



Contradictions of Archaeological Theory: Engaging Critical Realism and Archaeological Theory (Critical Realism: Interventions)

By Sandra Wallace

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Is current archaeological theory stuck at an impasse?

Sandra Wallace argues that archaeological theory has become mired as a result of logical and ontological contradictions. By showing that these contradictions are a result of common underlying philosophical assumptions and fallacies this book is able to show how a fresh approach to this discipline is necessary to resolve them, even if this requires re-examining some of the tenants of orthodox archaeology.

This fresh approach is achieved by using Critical Realism as an "under labourer" to philosophically evaluate archaeological theory. Starting by assessing the historical impact of philosophy on the discipline and then looking at the current relationship between archaeology and the ontology of the material this book facilitates the construction of discipline specific theory by archaeologists. The result is an approach to archaeology that allows both students and practitioners to free themselves from endemic contradictions and re-discover their approach to archaeological theory.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Sandra Wallace is currently a research affiliate at the Department of Archaeology, University of Sydney, Australia, and the Principal Archaeologist for Artefact Heritage Services. Sandra's research interests are archaeological theory, philosophies of materiality, critical realist theory and Australian Aboriginal archaeology.

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