

**An Attempt to Nuance
the Understanding of
Professional Reports in Archaeology
- A Dissertation Research Project**

Topic/Theme: Managing Change in Grey Literature

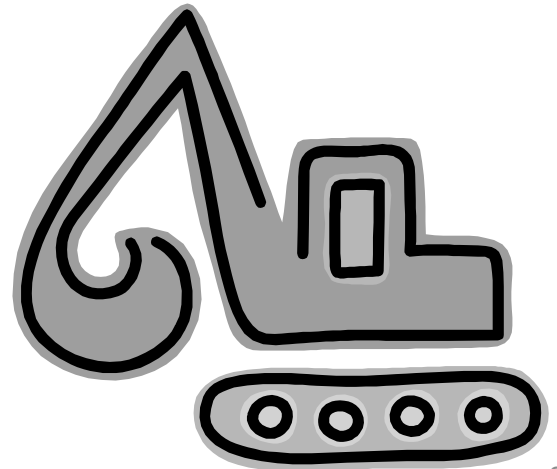
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Background I: Contract archaeology

- Most archaeological surveys and excavations are undertaken prior to land development, as contract archaeology.
- Contract archaeology reports make up a significant part of the corpus of archaeology literature. (Aitchison 2010)



Background II: Contract archaeology and knowledge (in Sweden)

- Contract archaeology surveys shall document findings, collect objects and disseminate the results of surveys.

[Heritage Conservation Act (1988:950), revised up to SFS 2014:649]

- Documentation shall be done in accordance with scientific standards and aim at creating “meaningful knowledge” (my transl.).

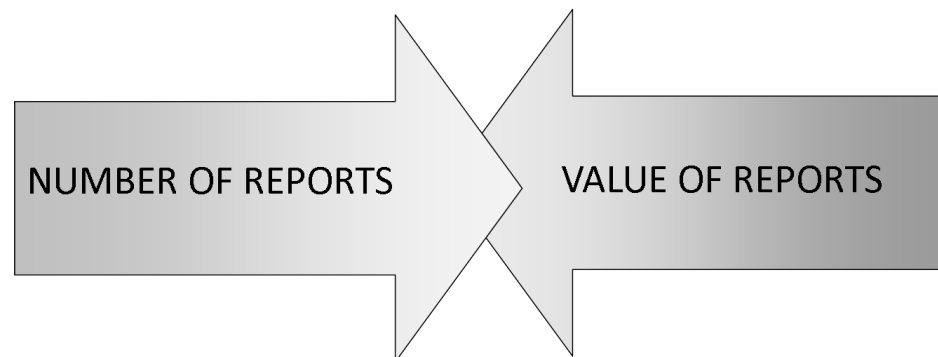
[Riksantikvarieämbetet (The National Heritage Board) 2012]

What is grey literature in archaeology?

”Archaeological reports with limited distribution, usually reports prepared by archaeological contractors.” (Darvill 2009)

Which are the grey literature problems in archaeology?

- a) **Reports are technically inaccessible** (as discussed by e.g. Aitchison 2009; Hardman 2009; McGowan 2009; Stock and Sampité 2009)
- b) **The quality of report content is not satisfying** (as discussed by e.g. Bahn 2012; Ersgård 2006; Lucas 2001; Kristiansen 1998)
- c) **Report readers do not understand how to use reports** (as discussed by e.g. Aitchison 2010; Harlan 2010; Seymour 2010)



Hypothesis

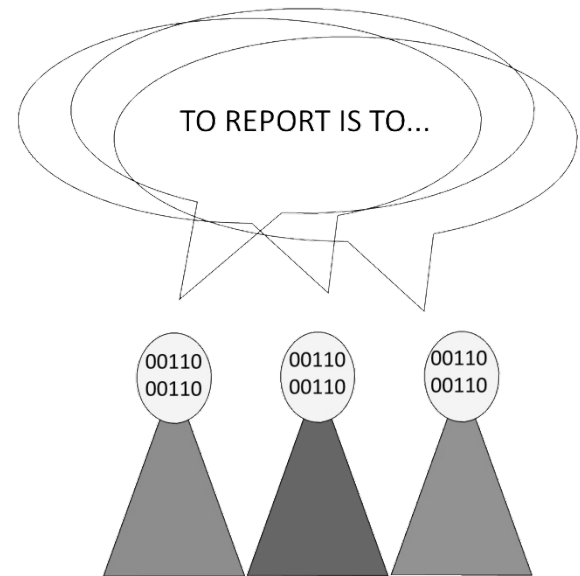
- **If** there are problems with report readers' understandings of contract archaeology reports hindering efficient usage

then

a more nuanced understanding of the report genre will support future use and management of contract archaeology reports.

Aim of the dissertation research

To, through an exploration of **contextual factors** shaping reporting in the intersection of **academic, government-professional** and **market values**, provide more informed grounds for readings and interpretations of contract archaeology reports in order to support report use and management.



Dissertation = four sub-studies

1) An idea analysis of dimensions in descriptions of grey literature problems in archaeology. (Planned for 2015.)

2) An analysis of information policy in legislation and guidelines regulating contract archaeology reporting. (Ongoing)



3) A bibliographic analysis of the frames of reference report writers bring into reporting. (Finished September 2014.)

4) A focus group study of professional archaeologists' and county board professionals' interpretations of the reporting and report auditing work tasks. (Planned for 2016.)

- The dissertation research will be finished by fall 2017.
- The dissertation research is a part of the research project *Archaeological Information in the Digital Society (ARKDIS)* <http://arkdis-project.blogspot.se/> and the Center for Digital Heritage <http://www.york.ac.uk/digital-heritage/>
- Welcome to contact me with questions or comments about the research project! lisa.borjesson@abm.uu.se



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INFORMATION
IN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY**
ARKDIS RESEARCH PROJECT
UPPSALA UNIVERSITY | GOTHENBURG UNIVERSITY
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