



Bioarchaeology: Interpreting Behavior from the Human Skeleton (Cambridge Studies in Biological and Evolutionary Anthropology)

By Clark Spencer Larsen

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Now including numerous full colour figures, this updated and revised edition of Larsen's classic text provides a comprehensive overview of the fundamentals of bioarchaeology. Reflecting the enormous advances made in the field over the past twenty years, the author examines how this discipline has matured and evolved in fundamental ways. Jargon free and richly illustrated, the text is accompanied by copious case studies and references to underscore the central role that human remains play in the interpretation of life events and conditions of past and modern cultures. From the origins and spread of infectious disease to the consequences of decisions made by humans with regard to the kinds of foods produced, and their nutritional, health and behavioral outcomes. With local, regional, and global perspectives, this up-to-date text provides a solid foundation for all those working in the field.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This new second edition of Clark Larsen's classic text Bioarchaeology presents an impressive synthesis of new methodology and information gleaned from analysis. Written by one of our most accomplished practitioners, this text is a must-read for anyone who seeks a comprehensive overview of this dynamic field. Although the author indicates he 'cherry-picked' the literature in assembling this volume, the reference list is extensive and indicative of the depth of research reflected in this new edition."

Doug Ubelaker, forensic anthropologist

"I have waited with immense anticipation for the arrival of this second edition, the first having been of great value to myself and my students. This updated book provides a comprehensive overview of how bioarchaeology enables us to understand the nuances of our ancestors' lives and deaths, and who we are today. It is published at a time when bioarchaeology is thriving as a discipline in archaeology and anthropology, which has over the last twenty or so years benefited from new methodological developments, and is attracting interest from a range of other disciplines. Larsen has again very successfully synthesised a huge amount of information to provide an accessible text that covers subject matter ranging from the impact of infectious diseases on humans, through injury and violence, to biological distance and isotopic analysis. I am convinced that this book will again be welcomed by the bioarchaeological community."

Charlotte Roberts, University of Durham

"This updated volume exhaustively discusses the full range of analytical techniques that are available for the study of human remains from ancient, historic and modern (forensic) contexts. Included in each chapter is a diverse set of examples drawn from the author's lifetime of outstanding research. The inclusion of a new chapter on paleodemography is important because age and sex are the foundation for all analyses. This book shows by example how to get it right and how to expand the interpretations to include a wide range of contextual factors. For those who are already familiar with human osteology, this book presents the stunning array of analytical procedures that can be used to make the bones come alive. As a handbook of bioarchaeological methods, there is nothing else like this on the market. This book deserves a wide readership among those interested in learning about the analytical potential of human remains."

Debra Martin, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

"This thoroughly revised and greatly expanded edition is the single best coverage of rapidly developing interdisciplinary research that draws upon fields as diverse as biological anthropology, medicine, developmental biology, biomechanics, archaeology and history. Students and established scholars alike will find much of value in this comprehensive, authoritative, empirically rich and heavily referenced volume that is simultaneously deliberately provocative and forward looking."

George R. Milner, Pennsylvania State University

"Since the first edition of Bioarchaeology went to press almost twenty years ago the bioarchaeological literature has exploded. Human remains from archaeological sites all over the world are providing unparalleled insights into life in the past, from the weaning practices of ancient Egyptians, to the techniques of ritual sacrifice used by the Moche of Peru, to status-differences in workload in medieval central Europe - all are meticulously recorded in bone. It was a monumental task to pull the first volume together and an exponentially greater one this time around. Clearly bioarchaeology has come of age and Larsen captures not only the state of the art of the discipline, but also its sheer breadth and depth in this extraordinary synthesis.

Bioarchaeology has been and will continue to be the go-to volume in the field."

Patricia Lambert, Utah State University

About the Author

Clark Spencer Larsen is the Distinguished Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. His research is primarily focussed on biocultural adaptation in the last 10,000 years of human evolution, with particular emphasis on the history of health, well-being, and lifestyle. He collaborates internationally in the study of ancient skeletons in order to track health changes since the late Paleolithic. He is the author of 200 scientific articles and has authored or edited 30 books and monographs.

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