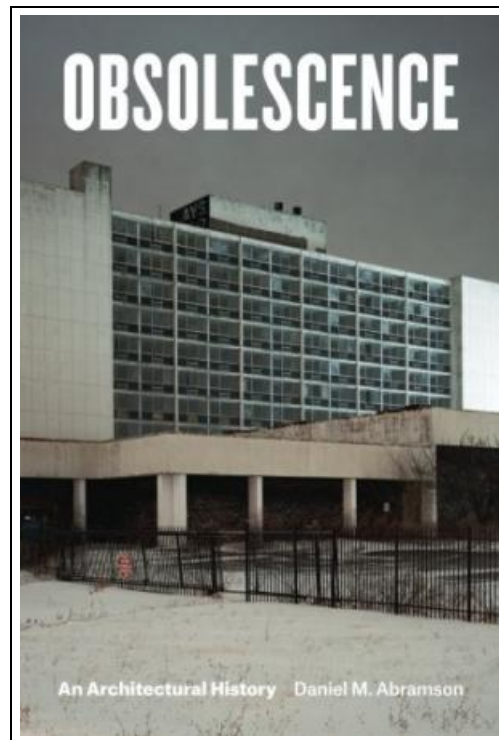


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The University of Chicago Press, United States, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . This book usually ship within 10-15 business days and we will endeavor to dispatch orders quicker than this where possible. Brand New Book. In our architectural pursuits, we often seem to be in search of something newer, grander, or more efficient and this phenomenon is not novel. In the spring of 1910 hundreds of workers labored day and night to demolish the Gillender Building in New York, once the loftiest office tower in the world, in order to make way for a taller skyscraper. The New York Times puzzled over those who would sacrifice the thirteen-year-old structure, as ruthlessly as though it were some ancient shack. In New York alone, the Gillender joined the original Grand Central Terminal, the Plaza Hotel, the Western Union Building, and the Tower Building on the list of just one generation s razed metropolitan monuments. In the innovative and wide-ranging *Obsolence*, Daniel M. Abramson investigates this notion of architectural expendability and the logic by which buildings lose their value and utility. The idea that the new necessarily outperforms and makes superfluous the old, Abramson argues, helps people come to terms with modernity and capitalism s fast-paced change. *Obsolence*, then, gives an unsettling experience purpose and meaning. Belief in obsolescence, as Abramson shows, also profoundly affects architectural design. In the 1960s, many architects worldwide accepted the inevitability of obsolescence, experimenting with flexible, modular designs, from open-plan schools, offices, labs, and museums to vast megastructural frames and indeterminate building complexes. Some architects went so far as to embrace obsolescence s liberating promise to cast aside convention and habit, envisioning expendable short-life buildings that embodied human choice and freedom. Others, we learn, were horrified by the implications of this ephemerality and waste, and...



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