

## Archaeologies Of The Contemporary Past

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Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past turns what is usually seen as a method for investigating the distant past onto the present. In doing so, it reveals fresh ways of looking at both ourselves and modern society as well as the discipline of archaeology. The contributions to this volume represent the most recent research in this area.

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Archaeology of the Contemporary Past is an emerging area of research activity, involving a range of disciplines and with researchers from the higher education and heritage sectors. People's definitions vary, but for me this is a period of study that deals literally with the contemporary past, the world we have experienced and shaped through our daily lives and practices.

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The archaeology of the recent and contemporary past—that is, the archaeology of places and events that relate to the period of recent or living memory—is a dynamic new field which engages critically with what it means to be *us*, with the politics of late-modernity, and with the nature, shape and relevance of archaeology as a contemporary research practice.

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The archaeology of the contemporary past is a new and interdisciplinary field of research that intersects with heritage studies, art, ethnography, and modern history. This kind of archaeology, as it is practiced today, was born in the late 1990s. However, its intellectual roots go further back (Harrison 2011: 144-9).

The Contributors to this volume represent the most recent research in this exciting new field. This new archaeology gives a crucial understanding of the experience of modernity and the communities it continues to affect.

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This Handbook is the first comprehensive survey of a rapidly expanding sub-field in archaeology, the study of the present and recent past. It seeks to explore the boundaries of this emerging area, to develop a tool-kit of concepts and methods, which are applicable to this new sub-field, and to suggest important future trajectories for research.

An Archaeology of the Contemporary Era approaches the contemporary age, between the late nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, as an archaeological period defined by specific material processes. It reflects on the theory and practice of the archaeology of the contemporary past from epistemological, political, ethical and aesthetic viewpoints, and characterises the present based on archaeological traces from the spatial, temporal and material excesses that define it. The materiality of our era, the book argues, and particularly its ruins and rubbish, reveals something profound, original and disturbing about humanity. This is the first attempt at describing the contemporary era from an archaeological point of view. Global in scope, the book brings together case studies from every continent and considers sources from peripheral and rarely considered traditions, meanwhile engaging in an interdisciplinary dialogue with philosophy, anthropology, history and geography. An Archaeology of the Contemporary Era will be essential reading for students and practitioners of the archaeology of the contemporary past, historical archaeology and archaeological theory. It will also be of interest to anybody concerned with globalisation, modernity and the Anthropocene.

Rodney Harrison and John Schofield explore how archaeology can inform the study of our own society and other late-modern societies through detailed case studies and a summary of the existing literature. They draw together cross-disciplinary perspectives, and develop a new agenda for the study of the materiality of contemporary societies.

Contemporary Archaeology and the City foregrounds the archaeological study of post-industrial and other urban transformations through a diverse, international collection of case studies. Over the past decade contemporary archaeology has emerged as a dynamic force for dissecting and contextualizing the material complexities of present-day societies. Contemporary archaeology challenges conventional anthropological and archaeological conceptions of the past by pushing temporal boundaries closer to, if not into, the present. The volume is organized around three themes that highlight the multifaceted character of urban transitions in present-day cities - creativity, ruination, and political action. The case studies offer comparative perspectives on transformative global urban processes in local contexts through research conducted in the struggling, post-industrial cities of Detroit, Belfast, Indianapolis, Berlin, Liverpool, Belém, and post-Apartheid Cape Town, as well as the thriving urban centres of Melbourne, New York City, London, Chicago, and Istanbul. Together, the volume contributions demonstrate how the contemporary city is an urban palimpsest comprised by archaeological assemblages - of the built environment, the surface, and buried sub-surface - that are traces of the various pasts entangled with one another in the present. This volume aims to position the city as one of the most important and dynamic arenas for archaeological studies of the contemporary by presenting a range of theoretically-engaged case studies that highlight some of the major issues that the study of contemporary cities pose for archaeologists.

The Archaeology of Seeing provides readers with a new and provocative understanding of material culture through exploring visual narratives captured in cave and rock art, sculpture, paintings, and more. The engaging argument draws on current thinking in archaeology, on how we can interpret the behaviour of people in the past through their use of material culture, and how this affects our understanding of how we create and see art in the present. Exploring themes of gender, identity, and story-telling in visual material culture, this book forces a radical reassessment of how the ability to see makes us and our ancestors human; as such, it will interest lovers of both art and archaeology. Illustrated with examples from around the world, from the earliest art from hundreds of thousands of years ago, to the contemporary art scene, including street art and advertising, Janik cogently argues that the human capacity for art, which we share with our most ancient ancestors and cousins, is rooted in our common neurophysiology. The ways in which our brains allow us to see is a common heritage that shapes the creative process; what changes, according to time and place, are the cultural contexts in which art is produced and consumed. The book argues for an innovative understanding of art through the interplay between the way the human brain works and the culturally specific creation and interpretation of meaning, making an important contribution to the debate on art/archaeology.

The Familiar Past surveys material culture from 1500 to the present day. Fourteen case studies, grouped under related topics, include discussion of issues such as: \* the origins of modernity in urban contexts \* the historical anthropology of food \* the social and spatial construction of country houses \* the social history of a workhouse site \* changes in memorial forms and inscriptions \* the archaeological treatment of gardens. The Familiar Past has been structured as a teaching text and will be useful to students of history and archaeology.

Illuminating the world of archaeology. Archaeology conveys the excitement of archaeological discovery and explains how archaeologists think as they scientifically find, analyze, and interpret evidence. The main objective of this text is to provide an introduction to the broad and fascinating world of archaeology from the scientific perspective. Discussions on the theoretical aspects of archaeology, as well as the practical applications of what is learned about the past, have been updated and expanded upon in this fourth edition. Learning Goals Upon completing this book, readers will be able to: Discuss the theoretical aspects of archaeology. Apply what has been learned about the past. Identify the various perspectives archaeologists have.

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