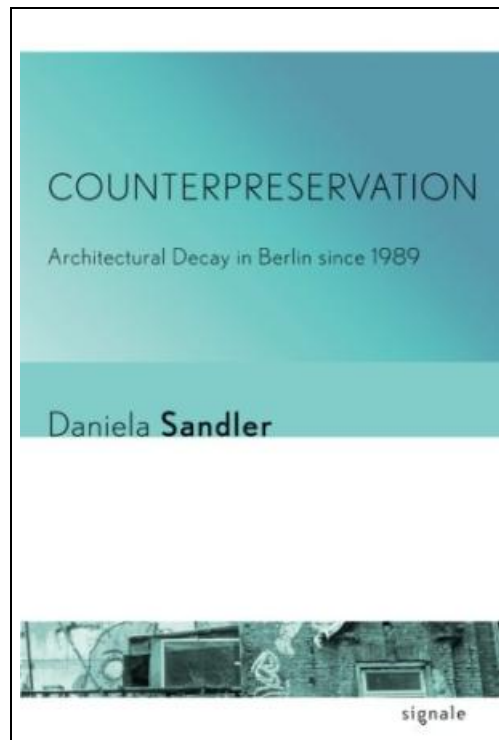


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COUNTERPRESERVATION: ARCHITECTURAL DECAY IN BERLIN SINCE 1989 (SIGNALE: MODERN GERMAN LETTERS, CULTURES, AND THOUGHT)

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Cornell University Press and Cornell University Library. Paperback. Condition: New. 306 pages. In Berlin, decrepit structures do not always denote urban blight. Decayed buildings are incorporated into everyday life as residences, exhibition spaces, shops, offices, and as leisure space. As nodes of public dialogue, they serve as platforms for dissenting views about the future and past of Berlin. In this book, Daniela Sandler introduces the concept of counterpreservation as a way to understand this intentional appropriation of decrepitude. The embrace of decay is a sign of Berlins iconoclastic rebelliousness, but it has also been incorporated into the mainstream economy of tourism and development as part of the citys countercultural cachet. Sandler presents the possibilities and shortcomings of counterpreservation as a dynamic force in Berlin and as a potential concept for other cities. Counterpreservation is part of Berlins fabric: in the citys famed Hausprojekte (living projects) such as the Kpi, Tuntenhaus, and KA 86; in cultural centers such as the Haus Schwarzenberg, the Schokoladen, and the legendary, now defunct Tacheles; in memorials and museums; and even in commerce and residences. The appropriation of ruins is a way of carving out affordable spaces for housing, work, and cultural activities. It is also a visual statement against gentrification, and a complex representation of history, with the marks of different periodsthe nineteenth century, World War II, postwar division, unificationon display for all to see. Counterpreservation exemplifies an everyday urbanism in which citizens shape private and public spaces with their own hands, but it also influences more formal designs, such as the Topography of Terror, the Berlin Wall Memorial, and Daniel Libeskind's unbuilt redevelopment proposal for a site peppered with ruins of Nazi barracks. By featuring these examples, Sandler questions conventional notions of architectural authorship and points toward the value of participatory environments. This item...

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