

was a visiting professor at Hawaii and in New Zealand in 1979. Becoming interested in Polynesian prehistory he turned his research skills to Western Samoa. As with all his previous field research, he published the results promptly. After retiring from Utah and moving to Oregon he taught each spring quarter at the University of Oregon until 1992.

Jennings' years of experience as archaeologist, administrator, author, editor, and teacher make a fascinating chronicle. But along with his personal achievements is the valuable light he sheds on how in the sixty years of his experience archaeology has changed—university field schools, federal relief programs, large scale “salvage” ahead of dam building, CRM, and many new aims and techniques. He provides a close-up, warts-and-all view of archaeology's changing ends and means and includes candid vignettes of many well-known colleagues. Because the history of archaeology includes both the research projects and the people who carry them out and this autobiography is generous in discussing both, it is a particularly valuable contribution to our understanding of “where we've been and what we've done.”

Jennings closes with a chapter modestly called “Archaeology without Theory,” in which he discusses his views of what archaeology is and how it should be done, with scepticism in some instances, enthusiasm in others, but bluntly giving his personal reaction to the many trends, innovations, and fads of archaeology during his long career. Given his unique breadth of experience, it is a fascinating analysis and commentary, with neither false modesty nor false pride. We can all think of other archaeologists from whom equally detailed and insightful autobiographies would be welcome, and in fact are needed, if the history of archaeology is not to overdepend on final reports that omit much of what really happened.

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“The First Twenty Years,” by Bernard J. Siegel. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 22 ( 1993), pp. 1-34, Annual Reviews, Inc, Palo Alto.

by

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After twenty years as editor of the *Annual Review of Anthropology* (ARA), Professor Siegel took on a daunting task with this article. In his words, he set out to “ponder the developments in the several subfields of anthropology over this period of time, as reflected in the topics selected for review in this enterprise” (p.8). To this end Siegel, a cultural anthropologist, mined the collective knowledge contained within twenty years of the ARA. In his presentation, he considers the intellectual developments within each of the five subdisciplines separately (he includes applied anthropology), concluding with some brief remarks on the importance of maintaining a four or five) field approach to anthropology. For our purposes here, I will limit my comments to his section on archaeology.

In reviewing the history of archaeology as it has been presented in the ARA, Siegel begins with an eloquent reflection on the modernist/postmodernist dialectic which emerged within in archaeological discourse in the 1980's. This, he believes, in part resulted from the “close attention archaeologists have paid to the theoretical and conceptual developments” in cultural anthropology. With this said, Siegel lists what he considers to be the principle categories of archaeological research, although he does not take the opportunity to discuss each of these in detail:

**“The New Archaeology and Systems Theory  
Structuralist Archaeology  
Marxism and its Several Interpretations  
Symbolic Archaeology and its Meanings  
Behavioral Archaeology (p. 9).**

After a brief discussion noting the importance of the contributions of Julian Steward’s cultural ecology and Gordon Willey’s Viru Valley study to the development of archaeological thought, Siegel begins his narrative on the contributions made within the several principle categories. Not surprisingly, his discussion begins with, and really is dominated by, the “New Archaeology.”

Siegel bases his discussion of the New Archaeology primarily on the excellent article published in the ARA by Bruce Trigger (1984). He succinctly summarizes Trigger’s critique of the New Archaeology: that New Archaeologists 1) relied on a doctrine of neoevolutionism; 2) often posited that a deterministic relationship existed between cultural subsystems; 3) took a non-Marxist materialist view of culture; 4) overestimated the predictive potential of the deductive mode of explanation. Siegel also reviews Fred Plog’s analysis of the relationship between systems theory and the New Archaeology. Siegel’s choice of Plog’s article reflects the timeliness of his piece, not

only for its lucid discussion of systems theory, but for its subtle call for moderating the claims to absolute knowledge that some processualists made. As early as the mid-70’s, Plog began to question some of the extreme claims of these doctrinaire New Archaeologists while acknowledging the many contributions this approach had made to the study of the past. In retrospect, Plog’s concern with the arrogance of processual archaeology may have presaged the postprocessual/postmodernist debates that emerged several years later.

Offsetting his discussion on the relative merits of processual archaeology, Siegel reviews some recent theoretical contributions by Marxist archaeologists, notably referring to Phil Kohl’s 1981 contribution to the ARA. He summarized Kohl’s conclusions that although ideas and meanings may be difficult to interpret from the ground, the material remains of stratified societies can reveal a great deal about the relations of power and dominance that existed.

I must give Professor Siegel a great deal of credit for tackling the gargantuan task of outlining the developments within the entire discipline of anthropology. Nevertheless, there are a number of issues which I wish he had commented on more thoroughly. In a single paragraph, he briefly mentions two crucial developments within the recent history of archaeology. First, that archaeologists have made considerable progress in the analysis of the cultural evolution of complex societies and second, that nationalism is a crucial motivating factor behind many archaeological endeavors. Unfortunately, he goes into no further detail on either of these topics. Similarly, he lightly touches on the existence of postprocessual archaeologists and their attempts to interpret symbolism and multivocality. According to Siegel until “more work is published in this respect, a review of this literature will have to wait”. I think that even as early as 1992 or 1993, when this article was published, a significant body of postprocessual literature existed which could have been reviewed, had not been specifically taken up by the annual review. Finally, there is no mention of historical archaeology at all, a burgeoning important subfield within archaeology. [Notably, within this same volume of the ARA is an excellent piece by Martin Hall on the archaeology of British colonialism in South Africa].

Professor Siegel’s review of the last twenty years of archaeology quite explicitly reflects what the ARA editorial board has defined the important developments within the discipline. As such, it is an important piece. Siegel is quite successful at presenting the core arguments of several critical pieces that have appeared in the ARA. I think this particular article sets a good precedent for the ARA and other periodicals to take a critical look at what they have deemed important and why. I only hope that it takes less than twenty more years for the ARA to publish another self reflective piece like this one.