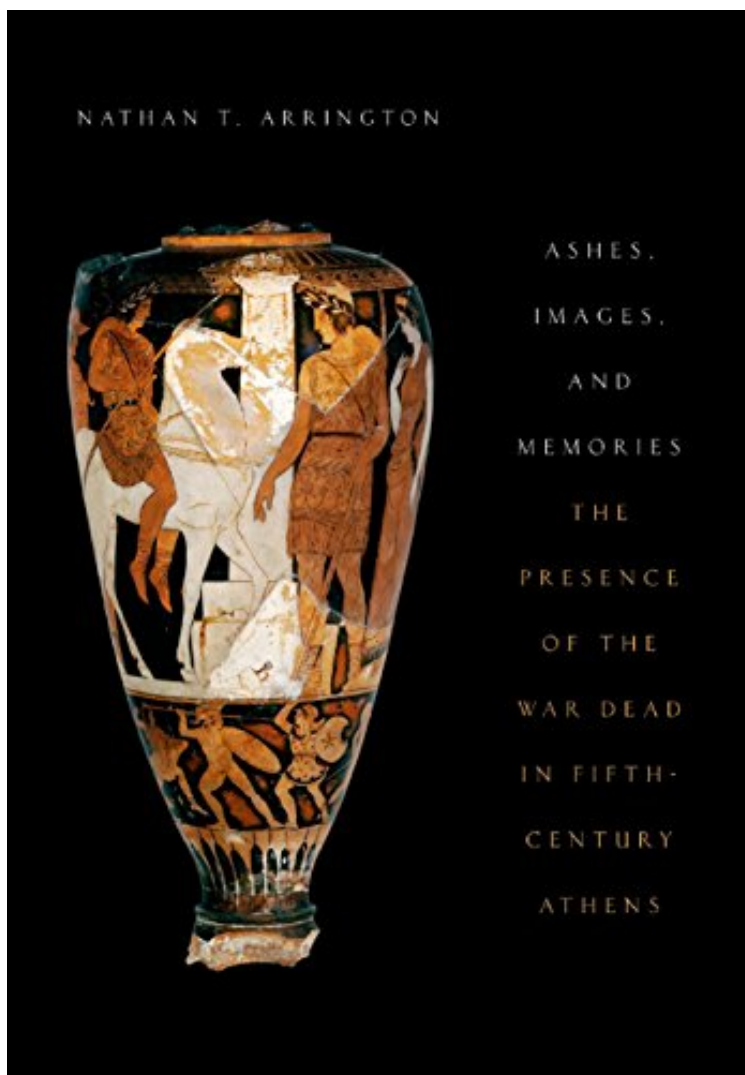


## Ashes, Images, and Memories: The Presence of the War Dead in Fifth-Century Athens

*Nathan T. Arrington*

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**Nathan T. Arrington : Ashes, Images, and Memories: The Presence of the War Dead in Fifth-Century Athens**  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ashes, Images, and Memories: The Presence of the War Dead in Fifth-Century Athens:

Ashes, Images, and Memories argues that the institution of public burial for the war dead and images of the deceased in civic and sacred spaces fundamentally changed how people conceived of military casualties in fifth-century Athens.

In a period characterized by war and the threat of civil strife, the nascent democracy claimed the fallen for the city and commemorated them with rituals and images that shaped a civic ideology of struggle and self-sacrifice on behalf of a unified community. While most studies of Athenian public burial have focused on discrete aspects of the institution, such as the funeral oration, this book broadens the scope. It examines the presence of the war dead in cemeteries, civic and sacred spaces, the home, and the mind, and underscores the role of material culture - from casualty lists to white-ground lekythoi-in mediating that presence. This approach reveals that public rites and monuments shaped memories of the war dead at the collective and individual levels, spurring private commemorations that both engaged with and critiqued the new ideals and the city's claims to the body of the warrior. Faced with a collective notion of "the fallen" families asserted the qualities, virtues, and family links of the individual deceased, and sought to recover opportunities for private commemoration and personal remembrance. Contestation over the presence and memory of the dead often followed class lines, with the elite claiming service and leadership to the community while at the same time reviving Archaic and aristocratic commemorative discourses. Although Classical Greek art tends to be viewed as a monolithic if evolving whole, this book depicts a fragmented and charged visual world.

"Nathan Arrington's erudite and thoughtful book conjoins a mastery of social history, art history, and field archaeology to explain the role of commemorating war dead in Athenian cultural expression and political development. He offers new and convincing interpretations of the chronology and topography of public rituals honoring the fallen. This has big implications for rethinking the iconography and reception of major monuments and the relationship between war, memory, and democracy. While always sensitive to ancient cultural specificity, Arrington draws telling, and often haunting, parallels between the attempts of democracies ancient and modern to represent to themselves the sacrifice and irreplaceable loss of young men who die fulfilling the purposes of their country. This is a major contribution to the literature on war, art, memory, and ritual. It deserves a wide readership within and beyond ancient studies." -- Josiah Ober, Stanford University "As the centenary of the First World War turns people's attention to the revolution in the culture of commemoration of the war dead effected by that conflict, it is highly appropriate that Nathan Arrington should bring to our attention, as never before, the culture of commemorating the war dead developed in fifth-century Athens. Arrington shows how, by giving the war dead a special status marked by word, deed, and monument, the community from which the dead soldiers had come came to see itself differently. This is not only a challenging example of how to make objects and texts, images and actions, speak to each other, but an eloquent testimony to the extraordinarily pervasive power that the dead can come to exercise over all aspects of a community's life." -- Robin Osborne, University of Cambridge "Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn'. Original, meditative, subtle, beautifully crafted, wide-ranging, and brilliantly synthesizing archaeology, art, and text, Arrington's study offers a magisterial new perspective on an enduring human problem. There is nothing as good or as thoughtful on managing the human cost of war as this." -- Andrew Stewart, University of California, Berkeley "...Arrington demonstrates that theoretical debate in classical archaeology can productively coexist with the discipline's empiricist traditions. His analyses are coherent and incisive, from the level of individual objects and sites to the broader debates concerning methodological direction. Readers from different fields and levels of specialization will be amply rewarded." -- The Classical Association of the Middle West and South "This fine and ambitious book is made more valuable by its footnotes and bibliography, a treasure trove for students and scholars alike both to check [Arrington]'s sources and to explore more deeply the many media and questions he tackles. [Arrington]'s elegant prose is a pleasure to read and his thought-provoking examination lingers in the mind long after the book has been finished." --The Classical "...Arrington demonstrates that theoretical debate in classical archaeology can productively coexist with the discipline's empiricist traditions. His analyses are coherent and incisive, from the level of individual objects and sites to the broader debates concerning methodological direction. Readers from different fields and levels of specialization will be amply rewarded." --The Classical Journal About the Author Nathan T. Arrington is an Assistant Professor of Classical Archaeology at Princeton University.