

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ETHNOGRAPHY AMONG MACKENZIE BASIN DENE, CANADA. By ROBERT R. JANES. Calgary, Alberta: The Arctic Institute of North America, 1983. Technical Paper No. 28. ix + 124 p. incl. tables, figs., photos, bib., Appendices. Softcover. Cdn\$15.00.

Archaeological ethnography, or ethnoarchaeology, is the "...study of living societies from an archaeological perspective" (p.4). The ethnoarchaeologist observes the interaction between behavior and material objects with the goal of "...understanding how and why material remains come to occur where they finally do" (p. 4). In other words, the ethnoarchaeologist documents the formation of archaeological sites. This approach enables archaeologists to examine some of the assumptions that have been made when interpreting archaeological sites and, it is hoped, will lead to more accurate reconstructions of the past lifeways represented in the archaeological record.

With this goal in mind, Robert and Priscilla Janes conducted field work with the Willow Lake Dene during the spring months of 1974 and 1975. This group, consisting of approximately six families, occupies a permanent hunting-fishing-trapping camp (located some 25 air miles north-northeast of Fort Norman, N.W.T.) during four to six months of their seasonal round.

Using an eclectic methodology that included participant observation, interviewing, and mapping, the Janeses were able to document numerous events and patterns of behavior relevant to archaeological interpretation. Among these are patterns of refuse disposal, the construction and use of structures, the use of living space for activity performance, and the pattern of male and female activity performance. It was discovered that assumptions commonly made by archaeologists concerning these phenomena would be spurious if applied to the Willow Lake Dene.

First, it was found that refuse tends to be removed from the actual living area during daily sweeping of houses, periodic raking and burning of outside living areas, and feeding of dogs which are confined to dog yards. Such methods of refuse disposal would confuse a future archaeologist analyzing the spatial relations of recovered artifacts with the intent of discovering the location of activity areas. In addition, the use of garbage pits in some cases serves to mix refuse from more than one household, and the practice of using the river for refuse disposal would further distort the archaeological record.

Confusion would arise also when interpreting the pattern of house construction. Three types of houses — log cabins, canvas wall-tents, and tipis — are currently built and used by the Willow Lakers. Variation in construction technique, as well as the scavenging of construction material (and even the relocation of an entire cabin from across the river), would cause difficulties in archaeological interpretation and could lead to the erroneous conclusion that the community was inhabited by more than one culture group. Furthermore, it was found that all these structures tended to be used for the same purposes. That is, a wide range of overlapping activities are performed in each of the three types of habitation structures.

With regard to the spaces outside structures, it was discovered that though many activities are performed in front of habitation structures, this space is not defined differentially — there are no special-purpose activity areas, and numerous activities are performed in the same area. This is contrary to the assumption often made in attempting to define the locus of activity performance on the basis of the provenience of excavated artifacts.

It was also found that at Willow Lake some activities are considered to be the special domain of one or the other sex. However, with only a few exceptions (e.g., setting up canvas wall-tents by men and processing large-mammal hides by women) most activities are performed by both sexes. Furthermore, because there are no areas specifically reserved for male or female activities (with the exception of storage of some bush equipment used by males), the locus of sex-specific activity performance overlaps. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to identify areas as being the domain of either men or women, using the criterion of artifact spatial distribution. This also is contrary to assumptions sometimes made by archaeologists.

Although most of the findings of this study are negative in the sense that they reveal some of the weaknesses of archaeological methods of interpreting cultural remains, it is important that such weaknesses be revealed. The raising of these questions should lead to a healthy re-examination of some common but possibly incorrect assumptions. Janes's call for more cooperation in this endeavor between archaeologists and archaeological ethnographers is particularly timely.

Beyond the presentation of the specific findings at Willow Lake, this monograph provides for the non-Dene specialist a succinct introduction to Dene ethnography. At the same time, for the non-ethnoarchaeologist it offers an equally concise introduction to the field of archaeological ethnography.

This monograph should be read by every field archaeologist and belongs in the library of every student of archaeological ethnography.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS BY THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE IN ALASKA. Edited by EDWIN S. HALL, JR. and ROBERT GAL. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1982. Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska 20(1-2). 191 p. Softcover. US\$16.00.

Formerly known as PET-4, the National Petroleum Reserve of extreme northwestern Alaska is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (surface) and the U.S. Geological Survey (subsurface exploration). The present volume of ten papers reports some of the results of a coordinated cooperative mitigation and cultural resource program undertaken by these two agencies during the period 1977-1981, but it is not intended to be a description of the program.

"A provisional view of North Alaskan culture history" by the volume editors opens this series of papers. Discussion is devoted to archaeological systematics. This two-page essay reinforces my impression that among prehistorians each person follows his own dictates and that systematics (taxonomy) will be a perennial concern. Among its innovations are the introduction of a new cultural tradition: Ilatka. The continent-wide Thule tradition needs such subdivisions, but I have reservations regarding use of an unfamiliar linguistic term for one.

Largely through necessity, the archaeologists concentrated on small single-component surficial sites or larger sites with separate loci that could be dealt with as small sites. Hall writes on the potential significance of small sites for yielding useful information, some of which would come under the category "archaeology as anthropology." The analysis of one site is presented. A Norton cultural placement is evident, but looking beyond this single site, which by itself tells us little about Norton cultural adaptation, Hall envisages the analysis of several small sites and comparison with winter village sites to obtain a more complete understanding of Norton culture in the area.

Craig Gerlach illustrates the behavioral/technological approach to small sites. The method used is conventional technological analysis taken to a highly detailed level. This, Gerlach states (p. 48), "should be helpful to those interested in securing a more detailed data base from which broader comparisons can be made and regional perspectives developed." However, by not carrying the analysis forward to discover patterns and behavioral correlates in the archaeological record — which is the approach contrasted to the specifically typological/culture-historical one — the author leaves us without demonstrating any of the proposed uses of small-site archaeology.

The treatment of 11 discrete clusters of the Tunalik site by Robert Gal presents another example of the analysis of small undated sites. The spatial array of these clusters suggests separate but contemporary camps or activity loci. Analysis of the numerous microblades leads the author to question the usefulness of statistical descriptions of microblades as culture-historical indices. Although other artifacts indicate mainly the American Paleo-Arctic tradition, there is a certain diversity in the assemblage suggestive of later temporal placement and possible interrelationships between the American Paleo-Arctic and Northern Archaic traditions. Gal suggests that this possibility be examined further.

Major excavations at the Lisburne site are described by Michael Bowers. Project objectives included establishment of a "landmark" culture-historical sequence. Implement types recovered appear to span the entire sequence of northwestern interior Alaskan prehistory. However, several cultural components sometimes are present in a single area and radiocarbon dating is not available. Establishment of the local sequence accordingly remains dependent on the results from other areas.

Lanceolate points predominate among implements recovered from the "Mesa" site. The limited typological scope of the assemblage suggests a special use occupation to Michael Kunz: one radiocarbon-dated to 7620 years ago. The points resemble ones from both relatively late sites and possibly early undated sites of the greater region, and in my estimation conform to concepts of late Paleo-Indian points. This interpretation, which carries in train speculation on North American prehistory (not discussed by Kunz) is en-

hanced by the radiocarbon date. Richard Reanier finds that the pollen spectrum associated with a probable cultural streak at the shallow Mesa site is compatible with that date.

Excavation of late nineteenth-century houses near Point Belcher adds further detail to the previously incomplete description of the Point Barrow house type. The new data are integrated with previous ethnographic and archaeological information by Dale Slaughter, who notes that although the houses he investigated date to a period of rapid cultural change, the house form had remained remarkably stable.

The volume ends with an Appendix of radiocarbon dates for Alaska north of 68° latitude. Robert Gal explicates dates for which there is concern regarding context, and presents previously unpublished dates including ones which had been "deleted" through past archaeological interpretations.

Each of these papers could have been published as an independent article, but together they work towards removing one of the last question marks from the prehistoric map of Alaska. They draw notice to the archaeology of interior regions and refocus attention away from large coastal Eskimo midden sites. Although the papers are local in scope, they deal with archaeological groups which have broader expressions in the interior and along the coastal regions of Alaska and the Yukon Territory, probably from Paleo-Indian times to the end of prehistory. Among this temporally variegated serving of the stuff of prehistory, spiced with occasional attempts to break new ground and with challenges of old interpretations, there is much that deserves the attention of serious students of northern prehistory.

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DOCUMENTING ALASKAN HISTORY: GUIDE TO FEDERAL ARCHIVES RELATING TO ALASKA. By GEORGE S. ULIBARRI. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1982. Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 23. vii + 300 p. + Appendices, index, reproductions, photos. Hardcover. No price indicated.

The copy of *Documenting Alaskan History: Guide to Federal Archives Relating to Alaska*, by George S. Ulibarri, read to produce this review contains a Foreword written by Dr. George C. West, Editor, University of Alaska Press. This Foreword is printed on a sheet of paper slightly, but noticeably, smaller than the other pages of the book; it is also pasted along the outer edge to a printed page corresponding in size to the rest of the pages of the volume. As you turn the page to view the rest of the book, a ballooning effect occurs, allowing one to ascertain that the page to which this Foreword is pasted also contains printing. With judicious handling, this first visible Foreword may be detached from its cohort to reveal another Foreword by Dr. West. The effort to accomplish this feat is not worth it, however, for the only difference between the two is that the word "staff" appears at the end of line four and again at the beginning of line five from the bottom of the page. After the book has been perused completely, it is obvious that this error has little or nothing to do with the substance of the work; the time and energy that went into trying to correct this repetition certainly seems overdone. It detracts from the appearance of the book; implants a fear that the rest of the work might be reflective of similar poor judgment, and does not aid materially in reaching the volume's objectives or improving its contents.

This excessive attention to the correction of a minor error is paralleled in the Foreword itself by Dr. West's claims for the work in question. In the third paragraph of his Foreword, Dr. West appears to be asserting that *Documenting Alaskan History* so identifies the Alaskan material in the National Archives as to obviate the need for researchers to seek additional assistance in the completion and submission of the forms necessary to retrieve the requested documents from storage for research use; help would appear to be not required either from staff members of the National Archives, or from other sources, for this accomplishment. This is an exaggeration at best. It could possibly be correct if the book were more technical in nature — with more of the content of a detailed handbook — but it is not true as the work now stands. One crucial ingredient missing from the work — if it was intended to provide the service suggested by Dr. West — is reference to checklists and indices for some of the cited collections, as well as explanations as to how such check-lists and indices should be properly consulted. The fact that some collections have a watershed about the year 1916, with pre-1916 file numbers being duplicated in post-1916

years for altogether different items, should have been more clearly presented. When requesting a file from a collection, such as "General Records of the Department of the Navy (R.G.80)", a notation as to whether the file is pre-1916 must be made if retrieval of the correct document or documents is to be assured. Although seemingly trivial on the surface, some attention should have been given to the forms used by the National Archives: how to complete them properly, where to submit them with respect to particular documents, and what constitutes the normal waiting period between the submission of a request and the delivery of wanted material. If *Documenting Alaskan History* corresponded to the expectations of Dr. West, it should have advised its clients to avoid this unproductive waiting period by placing orders a day or two in advance with the proper official. The situation that for some collections there are no checklists or indices, and that a file may encompass many boxes of documents, should also have been more clearly presented to show the magnitude of the research effort needed to mine some of the collections listed in the book: Much more emphasis would have had to be placed on procedures which must be used to retrieve the records, as well as on the tools to use them properly, if *Documenting Alaskan History* were to play the role allotted to it by Dr. West. *Documenting Alaskan History* is not detailed enough to replace the checklist, the index, or the assistance of an appropriate National Archives staff member, in the solving of the puzzle regarding the identifying and the retrieval of documents needed for a particular Alaskan research project.

A more balanced description and justification for this work is given in the Introduction written by the person listed as author, Mr. George S. Ulibarri. In this section, it is noted that the book is arranged under twelve subject headings (as given in the Table of Contents) and describes only selected materials. Perhaps because of its topical format, complete coverage of material in the National Archives was not contemplated; only the more significant record groups were included in the book. It is noted also that this limited coverage was designed to show the different types of records available. As Ulibarri writes, "References to particular transactions and documents are included primarily for illustrative purposes, and because they typify the documentation in large record series. Others are mentioned because they provide interesting examples of what can be found among the records". This modest position of Ulibarri is a far cry from the assertions of Dr. West and is in consonance with the work itself. *Documenting Alaskan History* is, in fact, an interesting portrayal of Alaskan history as revealed by an impressionistic presentation of material dealing with the subject in the National Archives. Graced by the inclusion of a number of facsimiles of important documents and by some photographs (the selection criteria for which are not given), the work is a reflection of pride that the National Archives does contain so much material on and about Alaska. For persons interested in Alaskan history, but not yet involved in an Alaskan historical research project or familiar with the National Archives, its association of topics with the way material in the National Archives is arranged by record group is valuable for the encouragement it should give to investigate further the matters discussed in its twelve sections. It may also be used to advantage by historians in the field as a guide and mentor to collections and items they might have missed in their more specialized examinations. It may also serve as a stimulation for ideas and new approaches after a line of investigation seems to be getting flat or running dry. For persons mistakenly assuming the title of the work to indicate that some sort of continuous narrative is contained within its covers, it offers self-contained vignettes of Alaskan history that may be read within a relatively short space of time. An example of this refreshment is given on page 12 in a section marked in the margin as 2.2.76 and titled "Records of Boundary and Claims Commissions and Arbitrations (R.G.76)". This section covers almost three pages and addresses the issues involved in delineating the Alaskan boundary between Canada and the United States as reflected in the records held by the National Archives. The references to photographs are of special interest. Unlike most research guides, *Documenting Alaskan History* may be read for pleasure as well as profit.

Viewed from the perspective of the author, and discounting the claims of Dr. West, *Documenting Alaskan History* is a success; in other words, it meets its objective. There are, however, a few minor reservations with respect to this conclusion. One is hard put to understand why each entry is preceded by what appear to be code numbers, such as 2.1.11 before "General Records of the United States Government (R.G.11)". The fact that the Table of Contents is arranged in this fashion is offset by the lack of any reference to these numbers in the index and by the unnecessary computer print-out look they give to the book. Some entries are very brief with no explanation given for this situation. On pages 21, 69, and 87, for example, only two lines (less the title) are allowed for the records of the "Office of Territories (R.G.126)". Why some entries list file numbers and others do not also remains a mystery — unless one assumes that the whim or whimsy of the author is responsible. Also, at least one Record Group, R.G.119, has been overlooked, both in the