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The Archaeology Of Alcohol And Drinking (American Experience In Archaeological Pespective)



Synopsis

"Smith interrogates sherds and other leavings of bibulous entertainments, drunken binges, and everyday drinking in a demonstration of historical archaeology's meaningful contributions to the study of alcohol and its use and abuse in the early modern and modern world."--Mary C. Beaudry, Boston University

"Provides an exhaustive though concise synthesis of the literature on the historical archaeology of alcohol production, distribution, and consumption. Student and professional alike will benefit from Smith's expansive knowledge of the historical archaeology of drinking."--James A. Delle, Kutztown University

Through its complex history, alcohol has served many cultural functions, often constructive ones. For centuries it has been used as a valuable economic commodity, a medicinal tool, a focus of social gatherings, and a mechanism for psychological escape. Frederick Smith identifies key themes associated with alcohol production, distribution, and consumption. He discusses industrial and home production of alcoholic beverages and both public and clandestine drinking. He defines the contexts in which drinking takes place and the motivations--social and antisocial--for alcohol consumption. As a case study, Smith examines archaeological evidence of alcohol use from a cave site in Barbados, proposing that major historical events can be influenced by the social and spiritual use of alcohol. At the same time, Smith argues, alcohol can also provide people with a temporary respite from the challenges of daily life.

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Customer Reviews

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Frederick H. Smith, assistant professor of anthropology at the College of William and Mary, is the author of *Caribbean Rum*.

The dream book for a beer geek with history interest. A fair amount of culture history and just the right amount of nerdy archaeology. Not too difficult to read.

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