PRAISE FOR THE DISCOVERY OF RICHARD III

MEDIA

"One of the most successful UK university media operations ever: the story of the discovery of the body of Richard III underneath a Leicester car park.” – Lucy Ward, The Guardian

"The most extraordinary press conference ever held at any UK university” – Maev Kennedy, Writer for the Guardian

"One of Britain's most dramatic modern archaeological finds” – New York Times

"The discovery of Richard III's remains under a car park at Leicester may have represented the PR coup of the year” – Times Higher Education

"I can't believe any university has ever had better publicity. The whole thing was indeed brilliantly handled and one of the most accessible and relevant pieces of university research of recent decades.” - Alastair Mccall, Editor, The Sunday Times Good University Guide

"It was a very carefully considered and beautifully delivered media coup” – Australian Broadcasting Company

“The stage management of the emerging findings, using television, press and the web, created a palpable sense of theatre and excitement. Brands are built on such things.” – Paul Woodgates, The Telegraph

"I have been to many press conferences in my career as a journalist- but never have I seen journalists cheer and applaud at a press conference. It really was quite something.” – Richard Bettsworth, Editor, Leicester Mercury
"It certainly was an astonishing event and brilliantly handled“ – Sian Griffiths, Sunday Times Education Editor

"Britain's "king in a car park" was the biggest archaeology story of the year.” – LiveScience

"The University of Leicester has managed to unite the two cultures of science and humanities in a way that few have before” – Nature, International Journal of Science

"This was one of the most well organised, and yet friendly, media events I have covered. The press pack was detailed, clear, and readily available. Any specific request was handled expertly and quickly by the media team. Very impressive.”- Adele Robinson, Sky News

"Science by press release“ cried some scientists. “History by press conference” complained some historians. They should get out more. The discovery of a 500-year-old slain King of England is an event that goes beyond the boundaries and the conventional audience of academia” – Nature, International Journal of Science

"The revelation has generated enough press coverage to repaper Buckingham Palace” - Ancient Worlds

“The discovery of the skeleton of Richard III beneath a Leicester car park trumps any work of fiction. It ranks as one of the most dramatic archaeological discoveries of modern times.” – The Telegraph (The Telegraph View - represents the editorial opinion of The Daily Telegraph)

“The BBC Radio Leicester team were thrilled to be a part of such an historic day. The excitement surrounding the discovery of King Richard III has been one of the biggest stories we have ever covered and it was a pleasure to join the University of Leicester for build-up and the announcement.” – Lucy Collins, BBC Radio Leicester

"Flanked on all sides by international, national and local media I found it impossible not to be swept up in the moment as teary-eyed university colleagues, who had spent months working towards this day, congratulated each
other to the sounds of cheers from the crowd.”
– Natalie Webb, The Melton Times

“The announcement on February 4 that a skeleton lifted last year from beneath a parking lot in Leicester, England, could be identified “beyond reasonable doubt” as that of King Richard III is the most exciting historical discovery of the year –maybe the century–so far” – Dan Jones, The Daily Beast

“Richard III was a tremendously exciting discovery. These things don’t just happen in archaeology. In fact, it shouldn’t have happened, but we are very pleased it did” – Carly Hilts, assistant editor of Current Archaeology (speaking of the University of Leicester winning Archaeological Project of the Year)

“There was this real feeling that people were avid to hear what the story was. We were all astonished to hear the news when it came […] Archaeology is my great love. Very often I find stories very interesting, but have to sell them quite hard to convince my news desk. That wasn’t the case this time! I have hugely covering enjoyed it. It is fantastic for the University and fantastic for archaeology.” – Maev Kennedy, writer for the Guardian

“I had a unique opportunity to work from within the university in the week leading up to the identification announcement, which gave a very different perspective into the project.

“It was a great fly-on-the-wall opportunity giving an insight into the people behind the discovery, as well as the drama of the media furore which enveloped the campus and staff.

“For one beautiful week the press (me) and the university’s press office worked in perfect harmony – for one week we laid down our rifles, left the trenches and played football in an uncharted media no man’s land.” – Peter Warzynski, embedded reporter, Leicester Mercury

“One small dig made 2013 an extraordinary year for British archaeology.” – Mike Pitts, British Archaeology Magazine
“This astonishing achievement has finally allowed the lurid comments by Tudor chroniclers about the physique of this most controversial king to be objectively assessed.” – Current Archaeology

“The discovery of the remains of Richard III is an archaeological find of the highest importance and the University of Leicester richly deserves its moment of glory.” - Dr Sean Lang is Senior Lecturer in History at Anglia Ruskin University, writing in History Today

“The Leicester team were duly careful with the presentation of their research. No dashing to conclusions in the news conference: this was measured and scientific.” – Catherine Fletcher, The Guardian

“The news conference announcing that the remains had been identified as those of Richard III was a model of how important news events of that kind should be handled -- comprehensive, in the experts you assembled; ideally scheduled, early in the daily and weekly news cycle, but not so early that those of us who live distant from Leicester couldn't travel on the morning; and courteous and efficient, in the manner of all of your staff.” – John Fisher Burns, The New York Times

“(The press conference) was the lead on every television and radio news bulletin, and front-page news from Alaska to Auckland.” – Maev Kennedy, writer for the Guardian

"Leicester University walked that tightrope between scientific rectitude and PR flummery and managed not to fall. It was an object lesson on when the golden rule of waiting for the peer-reviewed evidence should be broken to serve the wider public interest in what was after all an amazing story about one of history’s greatly misunderstood characters.” – Steve Connor, The Independent

“When the dig was over, it became apparent that by any standards this really was an exceptional project – not just because it found the remains of Richard III and Leicester’s Greyfriars Priory, but because it happened so fast and to cue: archaeology just does not normally work like that. So the releases and the background information became increasingly useful. And what in my experience was truly unusual, was that the PR did not get in the way of the research and its proper presentation.” – Mike Pitts, Editor British Archaeology
"I couldn’t make it to the conference in person but watched it live on the BBC News Channel. It is a testament to the importance of the story and the compelling way it was revealed that the channel broadcast the whole thing, breaking away only occasionally. For me, I thought the conference struck the right balance between clarity and academic rigour. Enough detail to justify the conclusions but enough focus to keep it understandable.” – Greig Watson, BBC

"The team avoided sensationalism. I think they went about it in probably the most rigorous way. Criticisms of the press conference are missing the point of this kind of discovery, because public interest is huge. Whether there's a press conference or not, it's going to be covered by the media, because that character occupies a place in our cultural psyche. In one sense, they are giving the public what the public demands, which is access to knowledge that would typically be restricted.” – Lemont Dobson, a historian and archaeologist at the School of Public Service and Global Citizenship at Central Michigan University, speaking to LiveScience

"The responsibility of archaeologists is to present that knowledge without cutting corners on scientific rigor. Nor did the DNA results trigger universal skepticism, given the multiple clues consistent with the body being Richard III.” – Lemont Dobson, a historian and archaeologist at the School of Public Service and Global Citizenship at Central Michigan University, speaking to LiveScience

"It's an impressive undertaking that the University of Leicester has pulled off: Not only did they find the cemetery and the body, they confirmed through numerous lines of evidence that the body was likely that of Richard III.” – Anthropologist Kristina Killgrove, a professor at the University of West Florida who was not involved in the study, told LiveScience

"Research on campuses can also capture the imagination of the public, whether it is through ground-breaking research or scholarly work communicated in a fresh and accessible manner. The worldwide attention garnered by the University of Leicester after its archaeologists excavated the remains of Richard III shows how dogged scholarly pursuit can result in extraordinary outcomes.” – Rt Hon. David Willetts MP Minister for Universities and Science in The Parliamentary Review 2012/2013

"A dig beneath a council car park by the University of Leicester led to one of the year’s most extraordinary news stories – the discovery of the body of long-lost English king Richard III. Announced at a press conference broadcast live on television on 4 February, the find was a global media sensation. News websites and TV stations led with the story, while social media buzzed with talk of what some argued was the greatest archaeological discovery of all time.” – The Parliamentary Review 2012/2013
“The public imagination has been captured not by glittering artefacts, but by tantalising personal information about the familiar yet controversial 15th century king. The discovery has so far provided details about Richard III’s rich diet, roundworms, oral hygiene, battle injuries and hasty burial, giving us insights into the life of a king that history may otherwise have omitted.” – BBC News

“Inevitably, the press conference in another building [...] was controlled mayhem, but the university had gone to extraordinary lengths to ensure that the actual remains were treated with respect [...] In the quiet room with the blinds drawn, there were no banners, no university logos [...] just the bones, stained a reddish-brown by their centuries in the clay, laid out on a black velvet cloth on four library tables pushed together, protected by a glass case.” – Maev Kennedy, The Guardian

“For what it's worth, I think it's an extraordinary story of archaeological detective work to have found the body, and the anatomical analysis will mean we now have some facts with which to calibrate our reading of both contemporary evidence and Tudor propaganda about Richard's appearance, and the accounts of his death at Bosworth. So in those senses [it is] significant.” – Historian Helen Castor, an expert on the 15th century, in the Guardian

“The press conference, watched by a global audience, was expertly paced, like a cerebral X Factor, and it told us something of the tactile brutalities of 15th-century warfare: eight wounds to Richard’s head, two to his body and the postmortem humiliation of a knife to the buttocks, giving new meaning to the expression “gettin’ medieval on your ass”. If such drama excites people to explore history and archaeology still further, then all to the good.” – Paul Lay, History Today

“This is why I’ve called the find a Tutankhamun for our times: not because there was any treasure involved (or for any information the dig might bring us), but because of the relentless media pressure for new stories, driven by a public eager for insights into everything from the state of Richard III’s teeth to the personal lives of archaeologists.” – Mike Pitts, British Archaeology Magazine
"The Most Surprising Photos of 2013 - Feb. 4, 2013: The skull of the skeleton found at the Grey Friars excavation in Leicester, now confirmed as that of King Richard III." – TIME Magazine

![Skull](image)

"The public imagination has been captured not by glittering artefacts, but by tantalising personal information about the familiar yet controversial 15th century king. The discovery has so far provided details about Richard III's rich diet, roundworms, oral hygiene, battle injuries and hasty burial, giving us insights into the life of a king that history may otherwise have omitted." – BBC News

"Thanks too for the link to your ever-impressive news site, it has been an invaluable resource for us since we started covering the project in 2012!" – Carly Hilts, Current Archaeology

"Rarely is a team of artifact hunters the unwitting extension of a studio publicity team. But Netflix's House of Cards, the new political thriller produced by David Fincher and Beau Willimon about a Machiavellian pol (Kevin Spacey) who seeks to catapult himself into power via any shady means, got a major PR assist Monday when a group of U.K. archaeologists announced that they've located and identified the bones of King Richard III. So... wait, what's the connection? Well, 'HOUSE OF CARDS' central character, Spacey's Frank Underwood, is actually based on Richard. Which means that by early afternoon on Monday, "Richard III" was trending heavily on Twitter, even holding its own against multiple Super Bowl-related hashtags." – Hollywood
AWARDS

Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education

Inter-connected research and expertise in history, heritage and archaeology, highlighted by the discovery of Richard III

Times Higher Education Awards

- Research Project of the Year
- Outstanding Communications Team

European Excellence Awards 2013

Gold Award in the Science and Education category

Richard Buckley, Project Manager of the Richard III dig

New Year Honours List 2014 - OBE for services to archaeology

Current Archaeology – nominated for Archaeologist of the Year 2014

THE PUBLIC

"This was brilliantly executed by Leicester both in terms of academic rigour and PR nous. Well done to all in the academic and PR teams involved.” – Peter Dunn, Head of Communications at the University of Warwick, commenting on a piece on THE website

"It was one of those rare occasions where the careful, dry, scholarly, world of academic inquiry and the more raucous world of instant global celebrity came together.” – Jonathan Sawday holds the Walter J. Ong, S.J. chair in the humanities at Saint Louis University.

"I think the authorities in Leicester handled it perfectly. It was a world story and each step of the way, it was exciting. I thought it was done with deliberation and respect. I am now waiting with excitement, way over here in America, to learn of the burial plans. From a distant cousin of the third Richard, thanks!” – Comment on a piece on THE website

"It behoves the academic world to be generous and positive, not snippy and critical, of others' findings. It's preposterous to assume that the University of Leicester team should have submitted some full case study to peer review before publishing their conclusions via the press.” – Comment on a piece on THE website
"As someone who attended the press conference in a non-academic capacity, I was thrilled by the way in which the discovery was announced to the assembled media. The reaction from those present was spontaneous and reflected the success of the University's strategic approach to the media management of the discovery. Many other national and international press outlets and publications have been quick to follow up on this initial announcement and the fact that weeks later, they still quote the conference itself demonstrates how clearly the messages were presented on the day.” – Simon Gribbon, Leicestershire Promotions, commenting on a piece written by Ather Mirza for the Guardian

"Congratulations to the University of Leicester team for your extraordinary discovery and analysis. As an American with some English, Scottish and Welsh ancestors, I’ve followed this story with fascination and a sense of connection to our shared history. Thank you for making me feel that 500 years are nothing more than a blink and the distance of the "pond" is merely a step away. It's great to be connected to our past and (through technology) each other.” – Comment on the Richard III website

"I find the unified approach to the study to be fascinating - there is the outstanding DNA research, meticulous archaeology, history and even literature all coming into play. This is the most interesting and creative study of its kind ever! Congratulations to the team!” – Comment on the Richard III website

"So very impressed with the press conference this morning - it was really excellently structured and well presented. I even shed a tear at the DNA results
and was fiercely proud of my old university.” – Comment on the Richard III website

“Well done University of Leicester and the Richard III Society. I just read about this exciting news in the New York Times. It's great to have a medieval topic in the (international) news, instead of the usual Victorian and World War I and II history stories. Britain needs to know that it is not just the Russell Group institutions at the cutting edge of research.” – Comment on the Richard III website

“I commend the University for its involvement with this absolutely fascinating project. What a discovery! I can’t wait until the complete academic study is released as I’m sure it will be a great read.” – Comment on the Richard III website

“I would just to tell you - you are the best, most efficient press office I have ever come across!” – Jo Siedlecka, through email

“It certainly was an astonishing event and brilliantly handled.” – Sian Griffiths, Sunday Times Education Editor, through email

“In my 20 years in the Military and 10 years in the real world, this ranks as one of the best operations I have seen. Lessons learnt...

- Full and ‘all informed’ communication and planning
- No ‘silo’ working spotted
- We were united in a single mission and common focus
- We all smiled ... eventually!”
– Tim Yates MSc MBA MBIFM MIH, Deputy Director of Estates

TWITTER

Tweets – Alistair Campbell – “Leicester Uni will be happy - Richard the Third front page news in Germany pic.twitter.com/56HDy1FM”

Danny Blanchflower – “I am pleased my old alma mater found the bones of Richard III”

Dominic Shellard – “Truly magnificent work by @uniofleicester to find Richard III!”

Russell Kane – “Richard III thing is blowing my mind”

Clarence House – “Congratulations to all involved @uniofleicester - truly magnificent work in finding the remains of #RichardIII”

Linda Spurdle – “Loved the #RichardIII live press conference this morning! Great to see #history so brought alive and talked about! Well done
John Prescott – “Really enjoying this episode of CSI Leicester #richardIII”

Jacqueline Riding – “The sight of the skeleton as discovered in the shallow pit was very touching. Congrats @uniofleicester for a great presentation”

Jim Roberts – “@uniofleicester Wonderful breadth and depth of research. A terrific story. #RichardIII”

S.A. Meade – “@uniofleicester You've done amazing work. This is such fantastic project.”

Wade Barrett – “Amazed by the Richard III discovery in Leicester. Incredible science behind the discovery.”