



The Evolution of Culture: The Development of Civilization to the Fall of Rome

Leslie A White

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One of the major works of twentieth-century anthropological theory, written by one of the discipline's most important, complex, and controversial figures, has not been in print for several years. Now *Evolution of Culture* is again available in paperback, allowing today's generation of anthropologists new access to Leslie White's crucial contribution to the theory of cultural evolution. A new, substantial introduction by Robert Carneiro and Burton J. Brown assess White's historical importance and continuing influence in the discipline. White is credited with reintroducing evolution in a way that had a profound impact on our understanding of the relationship between technology, ecology, and culture in the development of civilizations. A materialist, he was particularly concerned with societies' ability to harness energy as an indicator of progress, and his empirical analysis of this equation covers a vast historical span. Fearlessly tackling the most fundamental questions of culture and society during the cold war, White was frequently a lightning rod both inside and outside the academy. His book will provoke equally potent debates today, and is a key component of any course or reading list in anthropological or archaeological theory and cultural ecology.

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