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## Archaeologists: Explorers of the Human Past (Oxford Profiles)

By Brian Fagan



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**Archaeologists: Explorers of the Human Past (Oxford Profiles)** By Brian Fagan

Including eccentric professors and adventuring fortune hunters of old and highly trained scientists of today, *Archaeologists* collects together biographies of more than 30 archaeologists of the past two centuries. In the process, *Archaeologists* presents an engaging portrait of how digging for treasure evolved into the respected and vital science we know today. Some of the archaeologists profiled include:

- \* Giovanni Belzoni, the 19th-century archaeologist who brought the head of Ramesses II back to England
- \* Heinrich Schliemann, the modern discoverer of prehistoric Greece whose excavations included Mycenae and the ancient city of Troy
- \* Howard Carter, who discovered King Tut's tomb
- \* Mary and Louis Leakey, whose discovery of humanoid fossils placed human evolution's beginning in Africa

From the romance of golden pharaohs and lost civilizations to computers, tree ring dating, and numerous other scientific methods, *Archaeologists* is a fascinating look at the explorers of the human past.



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## **Editorial Review**

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up-A collection of essays on antiquarians and archaeologists from early figures to recent notables. The book is divided into four chronological sections, each beginning with an introduction that sets the scene for the biographies that follow and ending with paragraph sketches of other archaeologists from the same period. Individual entries investigate each subject's major contributions to archaeology as a science and to knowledge of the past in general. Fagan does not hesitate to criticize the scientists' failings or to highlight their strengths. His writing style is clear and interesting, making these essays much more enjoyable reading than encyclopedia articles. Each entry also includes black-and-white photographs or reproductions, a sidebar of facts, and suggestions for further reading. The book is not without its flaws, a number of which seem to be typographical or simply carelessness. Dates and subjects' ages are misprinted (or miscalculated?) in several cases. A bit more troubling is Fagan's description of European Neanderthals as "primitive looking," surely a value judgment, and his first mention of Bishop Ussher's 6000-year time frame for human history, while later dealt with more carefully, is described simply as "the mere 6000 years assigned to all our existence in the Old Testament." Even so, this is a brisk and informative volume, useful for larger collections and public libraries.

*Coop Renner, Fairmeadows Elementary, Duncanville, TX*

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## **Review**

"[Brian Fagan's] writing style is clear and interesting, making these essays much more enjoyable reading than encyclopedia articles....this is a brisk and informative volume." --*School Library Journal*

"Maps, timelines, a glossary, and a further reading resource list enhance the well-researched and interesting-to-read text." -- *Dig!*

"With *Archaeologists: Explorers of the Human Past*, Brian Fagan provides another accessible, readable, and enjoyable book on archaeology for the general public...These 33 adventurers, antiquarians, and scholars are profiled in thorough and concise essays, generously illustrated with black and white photographs, documents, field records, and maps....*Archaeologists* succeeds as an interesting introduction to the discipline for young readers, successfully balancing the great names of archaeology with some of the lesser known but important scholars....This book will be a welcome addition to libraries everywhere, and sure to become a ready reference source....The book might even be a useful addition to the disciplinary literature for undergraduates in that it provides an initial source for examining specific archaeologists and provides excellent citations for more in-depth reading and research." -- *Historical Archaeology*

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About the Author

Brian Fagan is at University of California, Santa Barbara.

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