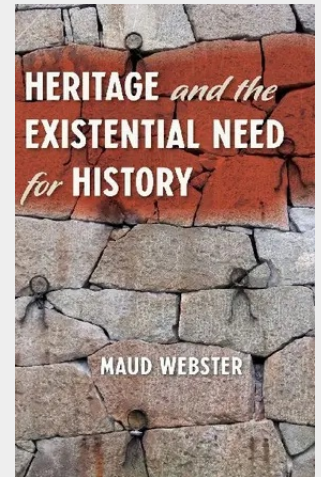


## Heritage and the Existential Need for History

In a sweeping survey of archaeological sites spanning thousands of years, *Heritage and the Existential Need for History* asks fundamental questions about the place of cultural heritage in Western society. What is history? Why do we write about the events of yesterday and set up memorials for them? Why do we visit places where momentous things have happened? Maud Webster takes readers on a journey from Bronze Age Mycenae through the Greek Dark Ages, from Medieval Rome through the Italian Renaissance, and from Viking Sweden to Restoration-period England and Civil War America. Combining archaeology, history, and psychology, Webster explores themes including literacy and text, monumentality and spoliation, and death and identity. She traces the human need for history at two levels—the collective, here shown through archaeological evidence, and the individual, shown through written records and the behavior they document. Webster's robust cross-examination of artifacts and texts, and the illustrations drawn from this methodology, attest that locating our history helps us anchor ourselves, for multiple purposes and from varying perspectives, and that the drive to write and build histories is an enduring part of the human experience.



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