

according to Shea). Here we learn about early African *Homo sapiens* and follow humanity's expansion into western Asia, south Asia, and Australasia and then on into northern Eurasia and the Americas. Chapters 11 and 12 discuss the Holocene emergence of food production and describe the amazing oceanic migrations that Polynesians took about 1,000 years ago across the Pacific as far as the South American coast. Chapter 13 looks into the future to ask what are the most likely existential threats that humans face in both the near and long term, and Chapter 14 ties the book's arguments together in a tidy conclusion. For the nonspecialist, Shea provides a handy glossary (pp. 311–319).

There is a lot to love in this smart, fun book. One helpful resource is that each of the continental chapters includes a table of important sites, their absolute dates, and comments on their significance. The book's maps and artifact illustrations are welcome visual aids, although I do not share Shea's enthusiasm for the Mercator projection. Perhaps my favorite chapter is "Neanderthal Country," in which Shea argues that Neanderthals lived in places where multiple ecotones came together, allowing a focus on different foods at different elevations and habitats during different times of the year. Neanderthals, he says, likely had larger home ranges than *Homo sapiens* but dispersed less and, as such, relied on local resources. He claims that Neanderthals neither added to nor subtracted from the survival skills they inherited from their *Homo heidelbergensis* ancestors.

I have minor quibbles here and there—Shea doubts the existence of Neanderthal parietal art (p. 191), his primate taxonomy (p. 50) includes some errors, and his cranial drawings are not as good as his artifact illustrations. Yet this delightful book will have great appeal for specialist and layperson alike. Shea's wry humor shines throughout—for example, "Many archaeologists think prismatic blades were more difficult to make than shorter flakes and therefore especially informative about earlier hominin intelligence and skill. As with so much of what archaeologists believe about stone tools, little or no evidence supports this hypothesis" (p. 40).

The Unstoppable Species is a must-read for anyone interested in how we came to be the cosmopolitan species we are today.

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***An Archaeology of Innovation: Approaching Social and Technological Change in Human Society.* Catherine J. Frieman. 2021. Manchester University Press, Manchester. xii + 238 pp. \$130.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-5261-7178-8.**

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Catherine J. Frieman's *An Archaeology of Innovation* (henceforth *Innovation*) is a noteworthy contribution that I benefited from reading. Thinking hard about concepts, theories, and assumptions—as well as their often-checkered histories—is important for scholars in any academic discipline. Here, Frieman interrogates the concept of "innovation."

A major strength of *Innovation* is the deep multidisciplinary well—archaeology, anthropology, sociology, and history, among other fields—from which it draws. As readers imbibe a rich blend of theoretical waters, they are forced to confront and question important issues of power, colonialism, prejudice, racism, and sexism in themselves and their research. Indeed, as one who thinks and writes a lot about innovation (mostly in Pleistocene technologies), I was not aware of how much baggage the concept of "innovation" potentially carries. But through a plethora of examples from disparate geotemporal contexts ranging from the Paleolithic to historic periods, Frieman unpacks innovation and

scrutinizes its contents: both the novel “thing,” as well as its invention, adoption, and transmission into eventual archaeological visibility. Her grilling is necessary and welcome. From the explicit identification of the Western presumption that “innovation” equates with “good” to the unsupported stance that only males are the innovators of the past, Frieman leaves few stones unturned.

In terms of production, *Innovation* is praiseworthy. Clear figures ($n = 24$) and tables ($n = 2$) and lucid chapter titles and section headings, end-of-chapter notes, and a comprehensive index all make for an enjoyable reading experience.

One issue I have is *Innovation's* depiction of cultural evolutionary theory, which is vastly different today than even a couple of decades ago, much less from the mid-twentieth century or the late 1800s (see Stephen J. Lycett, “Cultural Evolutionary Approaches to Artifact Variation over Time and Space,” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 56, 2015; Alex Mesoudi, *Cultural Evolution: How Darwinian Theory Can Explain Human Culture and Synthesize the Social Sciences*, 2011). For example, Frieman writes that “the social element of technological systems means that technological change cannot be a product of evolutionary development or the steady improvement of functionality, but instead must reflect human choices, values, and the wider social context in which it occurs” (p. 24). In another instance, Frieman writes that “social factors” are “not narratives that dominate the field [of evolution-based research]” (p. 20). Yet when considering modern cultural evolutionary theory and its literature, such statements do not acknowledge cultural evolutionary theory’s own evolution—not only because “culture” is today defined operationally and explicitly as “socially transmitted information” (e.g., Mesoudi, *Cultural Evolution*, 2011, 2–3; Peter J. Richerson and Robert Boyd, *Not by Genes Alone: How Culture Transformed Human Evolution*, 2005, 5) but also because modern cultural evolutionary theory eschews “progressive” or “linear” interpretations. Furthermore, rather than reducing understanding of human behavioral variation and diversity, there are now countless examples in which modern cultural evolutionary approaches regularly use or assess individual agents; human biases, values, and choices; and (nonfunctional) cultural drift as explanations. Modern cultural evolutionary studies also regularly acknowledge that functional and nonfunctional sources may or may not be simultaneously contributing to technological variation and change. There is little in *Innovation* that could not be profitably explored through a modern cultural evolutionary lens, and I think if Frieman and modern cultural evolutionary theorists sat down together, they would find more in common than not.

Whether one agrees with all of *Innovation*, some of it, or none of it, I recommend that it be read—for nothing else than to spend time giving a good, hard think to a concept regularly used by archaeologists. But I suspect the reader will get much more out of Frieman’s work than this. I certainly did, and I applaud her for her own innovative contribution.

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***Wood in Archaeology.* Lee A. Newsom. 2022. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. \$110.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-10705-206-2. \$29.99 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-10766-689-5.**

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Lee A. Newsom is one of the foremost experts on archaeological wood analysis in the world. With her 2022 Cambridge manual, *Wood in Archaeology*, Newsom’s goal is to provide a basic introduction to woody plant development, physiology, and anatomy with particular attention to how this information can be applied in archaeology and paleoecology. The manual also provides detailed instructions, based