

Abstract

For more than fifty years, bioarchaeology has been a highly complex scientific discipline investigating skeletal finds from archaeological contexts. In the course of its development, bioarchaeology has undergone significant evolution and has split into several geographically and methodologically specific subfields. The present work provides a brief introduction to the American concept of bioarchaeology, its historical development, and the methodological and theoretical framework and underlying themes it addresses. Extending and counterpointing the theoretical introduction are fourteen articles I co-authored that represent multidisciplinary research from the Czech Republic. The purpose of this juxtaposition is to compare the state of our scientific retrospective environment with the distinctly dynamic environment of American bioarchaeology. From this comparison emerges a number of problems shared by our and the American environments and different approaches to solving them. The paper highlights several elements of American bioarchaeology whose adoption into our environment could bring about a more significant implementation of bioarchaeology in our retrospective environment.