BIOARCHAEOLOGY

THE CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF HUMAN REMAINS

Like plants that share the same name but vary according to their environments, "bioarchaeology" has acquired various definitions since its origins in the 1970s. While some prefer to link it to osteoarchaeology, others use it to characterize multidisciplinary collaborations. In *Bioarchaeology: The Contextual Analysis of Human Remains*, Jane Buikstra and Lane Beck explore the nuances of the field as understood and practiced in North America at the beginning of the 21st century. Emphasizing the reconstruction of human histories, particularly anthropological problem solving and the integration of archaeological data, North American bioarchaeology encourages practitioners to integrate information about languages, biology, human cultural diversity, and archaeological interpretations. Hearkening back to Thomas Jefferson's remarkably modern plea for contextual treatment of all archaeological information, this volume offers a comprehensive history of the discipline by contributors who are often direct descendants of its founders.

"A rich history of bioarchaeology in North America is described by a number of the most experienced and prominent scholars. The authors give us everything: the necessary information, bioarchaeology of the past, and the present state of this significant area of science. I thought I knew it all, but I learned much more. This book is a valuable gift to contemporary and future colleagues. It will be an important platform, a 'must' for students in the field. I call it a masterpiece!"

—Pia Bennike, University of Copenhagen

"This book is rich in historical detail on the development of bioarchaeology but it also boldly confronts theoretical issues and controversies. This is the place to discover how the field of reconstructing human histories from skeletons has developed from early eighteenth-century precursors through twentieth-century pioneers. Careful scholarship goes into redressing many of the current 'simplified' views of what those pioneers contributed to bioarchaeology. This book should provide a wealth of material for discussion in upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses."

—Shelley R. Saunders, McMaster University

"Venturing far beyond cursory description and generic overview, this deeply introspective book tackles controversial issues head-on, sets a high standard for the study of intellectual history, and will undoubtedly initiate rich debate within the field."

—A. L. Grauer, Loyola University

"A remarkably compelling and comprehensive exploration of the history and future of bioarchaeology, with contributions by all of the leading scholars in the discipline."

—Bruce Smith, Smithsonian Institution

"This book performs the dual roles of clarifying the term 'bioarchaeology' and positioning current research in its historic and social context. Advanced students and professionals in the field will welcome it as a source where the history of our field is documented. They, and readers from other fields, will enjoy learning about the complex and shifting factors that shape bioarchaeological research. The book performs a unique role. The editors are to be congratulated and thanked for undertaking this ambitious project."

- Susan Pfeiffer, University of Toronto

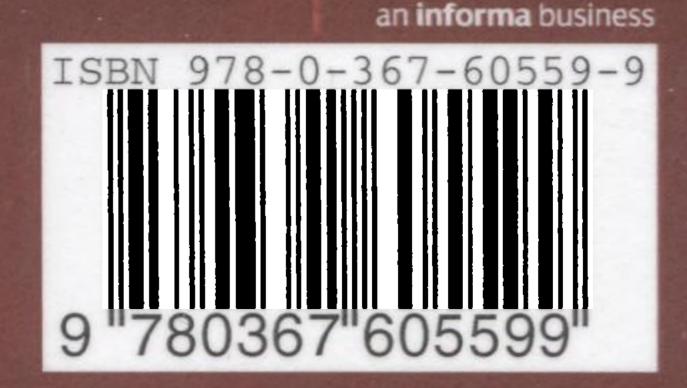
"This scholarly book is unique, and it has been needed for decades. It is a splendid and mature assessment of the development of human bioarchaeology, especially in the New World, the research position we are currently at, and where academic work on these ancient remains will probably go in the future. It comprehensively covers the various topics, from demography and mortuary studies to palaeopathology and behavioural implications. A major reference work not to be missed."

D.R. Brothwell, The University of York

"The field's foremost practitioners recognize their forebears, including *Invisible Contributions: Women in Bioarchaeology* in this volume, which traces the development of bioarchaeology from its foundations to the current state of the discipline."

-Sherry C. Fox, American School of Classical Studies at Athens





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