

ARCTIC ANIMALS AND THEIR ADAPTATIONS TO LIFE ON THE EDGE. By ARNOLDUS SCHYTTE BLIX. Trondheim, Norway: Tapir Academic Press, 2005. ISBN 82-519-2050-7. 296 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., bib., appendices, index. Hardbound. NOK 395.

The author's goal was to produce an introductory overview of the Arctic region and its animals, since such a text was lacking during his 25 years of teaching the subject. I shared this goal, and looked forward to finding a useful text for undergraduate students in my University of the Arctic courses.

Chapters cover the Arctic region, late Cenozoic glaciations, marine invertebrates and fish, marine mammals, land invertebrates, freshwater communities, amphibians and reptiles (a one-page chapter noting the lack of these in the Arctic), terrestrial birds and mammals, summer migrants to the Arctic, and physiological adaptations. An appendix offers an outline classification of animals.

The introductory chapter rather gallops through the physical and ecological characteristics of the Arctic region, giving the basics and including some good illustrations. It will be useful for teaching purposes, but will require additional explanation for undergraduates. The chapter defers to other "excellent" textbooks on the subject, but gives no references. This happens again in the chapter on birds.

The author's real interest is evident in the last chapter on physiological adaptations—fully twice as long as most of the other chapters and very detailed. There is some fascinating information in this chapter, but it would, I suspect, be more suitable for more senior undergraduate science students, given its level of detail and technical terminology (on p. 226, for instance, brown adipose fat is "characterized by multilocular distribution of its triglyceride" and has "an alternative mechanism for dissipating the proton electrochemical gradient").

The book is rich in illustrations, many of them very good. Sometimes, however, these are not well linked to the text, nor explained in much detail. Editing is needed to correct many typographical or usage mistakes, to ensure for instance that map labels and numbers match the text, or that units and terms are defined. Several chapters end suddenly, with no wrap-up or connection to the larger theme of the book or to the following chapter. The final chapter, for example, ends with a paragraph about light adaptation by Svalbard ptarmigan, which are contrasted to the Emperor penguin.

The book, and its emphasis on the last chapter, clearly draw on Blix's lengthy research career, and he writes in a personable style, tossing in the occasional humorous quip or story. However, the majority of references, even in the major chapter on physiological adaptations, are from before the mid-1980s. He fails to mention some other key introductory texts on Arctic ecology, such as those by S.B. Young (1989), B. Sage (1986), E.C. Pielou (1994), or B. Stonehouse (1989).

In summary, I was disappointed. My first-year Northern Studies students, tasked with reading the book as well, gave it a cool reception.

REFERENCES

- PIELOU, E.C. 1994. A naturalist's guide to the Arctic. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
 SAGE, B.L. 1986. The Arctic and its wildlife. New York: Facts on File Publications.
 STONEHOUSE, B. 1989. Polar ecology. Glasgow and London: Blackie.
 YOUNG, S.B. 1989. To the Arctic: An introduction to the far northern world. New York: Wiley.

Heather M. Myers
International Studies/Northern Studies
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way
Prince George, British Columbia, Canada
V2N 4Z9
Myers@unbc.ca

CIRCUMPOLAR LIVES AND LIVELIHOOD: A COMPARATIVE ETHNOARCHAEOLOGY OF GENDER AND SUBSISTENCE. Edited by ROBERT JARVENPA and HETTY JO BRUMBACH. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0-8032-2606-7. xii + 330 p., maps, b&w illus., index. Hardbound. US\$55.00.

In this tightly conceived volume, editors Robert Jarvenpa (a cultural anthropologist) and Hetty Jo Brumbach (an archaeologist) integrate four ethnoarchaeological studies of the gendered subsistence landscape of some of the world's best-known circumpolar foragers: Chipewyan, Khanty, Sámi, and Inupiaq. Their explicit goal, clearly explained in the Introduction, is to articulate a "gendered ecology" or context-specific typology linking sexual divisions of labor to their visible signatures, which is summarized in Table 10.2 (p. 312–313). Because each case study carefully adheres to Spector's "task differentiation analysis" framework (Conkey and Spector, 1984; Spector, 1991), the results are uniformly comparable. The format of each case study is the same, consisting of two complementary chapters. The first chapter presents a fine-tuned ethnography that pays special attention to the interrelationship of gender roles, intra- and inter-site landscape use, the *chaîne opératoire* of core subsistence practices, and associated material culture. The second chapter undertakes a detailed task differentiation analysis, which characterizes 1) the social unit, 2) task setting, 3) task time, and 4) characteristic material culture and architectural features of at least two interrelated subsistence activities. The second chapter always concludes with some "Archaeological Implications." The editors do a fantastic job of maintaining

consistency, and the three other contributors, Glavatskaya (Khanty), Pennanen (Sámi), and Zane Jolles (Iñupiaq), take direction well.

I've always found Spector's task differentiation framework problematic because of 1) the undue emphasis on the linear sequencing of discretely conceived tasks, and 2) the heuristic separation of subsistence and gender dynamics from power. Nonetheless, this volume employs the concept effectively. I especially appreciate that the ethnographic chapters readily acknowledge the significant impact wrought by colonization, missionization, state politics, industrialism, and the modern global market system. Only Glavatskaya's ethnography insists on characterizing the Khanty as still living a relatively unchanged and "traditional" way of life since the Bronze Age (p. 156)—in spite of his catalogue of pre- and Soviet-era policies of collectivization and forced relocation and the more recent ecological impact of the oil and gas industry. Of course, when one willingly acknowledges the influences of modernity on "traditional" foraging cultures, then any archaeological implications generated by a task differentiation analysis must be taken with a grain of salt. There is an important lesson to be learned here, however, about *circumventing* the denial of coevalness (Fabian, 1983) so common in ethnoarchaeological studies. In the concluding chapter, Brumbach and Jarvenpa acknowledge and make use of the undeniable impact of industrialization, the rise and fall of the Soviet system, and the involvement of these communities in the modern cash economy, to offer intriguing suggestions about the gendered nature of the transition from a foraging to a husbandry/domesticating mode of production.

All four case studies employ, with consistency, the editors' bush-centered v. village-centered model to draw out the gendering of these spatial patterns and the "gear" and architectural facilities most likely to be preserved in the archaeological record. One general conclusion derived from this comparative ethnoarchaeological study is that neither the type of (work) site nor the activities undertaken at a site are gender neutral. This volume makes very clear that while some circumpolar foragers have gender ideologies and proscriptions about what men and women can or cannot do, the rule of everyday practice is situational flexibility. Only by grossly over-generalizing the observations described in these pages could one possibly read the gendered attributions summarized in Table 10.2 and go out and expect to "dig up" women's or men's work areas, tools, and the like.

Another important observation generated by this volume relates to the way we define "hunting" and seek its (gendered) material correlates in the ground. From the delightful reminiscences provided by both women and men informants in all four ethnographies, it is clear that these "traditional" foragers do not define hunting as Westerners do. As Gifford-Gonzalez (1993) argued more than a decade ago, we define hunting (too) narrowly—as the (male) act of killing big game. In contrast, Chipewyan,

Khanty, Sámi, and Iñupiaq informants consistently describe hunting broadly—as involving not only the physical killing of large game, but also the tracking, trapping, butchering, transporting, processing, drying, cooking, and even storing of both large and small animals. By indigenous standards, then, women are intimately involved in all facets of hunting. An important corollary is that if we continue to define hunting as narrowly as we have, then this highly touted aspect of men's work, in the bush, leaves practically no archaeological traces! Thus contrary to Isaac's (1978) famous assertion (that it's too bad that women's work does not preserve as well as men's), this volume demonstrates repeatedly that it is the *chaîne opératoire* of women's hunting-related work that makes it into the archaeological record.

Also not surprising, but here demonstrated repeatedly, is the observation that most (but again, not all) women's work, though universally more arduous and time-consuming than men's, unfolds within the confines of or within a 1–3 km radius around habitation areas. This supports Brown's (1970) early suggestion, though it is now clear that child rearing is not the only reason women don't traipse into the bush as far or as often as men.

For me, one of the more intriguing archaeological implications stems from the editors' embracing the fact that modern foragers exist within the globalizing forces of first-world economics. They have good reason to suggest that in prehistory it might have been the reorganization and renegotiation of gender relationships and divisions of labor that led to (rather than resulted from) the increasing size, complexity, and permanence of villages concurrent with the development of animal husbandry, plant domestication, and new patterns of work and exchange. At least this is what the histories of all four societies indicate. Similarly, Pennanen's ethnohistory of the Sámi suggests that during times of wholesale economic transformation (in particular, from a foraging to a domesticating mode of production), people often maintain both subsistence systems simultaneously. Archaeologically, this observation leads to an important caveat: what may look to us like two different cultures—one "still" foraging, the other evolved into a more complex lifeway—may actually be one multifaceted system spread across the landscape.

The subject matter, organization, and editorial control exercised in pulling together this volume make it a "must" for academics interested in circumpolar peoples. It is also a great classroom text for courses on the ethnography, ethnoarchaeology, or archaeology of foragers. Each case study is valuable in its own right, and the complementary chapters (one ethnographic, the other presenting the task differentiation analysis) work well as stand-alones. But the editors' Introduction and concluding chapters do more than simply tie the studies together—they draw out tantalizing and well-reasoned generalities while tempering each with the caveat that archaeologists desiring a gender attribution "road map" should look elsewhere. After reading this volume, it is my hope that archaeological research on

the gendered nature of divisions of labor across space and through time will become more circumspect, more empirically and ethnographically grounded, and more carefully reasoned. This volume is a great role model in that regard.

REFERENCES

- BROWN, J. 1970. A note on the division of labor by sex. *American Anthropologist* 72:1073–1078.
- CONKEY, M.W., and SPECTOR, J.D. 1984. Archaeology and the study of gender. *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory* 7:1–38.
- FABIAN, J. 1983. *Time and the other: How anthropology makes its object*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- GIFFORD-GONZALEZ, D. 1993. Gaps in ethnoarchaeological analyses of butchery: Is gender an issue? In: Hudson, J., ed. *From bones to behavior: Ethnoarchaeological and experimental contributions to the interpretation of faunal remains*. Occasional Paper No. 21. Carbondale: Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University. 181–199.
- ISAAC, G. 1978. The food-sharing behavior of protohuman hominids. *Scientific American* 238(4):90–108.
- SPECTOR, J. 1991. What this awl means: Toward a feminist archaeology. In: Gero, J., and Conkey, M., eds. *Engendering archaeology: Women and prehistory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 388–406.

Marcia-Anne Dobres
Department of Anthropology
University of Maine-Orono
Orono, Maine, U.S.A.
04469
MADobres@maine.edu

A LAND GONE LONESOME. By DAN O'NEILL. New York: Counterpoint Press, 2006. ISBN 1-5823-344-5. 245 p., maps, afterword, index. Hardbound. US\$24.95; Cdn\$32.95.

Superficially, this is a composite of several canoe trips the author made in different years between Dawson City, Yukon, and Circle City, Alaska. Each trip contributed to an account that lingers vividly over places, people, and events (prehistoric, historic, and contemporary) along this section of the Yukon River.

At a deeper level, O'Neill's sweeps through space and time can impress readers in several ways. Some will be impressed with the improbable suite of tectonic, glacial, and erosion events that gave rise to one of the world's great rivers (p. 23–25). Others will marvel at how many different explorers contributed pieces to the geographic puzzle formed by dendritic tributaries to the Yukon River between 1778 and 1883 (from James Cook, p. 14, to Frederick Schwatka, p. 31). Yet others will note the subtle yet significant differences between the public policies of two

nations and their respective territorial governments toward the contiguous land and river systems coursing through this U.S.-Canada boundary region ("Canadians have an impressive knack for 'stick handling' around dicey problems" [p. 44]).

A Land Gone Lonesome is peopled with characters of near-legendary dimensions. The menu includes the Liken brothers of the Prohibition era (1920–33) in the United States and the legacy of their Sourtoe Cocktail in Dawson City (p. 2–3), ill-fated Dick Cook of Eagle country (p. 92–117), and Joe Vogler's astonishing rise and fall as a maverick miner and politician in Alaska (p. 202–220). Readers unfamiliar with the region might entertain momentary doubts as to whether these were real or fictional figures.

Not far into this book you begin to sense that something irreplaceable has vanished from this country, although the author does not rush readers into defining that something. Percy DeWolfe, for example, spent 35 years delivering the mail between Dawson and Eagle, back and forth, summer and winter, from 1915 through 1950. It took a letter about four days to make the 100-mile trip either way by dogteam or riverboat. After the U.S. and Canadian postal systems replaced Percy's surface delivery system with airplanes in 1951, that 100-mile, 4-day trip turned into a 3000-mile odyssey through Whitehorse, Vancouver, Seattle, and back north via Anchorage and Fairbanks. Now, although it is moved by high-flying aircraft that reach more than half the speed of sound, a letter sent from Dawson to Eagle spends 10 days in transit, and often longer.

Historically, some people could travel and live quite comfortably throughout this region. Of course others, such as prospectors, endured nearly unimaginable hardships. The contrast between comfort and hardship can be startling. After the purchase of Alaska from Imperial Russia in 1867, an 88-year reign of sternwheelers plying the Yukon River ensued, during which passengers expected various degrees of luxury. Roadhouses punctuated the river traveler's routes at regular intervals, especially after the Klondike Gold Discovery of 1896. After a strenuous winter day's travel by dogsled, the mail carrier and other wayfarers could rely on comfortable lodgings and hot meals throughout this land. For the comfortable folks of the early 20th century, it would have been unthinkable to take strenuous canoe trips like those the author took half a century after the last of the Yukon sternwheelers was beached in 1955.

At its deepest—and perhaps most deeply troubling—level, *A Land Gone Lonesome* needs to be understood as the *encore* to John McPhee's (1977) book, *Coming into the Country*. McPhee examined events and people in Alaska at a watershed in the state's historical development. The Trans-Alaska (oil) pipeline was under construction while McPhee traveled the state. More relevant to O'Neill's contribution, however, the second stage of the land distribution foreseen in the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was taking place in the form of selection of lands