

# **Dr Simon Underdown**

**Reader in Biological Anthropology in the Human Origins and Paleo-Environments Research Group at Oxford Brookes University**

Oxford, England, GB

He researches human evolution - examining ancient DNA to reconstruct past human and animal life.

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## **Biography**

Dr Simon Underdown is Reader in Biological Anthropology in the Human Origins and Paleo-Environments (HOPE) Research Group at Oxford Brookes University. He researches human evolution - examining ancient DNA (drawn from soils at special archaeological sites, mostly in Africa and the Middle East) to reconstruct past human and animal life. He has particularly traced the origins, historical genetics and spread (from animals to humans) of certain viruses such as the herpes virus. Simon is Chair of the Royal Anthropological Institute's Education Committee and is involved in broader science education and public engagement (in science) initiatives, as well as explores how human evolution is taught. He is a member of the Society for the Study of Human Biology.

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## **Areas of Expertise**

Public Engagement in Science, Human Evolution, Anthropology, Ancient DNA, Genetics

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## **Affiliations**

Chair of the Royal Anthropological Institute Education Committee , Trustee of the Horniman Fund, Project mentor for the RAI-Leach Fellowship in the Public Understanding of Anthropology , QAA Anthropology Benchmark Review Panel member , Member of International Association for the Study of Arabia

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## **Event Appearances**

### **Seminar for Arabian Studies**

Conference Paper (2020)

### **RLAHA Martin Aitken Seminar Series**

Seminar (2020)

### **Department of Archaeology**

Seminar (2019)

### **British Association of Biological Anthropology & Osteoarchaeology's 20th Anniversary Conference**

Keynote Lecture (2018)

**South West Wilts Virus Group**  
Invited Talk (2018)

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## **Education**

**University of Cambridge**  
Ph.D. Biological Anthropology

**University of Leicester**  
B.Sc. Archaeology

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