



The Power of Feasts: From Prehistory to the Present

Brian Hayden

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In this book, Brian Hayden provides the first comprehensive, theoretical work on the history of feasting in pre-industrial societies. As an important barometer of cultural change, feasting is at the forefront of theoretical developments in archaeology. The Power of Feasts chronicles the evolution of the practice from its first perceptible prehistoric presence to modern industrial times. This study explores recurring patterns in the dynamics of feasts as well as linkages to other aspects of culture such as food, personhood, cognition, power, politics, and economics. Analyzing detailed ethnographic and archaeological observations from a wide variety of cultures, including Oceania and Southeast Asia, the Americas, and Eurasia, Hayden illuminates the role of feasts as an invaluable insight into the social and political structures of past societies.

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