

## COMMENTS ON PAPERS PRESENTED IN THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE 2002 ANNUAL MEETING TEACHING ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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The theme for the plenary session of the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Society for California was "Teaching Archaeology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." There were two major inspirations behind this choice. The Society for American Archaeology's recently published volume, *Teaching Archaeology in the Twenty-First Century* (2000, edited by Susan J. Bender and George S. Smith), outlines key issues and challenges to be faced in the teaching of archaeology in the new century. I was further inspired by a roundtable discussion sponsored by the Register of Professional Archaeologists at the 2001 meeting in Modesto. This session focused on the certification of archaeological field schools, and further highlighted the need for the discipline of archaeology to evaluate its approaches to teaching. Few topics can be as important as how we go about teaching our subject to the variety of interested audiences.

My goal for the plenary session was to obtain a set of speakers who could discuss the teaching of archaeology at different levels—including school children, the general public, undergraduate students, graduate students, and even veteran professional archaeologists (as we never ceases to learn about our own field). My hope was to find participants who could offer perspectives, challenges, and possible solutions to the teaching of archaeology at these different levels. Nearly every archaeologist is involved to a greater or lesser extent in teaching archaeology as part of his or her professional duties, and the session was organized to address issues relevant to the society's diverse membership and perspectives towards teaching archaeology.

I was very fortunate to find the ideal panel to cover this wide range of topics. Russell Kaldenberg, the State Archaeologist for the California Bureau of Land Management, was the perfect "lead-off hitter." His goal was to inspire the audience, both students and professionals, to view archaeology as more than a job or career.

Quite rightly, it should be viewed as a way of life. This should be central to how we teach archaeology. Those without "the fire in the belly" (to paraphrase Brian Fagan) should probably avoid archaeology as a career.

The second presentation was by Susan Hector. She discussed teaching archaeology to children, particularly in the context of environmental education programs. Her work in San Diego County reveals that such programs are an ideal way to get our messages to children. She offers very practical advice to other archaeologists interested or involved in similar projects.

Beth Padon has helped to develop an outstanding program that seeks to bring the public into our mission of cultural resource management. She has conducted archaeological investigations and CRM studies in California for more than 20 years. Beth has a long commitment to public involvement in archaeology. In 1999, she helped to develop the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program, and she has served as coordinator of this program and chairman of the SCA site stewardship committee. Her paper offers several insights about engaging the public in active cultural resource management.

Michael Glassow is the chair of the Anthropology Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and he has had a hand in training many a California archaeologist. He is thus the ideal person to discuss the future of teaching both undergraduate and graduate students in California. As he notes, the rapid growth of cultural resource management has led to something of a division in the way archaeology is taught in California colleges and universities. He also offers six suggestions which could help a graduate curriculum to better address both the job market for trained archaeologists, and the challenges that archaeology will face over this century.

The last speaker traveled some distance to join us, thanks to the assistance of the Register of Professional Archaeologists. Michael Adler is a professor at Southern Methodist University, and he chairs the Register's Field School Certification Program. This program identifies the professional standards and ethics that should be the core of an archaeological field school. This discussion should be a vital part of how we teach archaeology, for it is the field school that captures most budding archaeologists, and it has a profound impact on how students develop their professional objectives, ethics, and values.

I would like to thank once again the panelists for sharing their experiences and ideas. It is hoped that their insights will be helpful to California archaeologists as they continue to teach archaeology to the diverse audiences that are interested in the past.