communication and education and these kind of things. But you think when somebody's so entrenched in their beliefs is not really like possible maybe to even change their mind about.

AB **nnelise Baer** 50:48
Mhm.
OK.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 51:00
Maybe a specific, let's say, historical topic, archaeological topic, pseudoarchaeology.

AB **nnelise Baer** 51:05
There can be, and at this point in time I approach each of those on a case by case basis and I find that it works best if that is something that you can do in person because on the

Internet there, you know there are several levels of separation between you and the person on the other side of the video or on the comments.

And in-person conversations is where you can actually have the most success because that takes away all of those blocks and all of those barriers. And it's just two people having a conversation. And so that's that's when I found it is.

The most worthwhile. And again, it's just like just approach whatever the topic is. And I think the best example that I have is that on one of my one of my past trips, one of the people was a, you know, kind of conspiracy-leaning MAGA.

Guy. And so I was just like, I am going to physically take you by the hand and we are going to walk over to this pyramid and you are going to touch the pyramid and we're going to talk about this. It's just like let you know I I'm going to let let the stuff here do the talking, but.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 51:59
Interesting.

AB **Annelise Baer** 52:15
You know, I on one hand I do kind of want to understand and sort of like pick it apart a little bit. You do a little surgery and like you know how, how is all of this related? How, how is all this connected? Like tell me how your mind works and at the same time I.

Try to do what I do best, which is figure out a way for them to make a personal connection with whatever that thing is. You know, ancient history, ancient. It was like, you know, how can you, a, you know, middle-aged American man.

Find something that you connect with on a personal level with someone who lived 3000 years ago and how in connect all of these things. And so it's it's slow, it's slow and it's it's delicate and baby steps, it's baby steps. And again, it's like you got to meet the person where they're at.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 52:53
Right.
These worked.
Right.

AB **Annelise Baer** 53:04

And baby steps and because at the end of the day.

That that change, that change in thinking is something that only they can do and something that can only happen in their mind. And you know, I can open the door and you know, my my best hope is to open the door to show them all the wonderful things on the other side of the door and maybe sort of like guide them through, but then they have to take it from there.

And that works best in person.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 53:34

Right, right. And also just very quickly, like I wanted to ask you like, is this something you do often, like doing organized trips with your followers?

AB **Annelise Baer** 53:43

Yeah, that's that's a regular thing I do now, which is to me still crazy to think about. But that was.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 53:50

It's a great way to engage with your followers, you know, like to a connection.

AB **Annelise Baer** 53:53

Yeah, it. And it is something that arose from having, you know, popularity on the Internet. I had a company reach out to me and they initially began by working with Instagram influencers. So posting, you know, beautiful curated travel content and they wanted to branch out a little bit. And so now I.

Organize these trips to all over the world, places where I like to go because it's the ancient history and archaeology that I like. And then people come with me and then we have a fun group trip and, you know, run around ancient sites.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 54:24

Yeah.

That's awesome. Yeah, sounds awesome. So going towards the end of our interview, we would like to ask you some more general questions to conclude. So would you like to see

more communication like yours, like yours from other archaeologists or also institutions like universities, for example?

AB **nnelise Baer** 54:28
Yeah.
Mhm.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 54:47
Simple.

AB **nnelise Baer** 54:48
Yes. And that would help with the, it would help with the preservation of.
I don't know, respect. Maybe respect isn't the right word. I don't know for actual experts in fields because the erosion of that trust and that respect is a huge issue right now. And a lot of it is coming from the fact that, you know, institutions, universities and.
People with PhDs, well, one are very busy and two, don't really know exactly how to make the type of content that is needed to exist on these platforms because every every medium is different and.
Most experts, actual experts in universities only know how to do things in an academic context and how to essentially just like have someone do a lecture at you in a video form, which is not what needs to be happening. I mean, you can do that on YouTube. Long form content exists on YouTube.
Have your lecture there, but platforms like Instagram and TikTok, need to have short form-content and it needs to be more direct, personable, casual communication. So I would like to see that. But again, it's a skill. Not everybody has it, not everybody's meant for it, and that's ok, but it does help to have at least one person who is good at that, and then you let them do that.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 56:18
Right. So would you say maybe then rather than doing their own, maybe archaeologists should seek for more collaboration with with people like you, with content creators, like established content creators like you or?

AB **Annelise Baer** 56:30

I think if I think that could be an excellent way to do things again, because like, you know, the actual professors and people are quite busy. And so if it's, you know, you can just have a team up and selfishly, I would love the opportunity to go hang out with my friends and people that I know and go like, you know.

See their active projects and make videos from their dig sites, that kind of thing. Like, I would love to do that. I want to do that. And I think that would be a great way to sort of bridge that gap because otherwise we end up with kind of awkward stilted videos of people who are not necessarily.

Good at that style of on camera communication, making a weird video and then it doesn't work.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 57:12

Right.

Right. And so as my final question, I would like to ask you, how do you see the role of social media evolving in archaeology in the next few years?

AB **Annelise Baer** 57:24

I would like to see it as a way to basically just continue humanizing, humanizing the profession, humanizing the people who work in the profession, and then the broader concepts that we deal with. So whether it's, you know.

Human history, Egyptian history, whatever. Making that more human and more accessible and removing a lot of the barriers that are keeping the public and academic knowledge. You know, separate. So hopefully breaking, breaking those barriers down further. And because we all have cell phones and specifically smartphones, it's so easy to film things, make a little video while you're on site. You know, if, you know, I've been that dedicated person on the team and so it's very easy.

to do. You can do it very easily and quickly with minimal equipment, and if you just have the one person on your team who knows how to do it, it can be done.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:27

Right, right, right. All right. I don't have any more questions on my side. If there is anything you'd like to add that you have not the possibility of expressing or sharing or.

AB **nnelise Baer**   58:42

I just, yeah, I think, I just think this is, this is really cool. It's a great research topic. I'm glad you're doing this and I can't wait to see more people doing this so we can all work together and make good stuff.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   58:42

You're good.

AB **nnelise Baer**   58:57

All right.

Interview with Tenninger Kellenbarger

12 November 2025, 05:17pm

1h 10m 24s

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:03
Take a second. There it is. All right. So I'll do a very short introduction before I start for the purpose of the transcript. So thank you for joining me in this interview. So today I'll go through the different topics that I scheduled for.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 0:04
Yeah, no problem. Perfect.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:23
So we'll talk about your background, the platforms you use and the content you make, your identity on social media, your audience and the way you engage, and credibility, trust and ethics of doing your job on social media. And we'll finish with some concluding points.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 0:25
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:41
If you don't have any question, I will start with the with my questions.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 0:41
Perfect.
Absolutely.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:48
Alright, so can you tell me a little bit about your background, both academically and professionally, and how you became interested in communicating archaeology on social media?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 1:01

Yeah, absolutely. So I graduated from my undergrad in 2016, got my master's in 2018, and began my PhD process in 2018, but with Temple University's.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:35
Mhm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 1:36
During that final semester, which was spring of 2020, when I was doing my doctoral exam prep for everything and the whole world shut down because of COVID and following my exams, which were done in April.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:47
Yeah.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 1:52
I was tasked with my proposal, turned that in in fall of 2020, and from then I began using social media as a way to kind of take breaks with my own research. I could only.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 2:06
Mhm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 2:08
Stay in my own academic Ave. and research for so long before I felt like I needed a breath of fresh air. So by staying on top of archaeological news, updates, reports, and more, it felt like I was able to stay on top of the field as a whole. And that is when I decided to.
Start taking breaks during the day and reading the reports, turning it into something that's more consumable, more digestible for individuals online. And since then, it's been about, you know, trying to communicate what is going on in the field, what are reports, what are we as archaeologists still currently working on my.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 2:36
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   2:47
Own research as well, and it was just kind of something I fell into as a way to break up my own dissertation research.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   2:55
All right, I see. So it really started as a just doing it for, for, for, for the fun of doing it and for like, you know, doing something else apart from research and then so right, right, right. So let's say when we talk about what were your goals when you actually started the.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   3:05
Exactly. I needed a break.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   3:15
on social media, it was mainly just like like that what you described, yeah.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   3:20
Yeah, I really didn't have any outlined goals immediately. I really found from the moment that I began talking about it in a way that was accessible and digestible for individuals was that there was a large desire for.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   3:25
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   3:38
People online to have science communicators, you know, talk to them and, you know, teach something to them. And that was really a huge proponent for me was if even if one person sees my stuff and they're able to take a fact or learn something from it, then my job is done.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   3:57
Right. So let's say your goal changes in in that sense over time in the.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 4:03

Yeah, it's really always just been how much information can I get out there? How can I make information and learning accessible? Because I'm currently a professor at Temple and I get it, you're you're doing your masters. It can be very hard and very costly to.
Go to school, to go into higher education. So if I can make, you know, learning more consumable, more accessible, accessibility, especially since I had to do my dissertation during COVID, became such a huge aspect for me to get across to people.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 4:33

Mhm.

Right, right. Makes total sense. So let's talk about the platforms you use. So which one do you use and why, if you have a specific reason why you use a specific platform?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 4:40

1.

Mhm.

Sure, yeah. So I will say personally, I post on TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, but and there's a huge but so I prefer the filming and editing on.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:01

OK.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 5:07

TikTok. I think it's easier and I just have learned that aspect better than say anything from Meta, but I will say TikTok is.
Feral TikTok can be a cesspool. And that's not to say that other social media platforms do not have their own darker side, but I mainly will film and edit on TikTok, post and run on TikTok, and then repost it everywhere else to share what I can.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:25

Mm.

Right, so mainly. So your approach is that you mainly do. If I understood correctly, you

mainly do content for TikTok, which is then reposted on your other social medias. So like for example, if I see something on your TikTok profile is.

TK enninger Kellenbarger 5:54
Yeah, it.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 6:01
Most definitely. Most likely that I'm gonna find it on Instagram, for example.

TK enninger Kellenbarger 6:06
100% and if if Meta for Instagram and even Facebook came up with a better system for editing and even filming, I would 100% move over there entirely. But how TikTok has been for the last few years there.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 6:08
Right.

TK enninger Kellenbarger 6:24
Kind of everything for the editing, the filming, all that kind of process. It's easier to to get everything together there and from there you can easily just export and crosspost.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 6:36
Right, right. It's very interesting because I actually, because I don't really know much about TikTok because I never really used it myself. I've always been more like using more like first Facebook and then Instagram. So like.

TK enninger Kellenbarger 6:44
Mhm.
Yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 6:51

And like these things you talk about about like editing, like the work of editing, is it like TikTok makes it easier because as like inbuilt like tools to help you edit?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   7:03
Yes, yes, yeah. So how they have it because TikTok also owns Capcut.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   7:07
Yeah.
Right, right, right. Yeah. So it's all connected. It makes it easy.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   7:12
Yes, so it's so connected and their editing for being on your phone is absolutely ideal. Meanwhile, if I'm editing something for a podcast or YouTube, more long form, I personally prefer Adobe Premiere, but like.
Adobe Suite is not gonna be good for a phone or anything and I feel like TikTok and Capka have really figured out what people are looking for for the phone editing process. And I know Meta with Facebook and Instagram has recently redone their editing, but.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   7:35
Right.
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   7:48
I'm not not fully there yet.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   7:49
Right, right, right. I see him. So the target audience doesn't really differ from platform to platform. You just or or do you have in mind for example, maybe you use let's say.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   7:52
Mhm.
Yeah, I.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   8:07

Which Facebook you aim for a different target or or not really?

TK Henninger Kellenbarger   8:13

Not really. I will honestly say I'm more geared towards anybody and anybody who has an interest in history, ancient history, art history, Archaeology. If you like any of those, hi and welcome.

Uh, I don't really try and you know, make it age specific. Um, anything like that.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   8:29

Right.

Right, right, right. I see. We'll be back in a second on your audience. First, I wanted to ask you the way you plan your posts. So is it more like strategically you follow is like following trends or you're just more spontaneous with the with posting?

TK Henninger Kellenbarger   8:46

Mm.

I would say a bit of everything. I think it really depends. So like a few days a week are more scheduled. So for example for me specifically every Monday I have a mini series called Ruin My Monday and I talk about ruins artifacts more to make your Monday suck less and.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   8:55

Mhm.

Oh.

Yeah.

TK Henninger Kellenbarger   9:10

During that day, it will be more long form, as in up to 90 seconds of something, whether I'm talking about an archaeological discovery, a report, anything like that. If I am posting a podcast on that week for Wednesday, I will then also curate something to come.

Out that day on social media to, you know, alert individuals like, hey, new episode is out, how can I get people to funnel into listening, whether it's Apple, Spotify, et cetera, or

continue on towards YouTube. So there are a few days, I would say Mondays and every other Wednesday where it is.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   9:41
Mm.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   9:50
A little bit more curated and then other things really just it can be trending. I do know that there is some delay with trends from TikTok to Instagram, but other than that it is honestly spontaneous and if I think that there's something really, really cool that just came.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:09
Mhm.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   10:10
Out in the realm of Archaeology, I'm gonna talk about it.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:12
Right, right, right. You're gonna be on point, let's say. Yeah, yeah, try to stay up. Yeah, yeah, get it. And how much work does it usually get to put out content? Like how many, let's say?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   10:16
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:28
Working hours per week do you spend if you know one estimate or or if you just want to tell me like how much work in general you put in, that's also fine.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   10:40
OK, so for short form content I would say for the entire week.
Less than five hours. I would even go as far as less than three hours per week.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 10:47

Mhm.

Right. So making a video for like short form content for Instagram or TikTok is really takes you like really fast.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 10:58

Exactly. Plus, if I have a sound bite or an art piece in mind or something that I know, oh, I want to talk about this next week or something popped up and I don't want to do a 90 second video, but I want to do something.

More trending, I guess, and more consumable that way. I will actually film it with the song in the background and I will actually take notes on it to say, here's what I'm thinking for this sound bite, like come back to it. So I will kind of have you should see my drafts right now, but there's a lot of stuff of if I have more time.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 11:18

Mhm.

OK.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 11:34

More time one day where I'm not teaching, I'm not meeting with students and I'm not filming. I will pump out multiple drafts and then from there there could be weeks where I don't actually post anything new, but it's been sitting in my drafts and now I feel it's appropriate to bring out.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 11:51

Right. I see. And you do all of the work you do. You just do it by yourself, right? Yeah, that.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 11:57

Oh yeah, there's a lot more time. I would say if I am filming a podcast and editing that, that's that's more than the three hours. But in terms of just social media, I would say around 3 hours. But it is just me, one woman show.

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   12:06
Mhm.

Right.

Right, right, right. And about the like long form of content for the videos, how how much work does that take you more or less?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   12:16
Mhm.

No, it's.

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   12:21
I imagine that's more work on the editing side, right?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   12:26
More work on the editing side and also to ensure that I am speaking properly. I got my dates down, I got name pronunciations down, all of that kind of stuff down. I ensure that I'm researching massively, especially if it's a topic outside of my time period that I'm not too familiar about.

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   12:44
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   12:45
So there's a lot more into the research process that way, a lot more into the process of me consuming it and then turning it into notes that is going to be more, you know, consumable for everybody who may not have the background that I do. And then the editing, the editing.

MD **Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   13:01
Yeah.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 13:03

It is a lot.

Mhm.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 13:16

Regarding the content you post, what is, for example, the tone of voice you prefer to use if you try to be more professional or or you try to be more informal or more expressive, let's say.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 13:31

Yeah, I try. I try to be very much, of course, myself, how I'm talking to you right now. But my husband has told me that sometimes he can hear my retail voice come out where.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 13:48

See.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 13:48

Like he will be able to tell when I'm more in teacher mode or my retail voice mode. But I do. I do try and make it as as anybody, friends, family, loved ones, how I would talk to them if I do have to.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 13:53

Mhm.

Right.

Mm-hmm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 14:05

Change my tone. It's usually because of the content that I'm covering, and I want to ensure that it's being done with the most respect as possible. So my tone will shift depending on the topic, depending on the images, the topic at hand, the subject matter at hand. But other than that, I would like to.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   14:16
Right.

TK Henninger Kellenbarger   14:25
Say that it is a little bit more professional version of me because I do think that if I'm able to teach via social media, I do kind of have to uphold that professionalism. Especially, you know, I don't want it getting back to the university I work for that I'm not being professional. So it is me, but there is some academic professional flair.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   14:45
Right, right. I mean, it's part of your training too, let's say. So makes sense, right? Right, right. And what about, for example, the use of communication techniques or strategies like the use of narratives?

TK Henninger Kellenbarger   14:50
Yeah, exactly.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   15:02
Or emotional engagement, for example, like sadness or humor. How do you go about that?

TK Henninger Kellenbarger   15:07
That's a really good question, and I think it depends on the subject matter. So, for example, if I'm talking about a new find that came out of Pompeii that has to do with human remains, it's about creating that narrative of human connection. How can we today?
In 2025, see ourselves in, you know, something that occurred in 79 CE or even further back. And whether it's, you know, something devastating like the eruption of Mount Vesuvius covering Pompeii or something that we are having a facial reconstruction of an individual from 4000 years ago, I think for.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   15:31
Mhm.

TK Kenninger Kellenbarger 15:46

Me specifically, it's about showing people that we could be separated by thousands of years, time and space. But at the end of the day, history is telling the story of humanity and to be able to.

Find these human connections to the past. Because when you read and learn about history, and even teaching it, it can feel impersonal and it can feel very different. And oh, well, if it doesn't affect me, then why should I care? And the why should I care is how I try and reach people more of well, here's why, because you know.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 16:10

Mhm.

TK Kenninger Kellenbarger 16:21

We all use toys even today, but did you know children in Mesopotamia had toys? Did you know that this is how brides got ready? Did you know that you know they used to do this back in the day? Or here's a jewelry or anything like exactly where you can say, wait, I wear a wedding ring today. People did that thousands of years ago.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 16:32

You make it relatable for the audience, right?
Mhm.

TK Kenninger Kellenbarger 16:41

Or, Oh my gosh, I I'm chatting with a friend right now. Oh, well, we have a tablet of, you know, friendship in the ancient world. So it's about being relatable and putting it into why does this matter and how does this affect me? And showing that we've always been people, even 5000 years ago, people have always.
Add this innate connection to one another.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 17:03

Right, right, right. So you really try to leverage that a framing of, let's say, humanizing the past, you know, in a way.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   17:11

Yes, I think, I think with textbooks, with, you know, even sometimes in museums, there is that othering of, Oh well, it happened to thousands of years ago. And I think it just takes one narrative, one story, one artifact to get somebody to be like 'Oh my gosh, they were just like me'.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   17:30

Right, right, right. And does your public, for example, respond more to when you do content leveraging more on an emotional engagement like sadness? Like I notice, for example, you also do the the so-called trend of the sad archaeology, right when you like.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   17:47

Uh.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   17:50

You really like text and you were like, you know, staring into the into the camera and does that like how does that work well for you or not really? Is it enjoyed as a content?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   18:01

I think it depends. I think it really depends on the topic. So sometimes it will do well. I mean, sadness, emotion that will always, you know, rings ring home for somebody that will always pull at anybody's heartstrings. But I think it also really depends because.
There's also, you know, longer as in 90 seconds content that seems to pull more people, because they have that desire to learn more, especially when it's larger topics like Pompeii, Egypt, Cleopatra, anything like that. And I would also say even in terms of weaponry and within my own research and publications, there is that desire to have more. So it's kind of everything and.
Making it your own at the end of the day too.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   18:53

Right. I see. So let's talk more about your audience. You said it's very like heterogeneous. So it's like very you were talking about different age groups.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   18:58
OK.

Mhm.

Yes.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   19:12
And so there is not really like a majority of one specific demographic group that is present in your audience. It's very like varied.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   19:22
It's very varied on.

The platforms, but I will say different platforms will have different demographics. I will say for example across the board all social media outlets including YouTube and even Spotify. I would say it is more in my age range. So I am thirty-one years old, so anywhere from.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   19:33
Mhm.

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   19:47
In the late 20s to the mid 30s is the age group I will say. And that's not to say I don't get those who are 18 or those who are 60 plus. I have everything, but because of my age, I do think that I get more people who are in that window as well.

And then depending on the.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   20:05
But.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   20:08
Social media platform. It will actually be very varied in terms of gender. A lot of women do follow me, but sometimes it will flip on YouTube and it will be more men or one post may be, you know, sent out more towards women or this one might get more.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 20:16
Mhm.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 20:28
More attention from men, so it is a little bit varied I would say.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 20:32
Right. So it shifts also depending on the content as you as you said, right? And does that, for example, influence the content you produce like this? Do you sometimes are influenced by a certain demographic group to produce?

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 20:35
Yes, absolutely.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 20:47
Specific kind of content or not really?

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 20:50
Not really. I would say it actually the demographics actually reflect kind of what comes after the posting. So if if it's more of, you know, an emotional video or even long form content, if it's geared more towards.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 21:02
Mm.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 21:10
Women, there's going to be a different reaction as compared to if it gets more pushed out to men or a different age group or anything. There's going to be a much different reaction in terms of how it's being perceived.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 21:25

And does that usually have negative connotations, positive connotations or neutral? Because I don't know, I heard for them from other creators that he when he's usually about like like a male population reacting like being the majority of the audience for one. Post one type of content doesn't really end up well and usually has insults with sexism and this kind of stuff. So does that reflect also on you?

TK enninger Kellenbarger   21:50
Yep.
Yes, it can reflect if the topic that is more, you know, people have the outside perspective of, oh, if somebody's talking about swords or weapons, that's going to be more like male dominated or anything like that. And if it's more about.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   22:13
Mm.

TK enninger Kellenbarger   22:15
Emotion. It's going to be more towards the female audience. And while I don't prescribe to that, I would 100% agree that the reactions are all across the board, good, bad and ugly. And it is very interesting to see what is the kind of tipping point.
Of what is going to cause any group to react in a in a certain manner.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   22:41
Right, I see. And so then how do you interact with your followers? Usually is it just through comments or you do live streams, things like this?

TK enninger Kellenbarger   22:53
Comments when necessary. I will say I do not really comment on TikTok, and that's just for safety concerns. Sometimes I will not respond even on Instagram, also due to safety concerns.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   23:01
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   23:09

But there is of course live streams. People can get into contact with me via e-mail, all of that kind of stuff. But these boundaries of, you know, not really being able to DM me or having that.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   23:10

Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   23:25

Relationship with constantly commenting back and forth and developing A parasocial relationship. There are boundaries that I've had to put in place just for my own safety. Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   23:35

Right. Is it because, is it because again of negative comments that we talked about or also just because you don't want to expose yourself that much online or other reasons?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   23:47

It is absolutely. So all all for your for a short answer. At the end of the day, I of course am a real person and I'm able to turn my phone off and exist outside of social media and these boundaries have had to come into place because of.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   23:51

I see.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   24:07

Death threats. They've had to come into place because of sexual assault threats. They've had to come in place because of stalkers in the past. And it's it's fine. And I I'm very lucky that I have, you know, my husband. I mean, that's not to say I won't be like, oh, somebody left me a really.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   24:09

So.

Down.

Sorry to hear about that.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   24:26

Mean comment today like I'm at the end of the day I'm I'm human too, but I think having these.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   24:30

Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   24:33

Aspects to, you know, hold people accountable and blocking people in XY&Z and all of that. It does help. But there are many reasons why I will absolutely not comment to people in my DMS. I will not allow for that parasocial relationship because.

As a woman, and I know other female creators have said this too, there are our DM S are dumpster fires of threats and more simply because we're stating facts. And I think that's been the most interesting kind of outcome is why are individuals?

So upset about facts that you are going to take it out on somebody on the Internet and there should be more protections online, but hopefully we can all work together to improve that.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   25:14

Right.

Right. Yeah, it's very sad to hear. And I think it's not just so much that it's just about the facts that you're putting out. I think maybe also coming from, you know, all these like sexist comments has to do with the fact that people are used to see the the image of the stereotypical.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   25:33

Mhm.

337

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   25:40

Acheologist is usually an old white guy. So seeing like a woman doing this kind of communication, it's not maybe perceived well by by a male population, we could say. So it's maybe it's not just about the facts, but it's because these facts are coming from.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   25:42

Yep.
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   25:58

From from a woman.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   25:59

100% if if I were to hold my videos and I've spoken to other creators, long form and short form like Mini Minuteman and Flint Dibble about this who have gone toe to toe with Joe Rogan about this.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   26:00

Right. Yeah, it's very sad.
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   26:16

Is, you know, how are women, female archaeologists, female scholars being perceived? Because, you know, as a woman who's had to fight her way up through academia, there there is some kind of inherent training that you always have of having to prove yourself. But social media really opens the door of, you know, of course.
People making comments about the way I look. Oh, you don't look like an archaeologist. You don't speak like one. You don't do this. You don't do that. OK, sure. Or I think it also stems from the mistrust of a woman who is commenting on this, even though I can say I have my master's, I have my doctorate, doesn't matter at the end of the day.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   26:53

Right. It's crazy as in 2025, there are still these problems that, you know, like, oh, like a woman talking about archaeology is weird. That's not supposed to happen. You know, it's crazy stuff.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 27:00
Yeah.
Especially when my cohort in my program was mostly women.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 27:11
Right, right. But speaking still about the interaction with your followers, I saw you also do organize like trips with your followers that you give that possibility. How does that go? Is it like a positive experience usually?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 27:13
Yeah.
Yes.
Yes.
Um.
Oh yeah, it's been absolutely incredible. It has really been an absolute dream come true because I often feel like I stumbled *** ********* into having a following. I don't. I find it weird when people peers.
Or colleagues or even friends are saying, oh, you're a social media like influencer. And to me, I'm just a scholar. I'm just a girl who loves ancient history and archaeology and art history. Like I I don't see myself as that and.
Hosting trips and being able to travel and show people on like a live field trip. Everything that I have studied for decades of my life is so rewarding that that is exactly why I started what I'm doing to see through people's eyes for the first time that I'm getting to see the gold mask of.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 28:14
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 28:24

Tut though getting to see the pyramids of Egypt and having all the knowledge that I do have and being able to share that with somebody and geek out and nerd out and just being with people who are so like minded and absolutely just love history as much as you do and sometimes even more and it's.

It's been the best experiences and they're absolutely incredible people and it's it's so fulfilling.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 28:47
Right.

Right. Sounds awesome. Is it something you like you reached out to like a trade agency or you did it your own or somebody reached out to you or?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 28:59
Somebody reached out to me, actually. So it was, it was really, I was honored that that happened and I'm extremely lucky that I'm still able to do it. We're going to Turkey in 2026, so I'm very, very excited.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 29:01
Mm-hmm. Please.

Nice, yeah.

Yeah, sounds awesome. Yeah. You mentioned that you don't really.

Like you'd really resonate when somebody like would describe you or indicate you as a as an influencer, right? Then how would you describe for like how would you consider?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 29:32
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 29:39
The you that is on social media, what term would you rather use? Like content creator, archaeological content creator, or just your Archaeology? Sorry, sorry for my English. You're just an archaeologist.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   29:52
No, you're good.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   29:55
Um, how would you define yourself?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   30:00
Hmm.
I always tell people, even online social media, whichever form of content, that I am an archaeologist and art historian, just to build credibility and I would honestly say across the board that.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   30:11
Mhm.
Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   30:19
I just teach online, I would say. I would like to say that my stuff is more educational and that's no shame. And I don't want to come off as like influencers or bad or anything. I just personally don't consider myself one.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   30:26
Mhm.
Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   30:34
I don't know. I don't know why. I don't know. I don't feel like I am influencing.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   30:36
No, no, I makes sense. No, no, it makes sense. And I also understand that a lot of times in society term influencer usually has tend to be a bad connotation because it's usually

associated with, you know, all those personalities that have like huge amount of followings or like usually like.

Stars or people like Kim Kardashian. So like I understand that. But I do ask that because in the literature, like doing the theoretical background for my thesis, I noticed that on research on social media, the term influencer is used.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   30:58

Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:16

Very often just to, you know, to indicate somebody that has a presence of social media and has a certain amount of following and has, you know, in a way like interacts or, you know, puts out content.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   31:26

Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:32

And this content has the possibility of influencing somebody also in the way of maybe learning about something new or changing his opinion about something. We're talking about Archaeology, so maybe changing your opinion about something related to the past. You know, that's why I.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   31:43

Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:52

Ask this question if you would like consider yourself an influencer or for the purpose of my thesis, I'm coining the term are you an influencer? Because that's how my communication supervisor when we worked on the social media for our faculty would like call us he would like.

TK Tenninger Kellenbarger   31:58

H.

Yeah.

Mhm.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   32:11

Coined this term RQ influencer and that was like very interesting to me. Hence why I I ask these, you know, because it's interesting also to see everybody's perspective on this.

TK Tenninger Kellenbarger   32:15

Yeah.

Mhm.

Yeah, I feel cause I'm not showing off like I'm not like a lifestyle content creator. I'm not of course not a Kardashian, but like it's it's nothing to do with like what's the new show everybody's Love is Blind or Love Island. It's nothing like that where you are a public facing. Figure and to me I I'm just able and very lucky that I'm able to get out there and share the knowledge that I do. So if that is influencing knowledge.

Yes, and I and I think maybe it's about like having a multifaceted approach theoretically in how we are understanding influencer or even if we wanted to breakdown creator. But theoretically speaking it is easier to understand.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   33:01

Oh.

TK Tenninger Kellenbarger   33:11

Archaeo influencer or a history creator or anything like that, that for people, they're able to understand that a lot more.

Mhm.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   33:27

Wanted to ask you, so is the kind of response that you get on your content usually, as I

understood, is it very varied or tends to be more positive, more negative about debating in your comment section? How does that go?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 33:42
Yeah.
So as my anthropology professor used to always say, it depends. And it absolutely does depend, and it really does depend on the subject matter and content, so.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 33:44
Cool.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 33:58
For example, a a trend I have personally noticed is when I or any other archeo influencer is speaking for up to 90 seconds for the longer short form content. There is this tendency for a group of people made-up of every background, every age.
Every, everything that there is this small group and you find it in every, every social media category, whether it's book talk, whether it's crochet talk, whether it's literally anything that there is this group.
Who when you speak they try to get you in a in a gotcha moment so they can type actually it's this or when you said this, this is actually incorrect and it's it's almost like this group is trying to disprove you based on one thing that you said and I think.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:39
Um.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 34:53
I think it becomes even more blatant, at least for myself, is when you mention a fact or a different verbiage of a word, and if some person didn't know what that word meant, didn't know that fact, it becomes a personal attack against them that they now have to tell you. You about and it's this very interesting phenomenon. Have you heard of the bean soup theory?

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 35:15

Right.

No, I haven't.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   35:24

OK, so I've I'm I'm new onto this theory from social media. I think it's stemmed originally from TikTok, but the bean bean soup theory comes from somebody who was sharing a bean soup recipe.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   35:32

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   35:40

A bean soup recipe and people in the comments. Some were very positive of thanks for the recipe. Can't wait to try it. Others were more along the lines of, well, I'm allergic to beans. How dare you post this? My mother choked on a bean. How dare you post this?

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   35:41

OK.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   35:59

Well, I can't have beans because of XY and ZI can't believe you're being inconsiderate. So it it's very much the bean soup theory in in any circle where you want to put it and I find with.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   36:03

Mhm.

Like people looking for a pretest to always like attack you or find a argument.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   36:20

Finding something that is wrong. Exactly. I've seen people. It's a different version of. I've seen discourse of it being a different kind of take or approach than main character syndrome, but it is very much like that. Anywho.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:35
Mm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 36:38
Within my own community, both good, bad and ugly, it is along those lines of if I say a term, a fact, if they don't know it, that is a personal attack on their intelligence, which I I hope I'm never coming off across that way. But there is this inherent desire to, um, actually.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:50
Um.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 36:57
Back to the original creator or try and get them in a gotcha moment. I would also say when any sort of content contradicts or goes to disprove hurtful conspiracy theories such as the aliens building the pyramids.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 37:04
OK.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 37:17
There is a more visceral reaction almost immediately I will say, but for other things it's a little bit more muted, but when you are taking away or taking jabs or working at disproving.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 37:23
Mhm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 37:32
People's reality because of conspiracy theories and misinformation being peddled online, especially in the age of AI. That's when there is almost an immediate visceral reaction, I will say.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 37:45

Right. And for example, when we talk about pseudoarchaeology and misinformation, for example, maybe happening in your comments section, is it something you usually engage with and try to argue against or you you think it's a lost cause?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 37:49

Yeah.

Mhm.

It depends, because sometimes it it does feel like you're arguing with a wall and that wall is never going to change. And sometimes you have to be OK with saying your point of, you know, aliens did not build the pyramids and here's why or here's how we know sometimes. And it is hard because I also.

Feel like I'm constrained by professional professionalities. I will say of I represent Temple University, but I'm also my own individual online, so I want to be able to go back at people, but professionally I know that I cannot.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 38:27

Mhm.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 38:37

Sometimes there can be somebody who will have to be Prometheus if they're acting out of line, and I can professionally put them in their place and do it as a learning example, but it's about knowing some commenters.

Can be a learning example and there are other commenters and comments where you know it's immediately going to be a lost cause. If you go back at them, they will absolutely harass you until you block them. And in the back of my mind, as a woman, I also have to worry about my safety of if I do say this back.

back at them. What if they find out where I live?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 39:18

Right. So better to, yeah, yeah, of course. Better always, you know, take risks like that. Totally, totally understandable.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 39:20
So it's hard.

I better to not take risks. Hopefully somebody will also course correct them in my comments, but I do not stand for if somebody's going to come in with misinformation and conspiracy theories. That's fine if I'm not going to course if I do course correct them, but the moment.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 39:32
Yeah.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 39:40
You are calling somebody a slur. The moment you're racist, the moment you are XY or Z, any sort of xenophobic, any phobic, you're done. You're blocked instantly. I do not care if you're a fan of mine. I do not stand for that. We can all have an academic debate.
But the moment you start game calling and the moment you start being hateful, done.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 39:56
Mhm.

Right. Totally understandable, right. So going back a little bit about, you know, the different reactions you get, how would you measure the success of your communication then? How do you know when you're like, OK, like?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 40:07
Mhm.
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:18
I'm succeeding as a I guess a science communicator. Like how do you go? Do you usually like look at the reactions you get or you go more with metrics like views and likes?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 40:29
So I used to be really obsessed with numbers, and then I realized it doesn't matter at the

end of the day. Sometimes I'll look at comments, not really look at numbers anymore, but what's interesting is.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:38
Mhm.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 40:48
People I know in my life, colleagues or peers will actually get sent my videos and they will, they'll let me know about it. And that's how I know it's it's made its way to the correct people. And the way that I measure it is not by views, likes, etcetera, but if museums are.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:55
Um.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 41:07
Commenting if you know the right creators, the right population, like the right, the right group of people find you. And like, I remember the first time National Geographic not only liked, but commented on it. I I fangirled so hard. I ran to my husband and I was like national freedom.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:09
Mhm.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 41:27
Freaking geographic, man. So I I don't care about celebrity. That is my celebrity. I don't care about celebrities. Ancient art is my celebrities. But I think it's when it's museums, when it's, you know, different nonprofits, if it's something that you look up to, you know?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:28
Great achievement.
Right, right.
Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 41:47

Leaders in different countries liking your stuff. I think that's when you realize I'm in the right direction. So it's not always about quality. I mean, it's not always about quantity with numbers and likes, comments, views, but it's about the quality.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:04

Right, right, right. So we could say that the the the perception of your presence online is usually positive by, let's say, other institutions or even your peers in academia. Like is it usually then?
Like a a positive perception or have you ever had like tensions or criticism received from like academia, let's say, since you're you're in it?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 42:30

I actually have not. A lot of people in my in academia don't really know. And I think it's because not many people in my field are really present on social media and if they are present, it's.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:39

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 42:47

Private. They're not science communicators. They're doing their own things of publishing articles, teaching books, all of that kind of stuff. So sometimes it does feel like there is a disconnect within the field of while the field is evolving, the science communication, it is still very much stuck in its old.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:59

Oh.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 43:05

Academic ivory tower ways. And when it has found its way across old professors desks, I

just spoke at my undergrad for archaeology for the students there and my old advisor reached out and said, hey, I hear you're this like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 43:07
Right.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 43:24
Theology influencer extraordinaire. And I was like, Doctor Canal, please don't, please don't call me that. And it is really interesting to see how people I graduated with, people in my field, if they do find it, they're very excited because they do see how.
How much this field can grow from it, but I do think that there is a massive still disconnect within the field right now.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 43:42
Mhm.
Right. But so when, for example, these professors of yours noticed that you were, you had this following on social media and his presence, was the comment meant in a negative way or you know, like more a positive way?

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 44:06
More of a positive way, even through extended family. My sister's sister-in-law has had her students. She teaches high school in Colorado. She's had her students come up to her and say, oh, hey, you should check out this new video. And she's like, I know that girl.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 44:07
Mm-hmm. I'm done.
Mhm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 44:26
Like that is my sister-in-law's sister or other colleagues of mine who I've excavated with when they're working and they get sent videos of mine. They'll let me know. And to me that's like really weird cause I'm like, oh, that's interesting. Like I'm, I'm honestly talking about what I like. Crazy that you're seeing my face.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 44:29

Right.

Mhm, yeah.

Yeah, of course, of course. But so it's interesting to know that there's not then there is no big tension or or worrying derived by this.

TK Tenninger Kellenbarger 44:51

No and no. But I will say with the disconnect, what is interesting is the chair of my department, she's a Roman coin specialist. She's actually going to be head of ASOR next year. She I've talked to her about.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:03

Mhm.

TK Tenninger Kellenbarger 45:08

The digital side, social media and everything. And I some people in my field are a little bit more open to social media, whereas other individuals are haven't really understood social media. So I think it's kind of a learning process for everybody involved.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:20

Mhm.

Right. So it's not more of a negative perception, it's more that it's frustrating that it's not considered enough than as a as a tool for science communication is not something that is really on their mind, on your peers mind maybe also like older maybe academic people.

TK Tenninger Kellenbarger 45:32

Not considered.

Older, I think, I think they're not. And I think with social media, with podcasting and going on, you know, National Geographic documentaries, History Channel, that kind of stuff, they're all for that. I've seen them on it. But when we get to social media, I think because of the preconceived notions.

About what social media is or was even in the past when Instagram first came out and it

was really just for over-filtered photos of ourselves with the utmost contrast back in the day that there has really been no change or mind shifting of what social media is today and how it can.

Be used to benefit so many different things.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 46:24
Right, right, right. And you see that personally around you. So yeah, it's very interesting because you are, you are the third person I'm interviewing, but you're the first really like person that is.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 46:30
Yes.
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 46:41
Like, like into academia. So it's like very interesting for from my point of view, you know, because I'm like also aiming my research towards like how can like, you know, social media be a tool for public countries and communication for.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 46:44
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:00
Academics for researchers that you know have to do public outreach and you know this can be a tool and is a lot of the times not considered or is because yes, like you said, there is still all the perceptions like of what social media is and how it can be used.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 47:07
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:20
So.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 47:20

Yeah, future work of mine. I really want to focus on why is there distrust of academia when academics are science communicators online and how it can be, how it can be used, how.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:34

Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 47:37

You know how we as individuals in academia are really missing out on a way to help change people's minds about us and about the topics that we cover.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:48

Right, right, right. It was interesting to know that at least there is no negative perception of yourself when you do this, because I've read papers exploring how scientists that are active on social media have received a lot of criticisms from their department about.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 47:56

Oh.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:07

Their presence online. So it's interesting to know that at least in your case, there was no negative interactions with your peers. So very, very interesting.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 48:09

Mhm.

Yes.

Yeah, no negative. And I think that's what keeps me in line of like, OK, if somebody's being a a **** in the comments, just block them, delete it, move on. But yeah, I will say speaking to other creators like Flint Devil.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:37
Mm-hmm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 48:37
He has personally faced other issues because he went on Joe Rogan to fight against pseudoarchaeology. But I think it's, yeah, it's just about making, I think everybody aware, even if it's your own department, even if it's, you know, where you currently work, all of that kind of stuff.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:45
Mhm.
Right, right, right. And still in this topic of the perception by your peers and also your public, as the growth of your followers change the way you are perceived, I read this paper of these researchers analyzing how like they're analyzing.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 49:00
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:13
Influencers accounts and they're seeing a pattern that is as the following grows, the engagement quality goes down and the perception of these these content creators worsen over time. Have you noticed something like this in your case or?
No, it's not really the case.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 49:34
Oh, that is really interesting, I would say. I don't think it's the case actually. Um.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:42
Mhm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 49:45

In terms of if you're getting more followers, your engagement can go down. I know the algorithm for different social media platforms, Instagram versus TikTok, vastly different from one another and how your content is being pushed out.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 49:58
Oh.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 50:01
TikTok pushes it more towards new individuals and Instagram pushes it more towards your followers because they have curated their following to include you. But I think it really would depend on the platform and the quality of the content.
And sometimes if you really like your video that you're posting and it does not go off to the numbers that you want, it can feel discouraging. But I always like to remind myself when the right people will always find it. And as somebody who is online or posting every day or almost every single day.
It may feel like I'm always online and posting, but not everybody else is always on their phone. Not everybody else is constantly scrolling, editing, updating and all of that kind of stuff. So I really don't know.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 50:44
Oh.
Right.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 50:55
If I would say I've noticed that trend at the end of the day.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 51:01
Fair enough. But it's interesting to to to hear these this perspective for as much as you, you know, you know, as much as you noticed.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 51:05
Yeah.
Yeah, that's interesting. I've never actually thought about that.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   51:10

Yeah it's it's it's very interesting you know of course you know I mean it's a it's a research this paper I read you know the the the the the scope the context of the research is the a bit specific so makes sense it it's not applicable to like.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   51:18

3.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   51:28

Everything, you know, every kind of profile on social media. But I thought of including in in the questions to know, you know, to if this is something you you notice. But yeah, so you talked before about about when you presented.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   51:38

Oh yeah, absolutely. No, it's a great question to think about.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   51:47

Yourself. You always try to present a very real version of yourself, right? And to also establish a level of trust and credibility with your with your audience. Do you make other kind of efforts in?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   51:53

Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   52:03

For doing this or it's just about the way you you try to be, you know, like authentic and real like like in real life.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   52:14

I try to be as authentic as possible, whether it's having my cat crawl in my arms because

she loves to be on camera or, you know, talking in the manner that I do and trying to make it as.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   52:21
Mhm.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   52:29
Like I would just be talking to you or any other person off the street, friends, family, loved ones. I try to do that to showcase that, or to, I should say, dispel the notion that academics are just old white men who don't know how to talk to society and boop, boop, boop.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   52:44
Yeah.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   52:46
To really showcase at the end of the day, academics are also just people with, you know, fixations on interesting facts and strange topics. But yeah, I would say I try and uphold the most professional manner that I can while still being myself. So if that means.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   52:54
Mm.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   53:06
I have to take a pause so that I don't say certain aspects that I've learned from teaching in the classroom. I can translate it into real life. I wouldn't. I try not to curse so much when I'm filming something, but.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   53:11
Yeah.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger**   53:22
I think it's that or too much colloquialisms or too many slang terms I try and really limit.

But at the end of the day, if I giggle about something when I'm filming a podcast, I leave it in. Like, why not?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 53:29
Mm.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 53:39
Yeah.
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 53:43
Are there, apart from the ones we already discussed, are there other negative aspects that you notice about the use of social media or ethical dilemmas maybe you face when creating videos? Like, yeah, maybe like simplifying too much or?

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 53:54
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 54:00
Dealing with controversial topics or things like this.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 54:03
Yeah, I will say again, it depends on the topic, subject matter, all that kind of stuff. But if I'm looking up reports that deal with human remains, there is the ethics side of that of what am I showing and does it need to be shown?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 54:21
Yes.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 54:23
Can I get a scan? Can I get an X-ray? Can I get something else that can visually help demonstrate what I'm talking about? Because coming from an art history background,

visuals are so helpful. And of course.

An image paints 1000 words. So sometimes I do find myself overthinking in my own conundrum of do I need this image? Do I have enough images? Am I explaining it in a way that the images can also supplement my work?

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   54:55

Mhm.

TK Kenninger Kellenbarger   54:56

Human remains is a big one. How are we showing it? How are we talking about it? All of that kind of stuff. I will also say the other dilemmas can be I'm running out of time. When I film something, I will film everything and then it could be 3 minutes long and I have to wrestle with myself sometimes.

To say, OK, do I cut this down to 90 seconds? Do I leave it? Do I have to change the verbiage because somebody might not understand this? Do I have to amplify this section more? Do I have to kind of do a more 101 level version of this video before I post this one? There's a lot of things that go into that, but.

Trying to think of anything else.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   55:40

For example, since you come from the context of academia and university, for example, when me and my peers were doing the social media of our faculty, we were doing, of course, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, but our university had policies against the.

TK Kenninger Kellenbarger   55:45

Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   56:00

Use of TikTok for example. So I don't know if that's something you had to deal with. Like you had the maybe problems with the somebody like had problems with the platforms you were using or not really. There is no really dilemma about that.

TK Kenninger Kellenbarger   56:02

OK.

I don't. I don't really think so. And my department doesn't really know much about my social media. I've talked to my chair about it, and I think she comes from the background of not really understanding social media.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 56:22
Um.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 56:30
But I it it does. I have. I will say I have had students find my social media and they've let me know, which is kind of interesting when they when they find me.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 56:31
Which helps in a way, I guess like.
Mm.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 56:46
Um.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 56:47
Again, is it a positive or negative?

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 56:49
Very positive, actually. They they think it's it's interesting whether they find it during the class or after. Yeah, it's been positive or who knows, maybe that maybe I'm in a group chat somewhere and somebody's saying, Can you believe Doctor K is doing this? I don't know, but.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 56:51
Oh, OK.
OK.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   57:08

Yeah, that is interesting. I don't believe that we have any policies about that. I never really bring in anything that would be university specific. I'm never filming at the university. I'm never filming students, never filming anything like that, just for privacy reasons. And if I do film something with people in the background, I will edit it so that it blurs the background.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   57:12

Oh.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   57:28

Just for privacy, especially in a world that is so interconnected via social media. I want to be as respectful as possible. And yeah, other other aspects, good, bad and ugly. Oh, a downside that.

Is has been interesting to see and it's weird is fake accounts of yourself.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   57:48

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   57:52

Fake accounts of people stealing your content and reposting it. That's weird. That that that was really weird the first time I saw a fake Dirt Diaries account. And there's really no really nothing on social media that has been able to stop this. There's really no care about it.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   57:53

Right.

Yeah.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   58:11

I've had people reach out. Apparently there's a Facebook page that has almost 300,000

followers on it that is using all of my stuff, but is also putting pseudo archaeology and A I generated pseudo history images in it.

And I think that's where it's kind of gross of people are able to use all of that and you know, get money from it, do whatever and people, people consume it and they think it's you. And I think that's been the craziest thing is trying to fight that, trying to get it taken down.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:42

Right.

Yeah, it's terrible because you definitely don't want your face to be associated with the pseudoarchaeological theories or stuff like that, you know?

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 58:53

Pseudoarchaeological theories A I use it just made-up conspiracy theories or what I've also noticed is people will use my videos to promote.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:57

Yeah.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 59:08

Something that they are selling like a book of theirs that's coming out or they are using it to promote their podcast. And so people taking your stuff, your face and hopefully in their mind your followers in order to take from that. And it's very interesting to see. I had that actually happened this morning.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 59:15

Mhm.

Hey.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger** 59:28

Somebody using videos of mine to promote a book of theirs.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 59:28
Yeah.

Interesting. How do you go, how do you go about that? Do you really just you limit yourself to report them and that's it through the tool on on the platform or or you do something else?

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 59:33
Yes.

If it if it's fake pages, I do my best to report it. If it's a fake page that I see is stealing somebody else's like a mutual of mine's content, I'll let them know or report it. If somebody is using my image post videos likeness to sell something or to.
Have people listen to a podcast or buy something of theirs.
If they follow me, I have in the past reached out and said, hey, can you take this down? I did not approve of this. If they don't and there's been no attempt to say, hey, I'd like to use this in like a a blog or something. If there's no attempt you don't follow, there is no interaction that you would have known me.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:00:15
Yeah.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 1:00:27
Know me? I will just block because why are you stealing people's content for your own gain?

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:00:33
Right, right, right.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger** 1:00:35
There's enough of the pie. There's enough space on the mountain for everybody to be successful. We don't have to take it from other people.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:00:41

Right, of course, of course. And that's the reporting, for example in the past, like worth in actually getting an account like blocked or deleted or not really. These accounts just keep existing, unfortunately.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:00:56
Yeah, they keep existing. They do the best that they can, to my knowledge when they tell me. But yeah, but other than that, no, I've had some people try to steal access to my current Facebook page.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:00:56
Yeah.
Yeah.
Yeah, of course.
Yeah.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:01:13
Um, so I was locked out of it for eight months this year, and I finally got access back to it. So yeah, I just wish that there were better, like, protections for like, um.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:01:17
Wow.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:01:25
What is it called? Like not licensing, but if it's not Creative Commons, all that kind of stuff.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:01:30
Mhm.
Yeah, yeah, of course. Makes total sense. Maybe a more bigger effort from the companies, the parent companies of the of the platforms you use, you know? Yeah. All right. So going towards the end, I'd like to ask you, would you like to see more communication like yours from other?

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:01:41

100%.

Mhm.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:01:52

Archaeology or even institutions like a university.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:01:56

Yes. So I know like a lot of my mutuals are within academia, finishing up degrees, all of that kind of stuff. But for the States, because it seems to be more popular and more backed in Europe, backed in the sense of institutions.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:02:10

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:02:14

Museums are backing these creators and actually using them and supporting them and, you know, promoting education. In the United States, it seems like there's a lot of missed opportunities.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:02:22

Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger**   1:02:30

Of, you know, you could have more interactions with archaeoinfluencers, working with museums, working with nonprofits, working with, you know, national parks. And I think that's a missed opportunity right now. I also do wish more institutions.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:02:44

Mm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger**   1:02:47

Could probably change the way that people think of higher education if they also figured out a way to communicate effectively, whether you know, whatever topic it is on. I think that there's still a lot to learn, but.

Yeah, I think it's a I think it's a missed opportunity here that the museum seem to stick to themselves and then they wonder why they don't really have any retention. They don't really have a community, they don't really have anything. And I even see it with, you know, colleges and stuff. So why not if you want to change your image or.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:03:07

Right.

Mhm.

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger**   1:03:24

Or dispel preconceived notions about certain degrees or certain majors. Like start looking into this, especially in like 2025 today with online misinformation, a I generated garble, pseudo archaeology, pseudo history, conspiracy theories and.

Everybody has access to Wi-Fi and the Internet and social media. That misinformation now spreads like wildfire as compared to fax.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:03:56

Right, right. So would you say like, would you, would you like to have more like archaeologists doing communication like yours on their own or actually like want them to seek a collaboration with the content creators like you?

TK **Kenninger Kellenbarger**   1:04:10

Yeah.

Maybe both. I think anything and everything would help, especially those who are individuals who might be majoring in Archaeology, ancient history, anything like that. Classics even.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:04:16
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 1:04:29
Working with, you know, museum sites, national parks, organizations and organizations also understanding that science communication can be used for good. And I know with the questions I was asked by these students, the archaeology students at my undergrad was well.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:04:29
Mm-hmm.
Mhm.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 1:04:49
How do I get started? Just start like that. I think that's the hardest thing for people is people will see me and they'll say, OK, well, you have a PhD. OK, well, you have X amount of followers. I too started with zero. It it can happen and I think it's just about building.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:04:52
Right.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 1:05:08
That confidence to begin and because the online world can be scary, trust me on that, I get it. But at the end of the day, it's about starting and it's about, I think, wanting to do it for the right reasons because so many people will also say, oh, you're just doing it to be an influencer or you're just.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:05:27
Oh.

TK **enninger Kellenbarger** 1:05:28

Doing it for XY and Z. I'm doing it so that people realize that you're never too old to learn something new, that you're never too old to live your dream of being an archaeologist, that you're never too old to go back to school and start a degree or finish a degree. That at the end of the day, anything is possible.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:05:44
Right, right. I think it's beautiful. Yeah. We need more, more of these, I think, on social media, yeah.

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 1:05:47
More and it it just get out there. It can feel awkward, it can feel cringe-worthy, but just do it. Even if one person likes it, even if one person follows you, I'll be that one person. Like just get out there and fight the good fight against misinformation.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:06:01
Mhm.
Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah. So as my last question I would like to ask you then, still on topic, how do you see the role of social media evolving in archaeology in the next few years?

TK **Tenninger Kellenbarger** 1:06:12
Yes.
Uh.
I would hope, fingers crossed, that it lends itself for more community outreach, especially when I'm thinking of, you know, ASOR or the AIAS in the states. I'm also really hoping that there is more of a desire to get out there and remove any stigmas of being an influencer online and reshaping our mindsets to consider it as science communication and to really understand that that is a much better way to reach the whole world. You can post a video 15 seconds, a minute and a half an hour on YouTube and it can be accessed from anywhere in the world. And being able to have a literal supercomputer in our wallets today, I think.
Allows us to be so much more connected and to use it to showcase with the world. Oh, you in 5000 miles away, you love history. You in South America, you love history. You in like over here in Tokyo, you love it like connecting people more that way and having that.

That more shared community and everything. And hopefully within academia, more people will start using it to dispel the nonsense of, well, academia is only for old white men. I mean, yes, but like, we got to change that, let's make learning more accessible. Let's make archaeology more accessible and for museums, especially a post COVID world, making artifacts, visuals more accessible not only from online collections, but having social media accounts like the British Museum, like the Penn Museum. Talk about these artifacts. Get people excited to see this.

And I think that hopefully it can just be a learned experience for everybody, for better growth, maybe even take people on sites or digs and say, OK, let's walk through how stratigraphy is looking today. Let's take a look at the site. You know, what's a petiche? What's this? What's?

That and I think bringing people out of the classroom, out of the library and into the field, whether that field is in a conservation lab, whether that field is in Egypt, whether that field is in a museum, you can bring people there and help just knowledge spread that way.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:08:52

Right. I couldn't agree more with with this. I don't have any more questions on my side. If there is anything you would like to add that you haven't had the possibility to discuss or?

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger**   1:09:08

I think the only thing I would say is to anybody out there who wants to get involved in science communication, there's no right way to do it. Just do it. Speak from the heart, be yourself. Don't try and be like anybody else and never think that you're you don't know enough.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:09:11

We.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger**   1:09:27

Because somebody will always like your content and whether it's me, whether it's you, whether it's somebody down the road, I think just being able to share lived experiences in 2025, lived experiences in.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   1:09:28
But.

TK **Henninger Kellenbarger**   1:09:42
2000 BCE I think can do so much for us and I think I think social media is really underappreciated within the realm of academia. So I'm I'm couldn't be more thankful that you offered me this opportunity to speak with you and be part of this study. But what an incredible study it is and it's something that I want to continue.
within my own work of how can we all do better? And yeah, just thank you so much. What an honor. Thank you.
Yeah.
Um.

Interview with David Ian Howe

26 November 2025, 06:05pm

1h 3m 40s

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:03
All right. So thank you for joining me in this interview. Today we're gonna cover a bunch of different topics. You're gonna, I'm gonna ask you some things about your background.

D **David** 0:05
Welcome.
Who?
Mhm.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:20
Things about your background, about the platform to use and the content you produce, about your identity on social media, your audience and the way you engage it. How this all reflects on credibility, trust and ethics online.

D **David** 0:35
OK.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 0:36
And then we're going to finish with some concluding points.
So cool. Can you tell me a little bit about your background, both academic and professionally, and and how you became interested in communicating archaeology on social media?

D **David** 0:42
Works for me.
Yeah, I'll try to keep it brief. Let's see. I was, I originally went to school for history and then because I loved history and all that. But then I realized, you know, history is just a lot of reading books and then all you can really do is go on and write books or be a teacher.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:10
Uh.

D avid 1:14
And I took an Archaeology class. I took an anthropology class and it was an overview of all anthropology. Loved it. Ended up switching schools to a better Archaeology program and fell in love with Archaeology. I like the hands-on aspect of it and how you can go into the field and do all that.
And then when I was in Graduate School for Archaeology, my professors always kind of pointed out that I was really good at like presenting and talking and giving, communicating essentially. And they they told me to whatever that is, pursue it.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:41
Mm.

D avid 1:49
And that was probably 2017, so Instagram and YouTube, so.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:52
I'm sorry, when you mean, sorry, when you mean the graduate school, you mean was it your master's or PhD or it was your master's? OK, sorry, big different terminology. So don't worry, don't worry about it, don't worry about it.

D avid 2:01
Masters, yeah.
Yeah, totally. I I should have specified, yeah.
I did my undergraduate at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and then my master's at the University of Wyoming. But I when I got into all that and my professors were telling me like, you're good at talking.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 2:13

Mhm.
Right.

David 2:24

That's right. When Instagram and YouTube started like becoming, you know what they are now. And then COVID hit. So everyone kind of shifted to TikTok, Instagram, YouTube. And mainly I ended up not going to get my PhD. I went right into working.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 2:35

Mhm.

David 2:41

And I would come home from work not having any homework or papers to write and I I didn't know what to do. So I started posting on Instagram and then just, you know, posts and things that I found informative and then when COVID.
Picked up and we were all stuck inside. That's when everyone started getting really big on TikTok and all that and it just kind of took off. And from there on out, yeah, it's just been like a my my job, yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 3:02

Mhm.
Yeah. So when did you start your Instagram page? Was 2017 you said or later?

David 3:15

Um, it's probably early 2018, but it didn't really pick up till 20/19/2020, yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 3:19

OK.
Right, I see. And what were your general goals as a content feeder and have they changed overtime?

David 3:31

Yeah, originally it was just an excuse to post pictures of my dog at the time, with captions about dog Archaeology, ethnosinology, all that. Just things I would have liked to have talked about in school had I not been in school.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 3:37
Mm.

D **David** 3:48
Or had I had I been in school? And yeah, it was originally just dog-focused, different breeds, different types of, you know, dog archaeology, dog burials. And then I realized people really liked the archaeology and the anthropology aspect. So it kind of from the dog part evolved more into.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 4:00
Mhm.

D **David** 4:07
To just broad Archaeology and history with a focus on dogs, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 4:12
Right. And I might have missed it in the beginning, but it's because in your PH, is your PhD related to this or or was it something different or was it?

D **David** 4:23
Um, I I don't have a PhD yet. Um.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 4:26
Oh, but but you're following like you're or not. I maybe I misunderstood that. Like if you have a like a following now like a PhD position. Sorry, sorry for my English. I have to be trying all this.

D **David** 4:36

Mhm.

No, no, no, you're fine. I just have a masters. I didn't end up going to get my PhD, but had I done that, it would have been that. Yeah, no, you're fine.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 4:42
Right, right. OK, OK, OK, OK, OK. So I misunderstood that. Sorry. Cool, cool, cool. All right. I see, I see. It was the perfect occasion for you to, let's say, talk about what you really love, like doing it on on social media, right?

D **David** 4:51
Yeah.

Yeah, like I've written probably just as much as I would have for a dissertation as on Instagram now, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:00
Yeah.

Yeah, yeah, totally. Yeah, yeah, makes makes sense. So which social media platforms do you use? Like like in in total. So you have Instagram, YouTube and then you also use other social media like TikTok or?

D **David** 5:23
Yeah, Instagram was my main one. Still is. TikTok kinda just blew up during COVID. I don't love it as much as Instagram, but TikTok is my biggest following I think, and YouTube is my main like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:26
Mm.

Oh.

OK.

OK.

D **David** 5:41

Monetary source of like, you know, that's my job now. Yeah, but TikTok, Instagram, YouTube.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 5:43
Oh.
Right. And do you use different platforms for like different audiences or different kind of information or not?

D **avid** 5:55
Yeah, I don't know if it's the same in Italy or the Netherlands, but in America or the United States, I should say YouTube skews more like older and conservative, whereas TikTok skews much more younger and liberal and a lot more energetic. So you kind of have to.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:07
Mm.

D **avid** 6:15
Play to those audiences and TikTok. I have to be kind of like, what's up guys? Kind of thing. Whereas on YouTube I'm more subdued and professional. And then Instagram is just like me, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:21
Right.
Mhm.
Right. I mean we'll we'll talk more about your your audience like in a little bit. But first I want to ask you, so when you plan your posts, do you do that strategically like you have schedules for yourself or do you follow trends or are you more spontaneous with?

D **avid** 6:30
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:48
That.

D **David** 6:50
Depends on the platform. Um, YouTube. I have a producer and I work with the network for the podcast, so I have a schedule. Um.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 6:57
Right. Oh, is it the Archaeology podcast network? Is it that one? Yeah. OK.

D **David** 7:01
Yes, yeah.
So I have a schedule there. So with that I get those videos up. Usually that day or the day after I'll post the clip to Instagram. That's my only like schedule. The rest of it is kind of just whenever I feel like it, but I do try to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 7:05
Oh.
Oh.

D **David** 7:19
At least once a day, post a story or multiple times a week post a post. Yeah, whether it's a meme or a educational post or not, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 7:29
Right. You you try to keep this regularity to like keep like engagement up or?

D **David** 7:38
Yeah, one thing I like to do, this is probably a question later, but I like doing different types of content, whereas a lot of people stick to the same exact format so you know it's the same person every time. I get bored with that, so I try to vary it.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 7:46
Mm.

D avid 7:55
But yeah, that's about where I'm at.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 7:57
Right. And how how much work does it take you to make content and manage, for example, the Instagram page? I don't know if it's easy for you to quantify it in hours or you just want to tell me more or less how much work does it take you?

D avid 8:13
Yeah, I mean, for all of it together, it's it's a full work week, like 40 hours a week. That includes editing, writing, responding to comments, all that. Sometimes more, sometimes less. But I would say it's a.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 8:18
Mhm.

D avid 8:28
Like a regular work week, yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 8:31
Right. And you said you have collaborators for what regards YouTube, but on Instagram and TikTok, you're fully on your own, I'm assuming.

D avid 8:43
Yeah, like, it's all me per SE. I just have, um, with the network for the podcast it like they are like, hey, you need this episode in by Monday at this time kind of thing. But the rest of it, yeah, it's just me, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   8:44
Yeah.

Mhm.

Right. All right, cool. Let's talk a bit about your communication strategies. So, so about the tone of voice you have, do you try to be and sound more professional, more informal, more expressive?

D **avid**   9:04
Yeah.

Mm.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   9:16
How do you go about that?

D **avid**   9:18
Depends on the platform for sure. I'm realizing now on YouTube I used to do a long form just talking podcast like a, you know, Joe Rogan style, but that doesn't get as many views. But I've noticed the more concise and the more.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   9:20
Oh.

Mm.

D **avid**   9:36
Professional it looks, and the more I cut out, the better it does. So there is like a professionalism aspect to it and trying my best to emulate documentaries that I like and things like that. Whereas on TikTok and Instagram it's more of just like things I find funny, things I find interesting.

And then, the only way I can really describe it is just, like, I like being creative with it. It's art to me. Whether that means being funny or educational or just mixing it. Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:01
Oh.

Yeah.

Right. And as let's call it as a communication strategy, have you ever try and use the emotional engagement? So playing on sadness or humor, I mean.

I do follow you. I know you post a lot of memes and they're really good, I think. But for example, have you like done something with like sadness, for example, as an emotional engagement or?

D **David**   10:27
Yeah. Thank you.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:36
Or.

D **David**   10:37
Yeah, especially for like specific posts when I know it's gonna be a serious one, I will be like, OK, this. I want this one to be emotional. I want this one to be sad if it's about a dog burial. Like I want this to be sad. I want this to be evocative in some way.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   10:38
Mhm.

D **David**   10:53
I do put effort into that and like if I'm going for that, I do put effort into making sure that I fit that. But usually it's like just like a hook of like, did you know or something like that? Or it just depends on the post really. But yes, I would say there's a.

A strategy to it oftentimes, especially when I, like, put a lot of effort into the post, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   11:17
Right. Do you think it, like, resonates well with your audience when it's, you know, more of an emotional post?

David 11:25

I believe so, yeah. Those are some of my favorite posts cause I put a lot of work into them, but also it does spark good conversation. And I have noticed when there's an emotional hook or an emotional angle to it, it does bring out a lot more commentary, yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 11:27

Mhm.

Right. Cool. That's really interesting. OK, let's talk a bit about yourself on social media. So how would you describe the version of yourself that is on social media? Like, do you feel like you have maybe?

David 11:45

Yeah.

Yeah.

Right.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 11:58

Um, to perform a certain version of yourself online.

David 12:03

Yeah, one thing like a negative aspect I do run into is like, I care more about my appearance than I used to. Like I'll if I have to film that week, I'm like, I I gotta shave or I gotta like, um.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 12:11

Mm.

David 12:18

Make sure there's no stains on my shirt kind of thing. Just bare minimum stuff. I don't like put makeup on or anything like that. That I'm a little more conscious of that now, especially when I get into the routine of like, OK, I got to record this week.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   12:25
Right.

D David   12:33
But in general, yeah, I'm just me. Like, I just sit in front of the camera and talk. Some people like that, some people don't. I like to talk a lot. So some people really enjoy that because they'd rather a long form, but other people are very quick to tell you, you talk too much. So I got a consensus. So it depends on the platform. And I guess a good way to answer that too is I met someone in person recently who had followed me for years and they were like, you're way more subdued in person, like you're a lot quieter than I am online.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   12:54
Mm.

D David   13:07
Which I found kind of funny, 'cause I feel like I'm me, but in in social settings, I just kind of I'm quiet and I listen. But online, my job is to talk. So that's how they see me, yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   13:08
Mm.
Right.
Right, right. And I think maybe also, yeah, the context of the place where you are, you know, like in the in the online environment, you know, it's it's a perceived difference, you know, because of the the context you're in, you know.

D David   13:21
Yeah.
Yeah, and I I'm not the center of attention, so I just try to be quiet. Yeah, yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   13:34
I think, uh, makes sense.

Yeah, makes sense. So about describing, let's say, your online persona, let's say, would you consider yourself?

David 13:40
Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 13:54
I like as an influencer. Now I know this term a lot of the times is a negative connotation, but because of like the context of my thesis, I'm like coining this this term. I'm calling the archeo influencer and it's because my my communication advisor.

David 14:11
Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 14:14
When we were doing the social media for our faculty, he would call it, you know, archo influencing and I felt really interested and really nobody's ever used this term before. I mean, it's not very research topic, but so I thought, you know, maybe like asking what do you think and if you.
Like if you would consider yourself as such or.

David 14:35
Sure. It's a good question. I would never like on my resume put influencer, but because of the negative connotation of that. But I've been called it enough by professionals and by other friends like, you know, being funny like, oh, he's an influencer that like, I guess.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 14:41
Right.
Mhm.
Yeah, yeah.

David 14:54

That is technically what I do. But yeah, I I usually just say anthropologist because I have the degrees in it and that's how I would classify myself. But in terms of me being an anthropologist that teaches or that works in the fields, I'm definitely more of the influencer.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   15:04
Mhm.

D **David**   15:12
You know, job. And how was I gonna qualify that? Yeah, like I'm called it enough that I I guess I would be. And I I will say when I have talked about politics or I have endorsed.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   15:15
Right.

D **David**   15:28
Products or endorsed, you know, make social commentary about, you know, US politics or something. I do get a lot of either pushback or a lot of like good point kind of thing. And that to me is like, oh, I I do need to be careful. I am an influencer. I have to, I can influence people. So I need to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   15:35
Yeah.
Right.

D **David**   15:48
To be careful with what I say, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   15:50
Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. But I think like what I would say also from what I just read on like basic literature on like studies on social media and influencers, these kind of things is not necessarily.
About for example like you said when you find yourself in those situations in which discuss

maybe politics like those kind of stuff and yes like that can have an influence on your public. But I think also the the just the the the the the reason why you're on social media you know like to do science communication about the topics.

You're interested in and that's also maybe sort of like influencing the view of the people or like what archaeology is or in your case like the relationship with like human and dogs and its historical and anthropological point of view. Maybe like could we say maybe it's also like about.

David 16:39
Yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 16:46
Like that, you know, you're kind of like, you know, influencing your public's mind and you know, and shaping it for for the better, you know, for the.

David 16:55
Yeah, it's a good point too. Yeah, I would agree. I'm still like influencing Archaeology, yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 16:56
Like in a in a way.
Mm.
Yeah, like in a way, you know. So it's, I mean, I'm really trying to, you know, like remove all negative connotations when I'm using this term in my thesis because, you know, I I mean, in a way I also want to follow what's the standard in in academia.
And so just use it. But I I don't want to, let's say, have it as a as a as a bad view on creators like you, you know? So I'm making sure I I get this point across, you know?

David 17:30
Yeah.
Yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 17:36
All right, so let's talk about your audience. So how is your audience composed on? And I

don't know if it is the same on both platforms or you were saying before there is a difference.
In a more older audience on YouTube and a more younger one on TikTok and Instagram.

David 17:58
Yeah, that's the the biggest difference. I like, you know, palpable. I can see it difference, especially in terms of numbers. YouTube is a lot older, usually like 40 to 60 or above.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 18:11
Oh.

David 18:14
Years in age, whereas TikTok is a lot younger, though there is older on TikTok as well. And then Instagram is pretty in the middle. I think most of my audience, just given the subject matter, skews male because.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 18:22
Mhm.

David 18:29
Dudes like history, but there is a lot of female and it it varies proposed. Like I I've noticed the more like if it's dog focused, it skews a lot more female. If it's archaeology focused, it skews a lot male. If I'm in it, it can skew both. I don't know what that.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 18:32
Yeah.
Yeah.

David 18:49
You know what what that is versus like just a picture of something older? Yeah, but it it definitely. One thing I try to tell a lot of students too when they ask me about this is Instagram, TikTok and YouTube. They make their whole money.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 18:54
Right.

D **avid** 19:06
And they exist because of data collection, obviously, but with that they do provide you with an insane amount of metrics for you to use. So especially for people like us that are in the science field.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 19:09
Yeah.

D **avid** 19:22
You have all these tools and analytics at your disposal to use and it it's worth doing. And I have never done like a full mass statistical study of my posts and whatnot, but I might at some point to see like what does best because they they they do provide you all that for free, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 19:37
Yeah, that would be really cool. And I mean, you find plenty of, yeah, literature that we know with this kind of studies on using this analytics. I think it would be very interesting. Yeah. So, so do you have?

D **avid** 19:40
Yeah.
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 19:53
So yeah, it's like quite varied when it comes to Instagram and TikTok, but do you specifically aim for a specific population group or not really?

D **avid** 20:04

Not really. I just kind of talk as I would. I have like a different. Obviously TikTok has to be like faster and snappier, whereas YouTube can be longer. But yeah, it's mostly just.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   20:07
Um.
Right.

D **David**   20:33
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   20:33
So have you ever felt like the need to adjust your content to meet your audience expectations, or is that something that happened?

D **David**   20:41
Like, especially with trends, like with trending music or something like on TikTok. I don't do like dances or anything, but little things like that. Like I posted that video of me reacting to watching that documentary this morning.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   20:47
Yeah.

D **David**   20:56
Yesterday. And like, that's usually not my style of content. It was just purely funny to me. But yeah, like, I'll do a trend or two here and there. Popular memes like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   20:56
Mhm.

D **David**   21:11
You know, like it, it always goes viral, so I'll use that meme template and apply it. Um, things like that. But I will say I try to.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 21:13
Yeah, yeah.

D **avid** 21:21
Especially on TikTok, censor myself a bit a little more than I would because see a lot more people are.
I don't want to say like social justice warriors, but like there's a lot more policing of social issues on TikTok and then with so I try to be more neutral and left-leaning. Whereas on YouTube I can do that and then like older people will be like you're woke and like won't like yell at me so.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 21:34
Mm.
Oh.
Yeah.

D **avid** 21:50
So it's a balance of finding, and it's a good exercise for, especially in America right now, like just finding what resonates with everybody and without leaning one way or the other.
And that's probably the most challenging part of my job, especially as.
A creator or as a scientist too, because I there are things I want to say. Scientifically, this is correct, but some people might get offended by that. So I got a yeah, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 22:10
Yeah.
You try to accommodate to to that a little bit.

D **avid** 22:21
Yeah, to accommodate to it, but also it's um a uh.
Like, uh, an exercise for me at being better at communicating. Yeah, without. How do I say this without being polarizing? Yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   22:34
Yeah.

Right, right. OK. It's an interesting view to to have it as a as a challenge for yourself to to be better at communicating. That's very interesting. And when it comes to interacting with your followers, how do you go about that is mainly responding to comments or do you do live streams?

D avid   22:37
Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah, this is where even though TikTok has more following for me, Instagram I feel is the easiest to connect with anybody. Like even I've met with a lot of comedians and like, not celebrities, but like.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   23:09
Oh.

D avid   23:16
Famous podcasters and stuff, and I can just message them on Instagram. They see my number and they'll respond. And like, it's just crazy. I can just contact anybody. And in that sense, I can't do that on TikTok. I can't do that on YouTube.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   23:28
Yeah.

D avid   23:32
But in terms of my audience on TikTok, I get so many notifications that I can't see everybody and I think they have to follow you to message you. YouTube doesn't have messaging, whereas Instagram, anybody like you can just message me and if.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   23:43

Oh, OK.
Right.

David 23:51

I'm happened to look at my inbox that day. I can see it and respond. Or oftentimes too. Instagram's a lot better at with stories like you can post Q and A's, you can post a story, ask a question and people can respond. And I find Instagram is like.
An extremely valuable tool for education in that sense. And part of why I think I was successful in the beginning was I did try to respond to every comment, every message, and as the numbers grow, you just mentally you can't do that.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 24:11

Mhm.
Yeah, it becomes a very, very difficult. I can imagine, yeah.

David 24:24

So.
Yeah, so that that's that's the challenge of it. But just being present with your audience and responding and a lot of people are like, Oh my God, you responded. And I'm like, Yep, I just you messaged me. So yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 24:39

Yeah, but that's really, I think that's something really I get. I think people appreciate that a lot because a lot of times, especially with the direct messages, a lot of times content creators don't really tend to respond to those, maybe more to comments, so.
I think it's really something that the people appreciate, especially when it comes to to to direct messaging, you know?

David 25:05

Yeah, I agree. And I don't know if this will come up in the next question, but another thing too is if somebody comments something on TikTok or Instagram that's calling me out or comments something that is purposely divisive or just mean.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:19
Mhm.

D **avid** 25:24
I try to respond before somebody else does on my behalf because that always starts a big problem. Other times it is a good idea to just leave it and see like other people will respond and there'll be a big fight about, you know, cloning or something.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:31
Right.
Yeah.

D **avid** 25:40
And then that creates engagement. But you also have the opportunity to be funny with your response, or if someone had said something really mean or purposely political. You can get in there and diffuse it yourself and that creates more and it's just another opportunity to teach, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 25:55
Mhm.
Right. So, so it's something you you try and do.

D **avid** 26:06
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 26:07
Like you. Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you had to, like, cancel, remove, delete comments because they were too maybe mean or, I don't know, racist or this kind of things? Yeah.

D **avid** 26:18

Yeah, yeah, a lot. Sometimes if it's like, especially those meme posts, when they go viral and they have millions of views, I can't see every. I just physically can't read every comment. But occasionally something will filter through it. I think Instagram does a good job of showing you the divisive ones cause it wants you to be upset.

MD litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 26:32
Yeah.
Oh.
OK.

D avid 26:54
There's sometimes where I'm like that. OK, delete. And like, yeah, like, I can't let that go, yeah.

MD litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 27:01
No, I get it. Is it mainly like like like crazy stuff or people just being mean to each other or like just insulting you? What's like the usually the worst things?

D avid 27:11
Yeah, racist stuff. Sometimes I will let slide because here's another thing. A lot of times it's coming from somebody posting from translate. They could be Russian, Italian, French or something.
And it often comes across as blunt or like rude, but I'm like, oh, they're translating from another language, so it's missing that filter. A lot of people I've learned are very autistic, which can also lead to being blunt and you can't always tell.

MD litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 27:36
OK.

D avid 27:43
Their intentions. So then I don't want to respond negatively because it could be offended. It could be mean on my end. But a lot of times, yeah, if it's just purposely malicious, purposely racist, or like they're parroting.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 27:43

Yeah.

Mhm.

D **avid** 27:59

Some talking point that I know they know is wrong. I'll delete it, but it's very rare that I delete a comment, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 28:06

Right. No, no, it makes sense. Masking. I'm focusing on this because you are the first male creator that I'm interviewing. I mean, you're all like male creators also in this specific topic are like a minority.

D **avid** 28:09

Yeah.

OK.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 28:26

So usually like the things that I'm hearing the most in these interviews is that, you know, the worst interactions and comments are all have to do with usually men being like very misogynist and like, you know, very sexist comments, et cetera. So I was interested in seeing in your case what was like the worst.

D **avid** 28:38

Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 28:45

You know that you that you get. So that was interesting. But I was expecting like, you know, like racism, like these kind of things being the the most second, let's say worst thing that you can find.

David 28:46

I.

Um, yeah.

The.

Yeah, that'll be the racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, like the all all place. But I will say speaking with female creators that I know, their messages are just flooded with men, you know?

MD Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 29:03

Yeah, right. Yeah.

Yeah, that's what I heard.

David 29:14

Demeaning them for this or like you're a woman and stuff. But I do get from some women and from some like, I'd say gay men that will like just incessantly message me, just trying to like DM slide, I guess. And that's just me as a male creator. So to any female creators out there.

MD Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 29:28

Oh, alright, I see.

David 29:33

Its like.

I can't imagine what their inbox is like, and that's got to be extremely hard to navigate, yeah.

MD Itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 29:37

Yeah, yeah, I heard very bad things. Yeah, yeah, no, for sure. And do you think most you were saying like most negative comments, just negative engagement comes from those videos, like the mean videos you post where they go like, you know, very.

David 29:45

Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 29:57

Or do you see also like a lot of negativity in your normal posts, in your regular posts?

David 30:07

It really depends on the post. You know, if it's something like a scientific theory that someone disagrees with, somebody will always be like this is wrong because XY and Z or I read this book and you're an idiot. So that you always got to deal with, but you just let it go.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 30:09

Um.

Right, 'cause I was thinking like, yeah, no, sorry, sorry.

David 30:24

But on the.

On the the meme posts, yeah, like it can always like it had something to do with like gorillas and chimps. And then it ended up having this whole feud about slavery and like it just, but it was like hundreds of replies. So it's like.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 30:32

Oh.

Wow.

David 30:45

I can't read every single one to please it, but also it's making the video do really well. So you have this weird spot of do I delete it? Do I just let it? And then at some point like I also got to go to the grocery store, I got to make dinner. I don't have time to like read it all so.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:03
Yeah, I am.

D **avid**   31:03
It does become like a like a weight or it's a responsibility because I want to make sure it's a fostering a good environment, but I I just can't delete every one of them sometimes, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:14
No, no, of course, of course. And the last thing I want to ask you also about like these more viral videos is that I'm assuming they they bring like in a lot of like new followers that like, you know, they come, they, they, they up, they get.

D **avid**   31:17
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:34
Had the meme on the feed and then they stay for the for the for the rest. Like do they follow you? Like does that happen a lot?

D **avid**   31:42
Yes, I would say the memes get the most followers just cause they have the biggest reach. Then the clips of me at my lecture where I'm like talking in front of the podium, those always get follows.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   31:50
Mhm, Yep.

D **avid**   31:58
And when I'm flipnapping, like making stone tools, that always brings in a lot too. So those are the big three.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 32:01

Oh.

Right. Yeah, it makes sense. I mean, I I started following you after a meme once. So yeah, that's that's how I that's how it happened. So I I would say that it happened a lot. But of course, as we were saying, it can bring a lot of people that are not your usual followers and then that can cause problems. But yeah.

D **avid** 32:09

OK, cool.

Yeah.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 32:23

So in general, what would you say is like the kind of responses that you that you get the most? Is it more about like people being curious or there is a lot more debate or I don't know, people spreading misinformation, these kind of things?

D **avid** 32:23

Mhm.

Yeah, I'd say overall it's positive for comments being like, wow, that's cool. I didn't know that. I loved this part. Or oftentimes somebody will comment something that they like.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 32:45

Mm.

D **avid** 32:57

They assume I don't know or like they just want to teach people. They're like, well, I learned this and like, sometimes it's hard to tell. Are they saying I'm wrong or are they just saying something that they just want to contribute? That's the majority.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 33:02

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah.

David 33:12

I do oftentimes, like I posted something about Charles Darwin, that meme, and it did very well. But then I got a lot of comments being like, well, Darwin was a racist and like this, this and this. I'm like, well, he's from 1850. Of course he is. So like, I have to.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 33:18

Oh.
Yeah, of course.

David 33:29

Please that. But a lot of times I'll read a comment like that and then be like, oh God, am I in trouble? Like they're like saying take this down. But really they're just adding commentary, being like Darwin, you know, had racist ideas, but the meme was funny. And like, that's the second tier of it, I would say, where it's like.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 33:45

Yeah.

David 33:49

Like critical comments. And then it can turn into just straight up. You're a terrible person. You're horrible. Don't ever post this again. And like those of them. But unless it's there's been a few where, like I posted about, you know, the Spanish conquest of Mexico and somebody politely messaged me being like.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 34:00

Yeah.
Mm.

David 34:09

Like, hey, that's a very sensitive topic. Please don't make memes about that. And I'm like, OK, like, I'll listen. But when they do it respectfully and ask, that's different than like, you suck. Like, it's better. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:15

Alright.

Yeah, right. I see. So overall, how would you measure, let's say, the success of your communication? Is it do you look at metrics or it's more about just your feeling about the engagement you have with the with your followers?

D **avid** 34:39

Um.

Yeah, I would say.

Maybe two things. One on YouTube, that's where I get like paid the most and you're kind of subject to the algorithm. Like some videos can do well, some don't. But the last two I did on horses did very well and it's because I took the time to like.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 34:48

Oh.

D **avid** 35:01

Make a good documentary style interview and I put work into it and you can see the numbers of the views and then you can also see the number of, you know, dollars I'm making from that. And that's a direct correlation. But that sucks though, because.

When a video doesn't do well, not only does it not do well, but you also don't make money off of it and that can like really hurt. So I try my best not to dwell on it, but it's my job. And then over the years, especially on Instagram, I've made like friends that I've never met in person.

MD **litrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 35:25

Right.

D **avid** 35:36

But I've talked to probably every day or at least a few times a week when we say hi, like, you know, send each other memes. And over the years, probably like hundreds of people like that, that maybe only a couple dozen that I can name or think of immediately.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 35:41
Mm.

D **David** 35:53
But when they like the post or they comment, it's like nice to know like my community is there and they're liking it. So they've known me kind of like you. Someone's followed me for a while, can tell this was a good post and I'm like, OK, so this is must be good. So especially when your community likes it and people that you recognize, that's a good feeling.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 35:54
Hello.
Mhm.

D **David** 36:13
Yeah. Or if it does really well and it's people I don't know and they're saying good job, that that's a good metric. But it's very difficult and I'm sure anyone else you interview to to like attach your value and your self-worth to the numbers.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:17
Right.
Yeah.

D **David** 36:33
Because.
Again, like you get paid from it and the better numbers, the more you better you do. But like you could work for a whole. I put 40 hours into a video one time and it just flopped. But like one time I made a meme while I was in the bathroom and like it did millions and it's like.

MD **Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 36:53

I don't know. It's always like it's always the the very simple, easy content that's ends up being super popular like that. I get it.

D avid   36:53
What? So yeah.
Yeah, so it's it's tough to put your value to that, but yeah, anyway, yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   37:07
Of course. No, no, makes makes a little sense. All right, let's go back a little bit on your identity online. How do you balance your identity as an archaeologist or anthropologist with your role?
On social media, do you see a contrast or tensions between these two worlds?

D avid   37:30
Yeah, that's a great question. Um.
It's difficult because like I said, I I will always say I'm an anthropologist first before I say influencer or content creator to other archaeologist and anthropologist. I will say I guess I'm a content creator, I'm a YouTuber.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   37:50
Mm.

D avid   37:50
But to like my family, when they're like, what do you do? I'm like, I'm an archaeologist and then but I happen to post on YouTube. So it depends. But I would say, especially politically and socially, especially in America right now.
It's like people want you to weigh in on certain topics. They want your opinion on this, they want that. And as a scientist, it's like I have to stick to the facts, but there are. But at the same time, I'm still a person. I have my own opinions, so I want to chime in with that too and be like.
Here is my anthropological take. Here is my educated take. You can take what you want with that. You can disagree, whatever. But here's my take. It's very hard to do that often because your takes can change and all that and then.

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Since I'm a anthropologist with a large following, I might be the only anthropologist that people know, so they might think that all anthropologists think that, whereas like.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 38:50
Hey.

D avid 38:55
You know, not every anthropologists may have voted for Trump or may have voted for Kamala kind of thing. Like it. I don't want to. That's why I try to avoid it, because I don't want to speak for all of them. And within the community I will get people.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 39:07
Right.

D avid 39:11
Who disagree with my take on human evolution or, you know, which dog species is the oldest or something like that. And then they might not. I'll see some people unfollow me cause they're like he doesn't post correct stuff, but science changes every day, so.
You know, so it just, it depends. It's a it's a heavy weight because I want to make sure I do right. So the best thing to do is just sit with it, try to ask as many people, do you know, what do you think of this kind of thing? And then post it, yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 39:41
Mm-hmm. Right. And for example.
Have you ever like received the criticism or or you have a positive interaction with like other anthropologists and archaeologists about the the the work you do on social media?
Like have you had like interactions?
Either negative or positive like that.

D avid 40:08
Yeah, um.
Much more positive than negative, I think, because a lot of times it's easier to share a positive feeling. Well, I guess sometimes it's easier to share a negative feeling. But most of

the time people are like, I love what you do. Like I I show my family like if I they ask what I do.

For a living, they'll show them my videos, which is nice.

I'm writing a book right now, so I had to reach out to people to like, endorse the book.

And I got a lot of positive, you know, David's great at this. He's, you know, one of the best at this. So that's a good feeling. But there are people that will let you know. I did not like that. I don't like you. And like, that's just part of the job and.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 40:37
Yes.
Cool.

D **avid** 40:53
That's always a thing in Archaeology, like even at conferences like 30 years ago, they were choking each other out at conferences and stuff. So it's like, yeah, that just that's part of it. But now it's behind a keyboard and yeah, it's yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:08
Right. Like, have you ever had like a comment? Like, yeah, yeah, yeah, of course. Like, have you ever had the comment like like you, you shouldn't be doing this on social media, you should like be on books and do research and blah blah blah.

D **avid** 41:09
I I hope that answered the question.
Yeah, like for this past week I I, and this is my fault, I posted a video talking about the rise of Spain in the, you know, 1500s and I said that Spain was a backwater Roman province. But what I meant to say was in modern European history to the French, the Italians and the English.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:31
Mhm.

D **avid** 41:43

Was like, you know, the Middle East, basically, or Africa. And that's what I meant to say, but I didn't phrase it right. So all these people were like, you shouldn't talk about history if you don't know what you're saying. And like, I only have a minute to say all of it, so I can't get all of it. But those ones kind of hurt because it's like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 41:45
Mhm.
Yeah.

D **David** 42:02
That's not what I meant, but it is what I said and I can't fix it. So all I can do is respond to those comments positively and be like, you know, good point, sorry. And things like that, yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:05
Mhm.
Right, I see. And the other question also related to your followers. Has the growth of your followers changed the way you're perceived by by other people, your peers, or even your followers themselves?

D **David** 42:13
Yeah.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 42:32
Because I read this article on still researching social media and influencers explaining basically how it's there is always a tendency for engagement and just perception to go down and become.
Worsen overtime as your followers increase. So it's something you noticed in your case.

D **David** 42:59
Like the more followers I get, the more is that what? What number is that?

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   43:05

The more followers you get your your engagement goes it it worse. Also the your perception online becomes worse because you know you become more famous and this kind of things.

D David   43:19

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Especially in the dog space, dog trainers. I don't know how it is in Italy or the Netherlands, but dog trainers in America, it's kind of like.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   43:30

Mm.

D David   43:35

There's a lot of grifters and a lot of like con men and they are con women and everyone who trains a dog, you know, knows what's best. This is the best way. Everything else is abuse. So like if I say anything that.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   43:39

Oh.
Oh.
Yeah.

D David   43:51

Goes against their idea. They will like, come at me and like, send me a bunch of things and be like, I'm disappointed in you. And it's like, I can't deal with that, which is why I I specify I talk about dead dogs, not live ones. So it's like.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)   44:01

Oh yeah.

D David   44:07

I just stick with that, but I've noticed since I've shifted from posting about dogs as much since my dog passed, it's been more archaeology focused and I've gotten way less of that, so that's a benefit.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 44:09
Yeah.
OK.
OK.

D avid 44:23
But in terms of following, yeah, I have noticed like people that I went to school with or people that I've met through other jobs. I'll notice that they don't follow me anymore. And I I do wonder, like, did I say something that hurt their feelings? Maybe they just.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 44:35
Oh, OK, interesting.

D avid 44:40
You know, saw too much of my stuff and they don't want to watch it anymore. Did I say something wrong? That does sting a little bit. But I also have unfollowed people just cause like I don't communicate with them anymore. So I try not to take it personally, but that I would say that like I do. It does make me wonder.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 44:43
Yeah.
Right.

D avid 44:59
Did I offend them or say something wrong at some point? Yeah, yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:03
Right. I see. All right. That answers my question very well. Thank you. So about trust and

credibility with your audience, do you make a deliberate effort in establishing trust and credibility apart from maybe?

D avid 45:08
Yeah, yeah.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:23
Like you were saying before, you know, trying to be yourself, right? And do you more like you put more effort in that?

D avid 45:33
Yeah, I think recently since I put my bookshelf back up and I have the, you know, the padding back here, it does give the credibility of like high production. When I have the books, it's like, OK, he's read those books or hopefully and then.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:40
Mm.
Mm.

D avid 45:50
That helps. I try not to repeat, you know, hey, I'm an archaeologist or an anthropologist because people know that. But in like the horse video I did recently, I started it off by saying, hey, if you're unfamiliar with me, I'm an archaeologist to talk about dogs. And that video did great. So maybe we need to do it more.

MD itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 45:59
Hello.

D avid 46:10
Um, but yeah, in terms of credibility, I think people know me as the dog guy. I do feel. Naked wouldn't be the word, but like, uh.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   46:22
Oh.

D **David**   46:24
Trying to think of a word in English or Italian for it, but like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   46:26
Naked like you meant like exposed. Like maybe no.

D **David**   46:30
No, maybe not exposed, but I mean, that's what I'm trying to say is like, without a PhD, I feel like less credible sometimes. So like, without doc, so you make it's not the word, but like without imposter, that's the word I'm looking for.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   46:38
Oh, OK.
Right, right, right.
Oh.
Yeah.

D **David**   47:04
Which is crazy to me, but with that does come responsibility of like, OK, these people trust me. I need to do a good job without the PhD and you know, a masters still counts for a lot, so that helps.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   47:05
Yeah.

D **David**   47:19
But yeah, imposter, not naked. But like, like, I just feel not fully complete without a PhD. But I think that helps in a lot of ways too, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:20

Right.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

No, I get it. And and that's something you received criticism about it like not being, you know, a full professional like we like, cetera, et cetera.

D **avid** 47:41

Funny enough, now that you say it out loud, I don't think I've ever received criticism for that. It's just in my head. But yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 47:46

Nice. All right. No, no, exactly. That's something I also noticed with other creators. You know, these like imposter syndrome of like, you know, being like, I'm not a professional archaeologist. I don't teach in university and this kind of thing. So I feel like.

I feel like I'm not complete, you know, I'm not like an actual archaeologist and I can't, you know, speak about these things. So I get it as a as a like a sort of imposter syndrome, you know, that that can happen. But it's nice to, yeah, it's nice to know that it's not, you know, reflected in in reality, you know, that's nice.

D **avid** 48:12

Yeah.

Yeah, that's that's what I'm thinking of.

Yeah, and and to that point too, I'll add this. I have noticed since I do have two degrees in archaeology, I have done field work, I have taught people do trust me over other people because I know several like.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 48:24

Yeah.

Yeah.

D **avid** 48:38

Milo Rossi's a big guy right now. Mini Minuteman, I think is his name. He's never done field

work. He's never that I know of. He's never worked for an archaeology firm, so he has less traditional way of saying I'm an archaeologist than other people. Stefan Milo is a friend of mine.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 48:41
Yeah, yeah.
Mm.

D David 48:57
He has his undergrad in it and has a degree in it, but didn't do any other work or anything like that. So they will message me asking me, you know, what do you think? Because I'm like the professional in that field. So I'm like in this spot in between where it is a lot of responsibility, but.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 48:57
Mm.
Right.

D David 49:13
It is interesting to me that people like them who can do an incredibly good job, they know how to research, they know how to write, they know how to talk. So when do you say someone's an archaeologist or not? Because they do, they do great. And I know some archaeologists with a pH D that are very bad at it. So it's like.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 49:26
Right.
Yeah, yeah.

D David 49:33
At the same time, yeah, yeah.

MD Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 49:36

No, of course I totally get it. OK, so going back to like negative side that you might have noticed in your experience on social media, is there other negative aspects that you noticed that the use of social media for like science communication or like?

D **avid**   49:38
Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   49:55
Dilemmas like simplifying too much or I don't know, people have a problem with the fact that I don't know, you monetize over the content or like these kind of things.

D **avid**   50:07
Yeah, the.
Two answers. I'd say the monetization is hard because it is my job. I do need to monetize more because it's how I make a living. But education to me should be free. So it's very hard to figure out what I monetize and what I don't. So like selling.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   50:19
Oh.

D **avid**   50:28
Hats or T-shirts and stuff like that. That's easy. I've thought about doing a course online and then people would pay, but then my friends were like, you're asking way too little for the amount of work you're doing. You need to charge more, but then people can't afford it. So I want to be amenable. So it challenges like that.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   50:41
Um.

D **avid**   50:47
And then in terms of let's see, negative aspects you might have noticed the major thing. I would say is the balance of both political spectrums because like.

Charles Darwin, for example, or George Washington? Like, he was an incredible military general and he was the 1st president of the US, fought the British, but he also owned slaves. And I'll post something about that. And like, I assume most people know he owned slaves, so he's problematic in that.

Sense. And I'll post about 1 aspect of him and that's just an example. And then like all the comments will be like, how dare you not mention this, this and this. And I'm like, well, I'm assuming most people know that already and I only have so many words I can fit on the page. So that's a really hard part.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 51:39
Yeah.

D **David** 51:41
Anything I say isn't enough for some people. And that goes for both sides of the aisle. It's like if I'm I mentioned indigenous people in any positive light, then on the other side they're like, you're woke, you're stupid and like, I can't trust you. And I'm like, what are you talking about? Like it just like.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 51:56
Yes.

D **David** 51:59
That is, I would say, the hardest part of the job, and I don't know if that's the same in Europe or not, but here it's crazy. A lot of it is bots too, so figuring out what is a bot and what's a person.

But yes, I would say every time before I hit post, I have to sit there and think, is this racist? Is it homophobic? Is it too woke? Is it not woke? Like at every angle? And maybe that's just me getting in my head way too much more than I need to.

MD **Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 52:15
Yeah.
Hey.

David 52:34

But I think it does that little bit of you know self checking or a self self policing the to make sure it's OK does add to the the the content you know like it it it's good writing.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 52:50

Yeah.

David 52:51

Yeah. So I'd say that's the hardest and the the most to answer the question, negative aspects would be that it's just the pushback from both ends. You can't avoid it. So you've got to do your best, yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:04

Right, I get it. And are there any like other like ethical dilemmas when you?

David 53:06

Yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:11

Like I don't know if you show maybe like like humor remains or in your case like you know, like animal remains like these kind of things or or other kind of ethical question issues you encounter.

David 53:18

Yeah.

Yeah, in the United States, we have a lot of laws that protect indigenous remains. You can't dig them up. You can't post pictures of them, all that.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:35

Yeah.

Then NAG Nagpra something and like, yeah, the Nagpra, yeah, yeah.

David 53:40

Nagpra. Yeah, there you go. So an ethical dilemma with that is like that. I get like, I support it. Dogs, if they're buried like people, are they considered part of humanity? And therefore, can I post a picture of that burial? Can I talk about it?

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 53:58

Yeah.

David 53:59

And it become and the horse video I did, I had to blur the remains or the burial of the horse because the tribe, you know, just said be sensitive with it. So I just, I'll blur it. You can still see it. And then all these people.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 54:10

Mm.
Yeah.

David 54:16

Thought it was YouTube that made me blur it because of like censorship or something. And it created this whole debate of like, this is so stupid, why do you have to blur it? And it's like, I'm just trying to be respectful to the natives.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 54:23

Yeah.

David 54:32

And then with the dog aspect too, it's like there's so many things I could post about, like beautiful burials of dogs, but I want to be respectful to the tribes. So it's like the ethical dilemma of that and like oftentimes.
This is a big one too. People will be like, why don't archaeologists ask natives? Why don't they ask the indigenous perspective? And I do. And a lot of times they're not able to share

that with people outside of the tribe. So, like, you're just damned if you do, damned if you don't.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 54:55
Mm.
No.

D David 55:03
And people just want to, I think sometimes just want to post that so they feel good, which is fine. But yeah, it's a lot of that's a good question, like the ethical debate of that. And then like a lot of times people will treat indigenous people.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 55:12
Yeah.

D David 55:22
As a whole blanket one person, but like, there's dozens of nations, so they don't all speak for the each other. And that that's a hard thing too, yeah.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 55:31
Yeah.
All right, I see. It's very interesting. All right, so going towards the conclusion, I'm gonna ask you 2 main questions. So would you like to see more communication like yours from other archaeologists or also institutions like universities?

D David 55:36
Yeah.
Absolutely. I think it is. It should be a requirement for Archaeology students, especially with how much misinformation and like Joe Rogan pyramid stuff is out there. It should be a requirement for students to take a basic.
Public speaking class, but also public Archaeology class. How to talk about this stuff even with your families, the holidays or like talk about it online because that's the only way to fight back against that and.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   56:28
Mhm.

D **avid**   56:28
There's a lot of people who fight back with it, like doing like, not diss tracks, but like they'll like a list of every reason why Graham Hancock is dumb. And like, that's.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   56:42
Yeah, like like Milo does, for example, like the kind of, yeah, yeah.

D **avid**   56:45
Yeah, I think sometimes that can get a little aggressive and rub people the wrong way. Whereas my style, because I used to be like him too and I had to stop because I hated being mean, but respect because it's working for him.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   56:49
Call.
Yeah.

D **avid**   57:00
Um, but I think a lot of people.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)**   57:02
Yeah.

D **avid**   57:04
Would listen more if it's less antagonistic and more just like here's something cool and here's why it's cool. So I think it should be a requirement at least take like a photography class, take a especially now video editing class or just how to talk to people.
I think is super important and I would love to see more archaeologists like that because it

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is everybody's fascinated by ancient history like anyone in the world. So it's important to talk about and.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 57:33
Mm.

D **avid** 57:36
A lot of science denial in terms of, you know, space or evolution or vaccines. And like, archaeology is one that, like, I can hold it in my hand and tell you what it is, you know? So it's like, it should be easy enough to talk about it, yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 57:52
Yeah, for sure. And do you think that archaeologists or institutions should seek more collaboration like creators like you, or should they do more stuff on their own, more communication on their own?

D **avid** 58:07
I think both. Like I I I get invited a lot kind of like like this to talk to students and they ask me questions and I think that's important. Like if a university wanted to hire me as like a professor or a teacher.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:15
Oh.

D **avid** 58:24
Teaching this, I would love that cause it's what I do all day and I like talking about it. I don't think that role exists yet, but I could even do that for zoologists or biologists and all that too, like just the social media.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 58:29
Yeah.

David 58:40

Literacy teacher or something. I'm not sure what you would call it, but whether they hire people like me to do that, or they just have them come in as a guest lecturer or start doing it themselves, I think it's all good because especially since COVID.

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 58:43

Oh.

David 58:57

And with AI and VR now, education's going to move more online, less people are going to go to colleges and everyone's going to get their information from TikTok and AI generated people talking about stuff.
So whether we like that or we don't, I think it's coming. And the better you are at online literacy, figuring out what's wrong, what's right, and the better you are at like being genuine and like, what's the word?
Um.
Like a good content creator. Like the better you are at that, the better Archaeology does.
So I think it just helps everybody, yeah.

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 59:35

Yeah.
Right, right, right. And it's perfectly connected with my last question, which is how do you see the role of social media evolving in archaeology in the next few years?

David 59:49

Yeah, um.
I think not that most everything has been dug up by now, but a lot of it has been. So the idea of like, you know, going on digs and finding something new, I think in the next, especially with new laws and regulations that don't let you dig.

Nitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 59:59

Mhm.

David 1:00:10

That might be going away, not a lot, but like it'll shift from that to more like online education and teaching I think. And then going through big data, going through old things that are already collected with new AI, new scanners and all that and.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:00:21

Mm.

David 1:00:29

I think technology will play a big role in how we reanalyze things that are already excavated or things like that. Yeah, and I I think.
The cause before in like, let's say 1985, you would have find an archaeologist at a university, call them or write them a letter and ask them a question. And usually they're like, is this a bone? That's the most questions I get.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:00:53

Yeah.
Yeah.

David 1:00:59

Or like they found this Arrowhead on their grandpa's land and like, is it worth anything? Those are questions I get. But with social media, now anybody can access me or e-mail me. And I think archaeologists have like a responsibility to be engaged with the public and connect because it is all of our shared history. So it shouldn't.
Be gate kept and it should be publicly accessible. So I think, yeah, Archaeology will change a lot with social media in that sense, yeah.

Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:01:22

Yeah.
Right. Yeah. Thank you very much for the the answer. You're very nice. Is there anything? No, of course. No, absolutely not. No, don't worry about it. We're really good on the on time. Is there anything else you would like to add that has?

David 1:01:35

Thanks. I hope I didn't talk too much. Yeah.

OK.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:01:47

We have not covered that maybe you want to express or I think we we covered quite quite a lot.

David 1:01:56

Yeah, I guess for anybody that reads this or you can add it to your thesis or not, but like anybody that wants to do this, I think you need to take a deep breath and ask yourself, like, Are you ready for all of that responsibility?

And like the the hate comments and the negative stuff. And you got to ask like, Are you ready for that? Can I handle it? And because like I went in not even realizing that was going to be a thing. I didn't think about it, so.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:02:28

Hello.

David 1:02:32

And like, it causes a lot of mental stress sometimes. So you got to ask yourself that. But at the same time too, when I wanted to start, I wanted to be. I wanted the best camera. I wanted the best computer. I wanted the best. Like, how do I get started? And every person I message that gave me advice was like, you just got to start.

And like the same thing with that too. It's like whether you're worried about negative or positive comments, you just have to do it and figure it out. And the only way you can do it is to to just start and you'll find your rhythm, you'll find your voice and.

MD Mitrotta, D.M.R. (Davide) 1:02:53

And.

David 1:03:08

I had one last thing to say with that. Oh, right. Whether, like, don't worry about trends and all that. Just if you think it is good, you think it's funny, you think it's a good post, post it. And like, if it doesn't do well, they'll let you know. So just like, just do it. Yeah.

MD **itrotta, D.M.R. (Davide)** 1:03:23
Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah, those are really good advice to to conclude, I'd say. Thank you for that.

D **avid** 1:03:35
Yeah.