

key figures and their replacement by others was central in resolving the wolf-sheep conflict at McKinley. That has a nice evolutionary ring to it. Because the book is about the development of ideas, the reader cannot help thinking about what is next: the conflict over wolf management in Alaska or elsewhere is far from over. If new ideas are lined up for the next generation to take on, perhaps they will include the emerging challenge of buffering, linking, and networking parks with protection for large, space-demanding carnivores.

Rawson is a good, clean writer: the book is easily understood, exceedingly well researched and referenced, and full of intrigue as you follow the interplay of personalities.

*John B. Theberge*  
Adjunct Professor of Ecology  
University of Waterloo  
RR #3, Site 25, Compartment 82  
Oliver, British Columbia, Canada  
VOH 1T0

#### ASPECTS OF ARCTIC AND SUB-ARCTIC HISTORY.

Edited by INGI SIGURÐSSON and JÓN SKAPTASON. Proceedings of the International Congress on the History of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic Region, Reykjavík, 18–21 June 1998. Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 2000. 623 p., 30 maps, b&w illus. Softbound. US\$30.00.

This book incorporates all but a few of the papers presented at the 1998 International Congress on the History of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic Region. All the essays are in English, and the editors deserve much credit for maintaining a high linguistic standard without falling for the temptation to interfere with individual writing styles by imposing their own elegant English.

The conference, held in Reykjavik under the generous auspices of several Icelandic cultural institutions, drew scholars from many countries and disciplines and covered a wide, but uneven range of topics, only a few of which can be highlighted here. Faced with such an eclectic spectrum of subjects and scholarly approaches, the conference organizers and editors, Ingi Sigurðsson and Jón Skaptason, created three broad categories: “Centre and Periphery,” “Indigenous Culture and External Influences,” and “Farming.” Added to 20 single lectures on a variety of topics were round-table discussions with short papers on “Historical Sites and Heritage Management,” “Preindustrial Navigation in the North,” and “The Position of the Karelian Autonomous Socialist Republic within the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 30s.” This review will not use the editors’ categories, however, because the link to the various headings—or even to the volume’s title—is decidedly tenuous in several otherwise illuminating papers.

Not all of the essays are crisply argued, but as a group they demonstrate why the Arctic and Subarctic areas of the world deserve the attention of historians and archaeologists, as well

as of politicians, administrators, and scientists. This is especially true given the strong reminder that in the Far North, as elsewhere, “history” has so often been mined to establish political and economic “entitlement” to one region or another.

Several contributors illuminate political and administrative problems arising from tension between national and provincial entities or between officialdom and individuals. In “Centre and Periphery in Wartime: Iceland and Denmark during the Napoleonic Wars,” the Icelandic historian Anna Agnarsdóttir deftly interweaves all of these strands. Balanced in its approach and as well informed about Danish and English politics as about the Icelanders’ measures against famine, her article is alone in spotlighting English participation in North Atlantic concerns over the past several centuries. Jens E. Olesen’s “Iceland in the Politics of the Kalmar Union” is so meticulous in outlining the part played by the Hanseatic League that the short shrift given to the English position is likely to leave some readers with a sense of imbalance.

The Canadian scholars K.S. Coates and W.R. Morrison define the geographic scope of these conference papers in terms of temperature: “Without winter, the North is only a direction, not a place; the two are thus inseparable” (p. 409–410). Put differently, isotherms (imaginary lines on a map indicating areas with the same mean temperature) are as important as latitudes in determining what constitutes Arctic and Subarctic regions. A number of the papers in the present volume therefore stress the impact of climatic conditions on such issues as demography, social customs, agriculture, fishing, forestry, trade, and communications. These essays on basic economic issues form an important and satisfying part of the book.

Creating a coherent narrative about past and present development in northern regions demands a multidisciplinary approach. Documentary evidence—the historian’s traditional source material—is often absent even for fairly recent events, and it certainly becomes scarcer the farther we go back in time. The continuous process of illuminating the past in the Arctic and Subarctic thus requires historians to consult tangential disciplines: archaeology, anthropology, climatology, philology, and linguistics, to name only a few. It is therefore surprising that among the 66 contributors to *Aspects of Arctic and Sub-Arctic History* there are only three archaeologists, with just two of them reporting on recent first-hand experience. Fortunately, both “The Eskimo Cultures in Greenland and the Medieval Norse: A Contribution to History and Ethnohistory,” by Hans Christian Gulløv, and “The Norse in the North Atlantic: The L’Anse aux Meadows Settlement in Newfoundland,” by Birgitta Linderöth Wallace, are models of updated research placed in a well-defined context.

I also question the omission at this conference of scholars from England, Scotland, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the Iberian Peninsula, who could have provided useful perspectives on their nations’ activities in the North Atlantic from the early Renaissance onwards. The Nordic

countries are well represented, however, as are Canada, the United States, Germany, and Russia. The Canadian and Russian papers in particular address conflicts involving the dominance and exploitation of indigenous peoples by powerful outsiders. The ethnically diverse Karelian region with its fluid borders received special scrutiny at the conference, in no fewer than ten papers. This is not objectionable in itself, but the information is needlessly repetitive, and some of the papers are essentially commentaries on Soviet and post-Soviet politics.

Susan Barr argues persuasively (p. 583–592) for the value of photographs in Arctic history, and with “Early Swedish Military Maps of the Polar Region,” Björn Gäfvert stresses the importance of maps as primary historical sources. He is the only participant to do so, although cartography from the Middle Ages onwards is crucial to our understanding of “how the North was won.” In this connection, it needs observing that while several contributors illustrate their articles with maps, the publishers did not include a map or maps of the book’s target regions, which some readers may consider a problem.

Maps and other illustrations accompanying individual articles are well reproduced, and the book has a number of other attractive features. It is sewn, not glued; there are ample margins on all sides of the medium-glossy pages; and the clean type makes even the footnotes easy to read.

Anyone looking for recent information on research concerned with the Far North will find this a stimulating volume within the areas it addresses. How the Russians experienced Lend-Lease in World War II has as little to do with my own field as does an account of a 1923 murder trial at Pond Inlet (Baffin Island) involving two Inuit. But I was so riveted by these and similar excursions into other scholarly worlds that they made up for occasional simple-minded statements about the Norse Greenlanders. You may well find yourself pursuing fishing and agriculture in medieval Iceland even if you sat down to this literary buffet just to find out what the Canadians hope to accomplish in the future.

*Kirsten A. Seaver*  
*Independent Historian*  
3638 Bryant Street  
Palo Alto, California, U.S.A.  
94306

BARREN LANDS: AN EPIC SEARCH FOR DIAMONDS IN THE NORTH AMERICAN ARCTIC. By KEVIN KRAJICK. Toronto, Ontario: General Publishing, 2001. ISBN 0-7167-4026-5, xiii + 442 p., maps, notes, index. Hardbound. Cdn\$42.00.

This book’s main title, *Barren Lands*, does not reveal its principal content. The subtitle, *An Epic Search for Diamonds in the North American Arctic*, comes closer, but still is not very specific. A page-scanning survey disclosed

that *Barren Lands* deals with two main subjects. The first is a general history of the exploration for and production of diamonds (and other precious minerals) in India, Brazil, Africa, the United States, and Canada. The second is prospecting for diamonds in the Northwest Territories and elsewhere in the world by one now-famous Canadian prospector, Chuck Fipke.

Readers interested in the first subject will find that this part of the book provides a succinct factual overview. Most readers of *Arctic*, however, will be paying more attention to the author’s account of his northern experiences.

Kevin Krajick first met Charles Fipke in his prospector’s lab in Kelowna, B.C., in July 1994. He also found out that no one—not even his parents—called him Charles. It was then that Kevin became a close friend of Chuck.

Chuck Fipke had been fascinated by rocks and minerals since he was a teenager. Through the years, he had acquired his knowledge in the field, never in a university classroom or lab. He had prospected in Brazil and Arkansas before shifting his attention to the Northwest Territories. By that time, he had registered his company as “C.F. Minerals” and was working closely with geologist Stew Blusson, a top University of British Columbia graduate who worked for the Geological Survey of Canada.

In 1991 Chuck Fipke, Stew Blusson, and their cohorts traced garnet and other diamond indicator minerals to a site that is now the Ekati Diamond Mine™, which started operation by BHP Diamonds Inc., Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, on 14 October 1996.

Kevin Krajick, a prize-winning journalist, wrote this book in the style of his contributions to the *New York Times*. This makes the *Barren Lands* experience more like reading a novel than a scientific or historic report—a view that is strengthened by the language Krajick uses to describe his first impression of the tundra:

Soon the spruces below looked ever hungrier, like rejected Christmas trees. They began to spread out and keep distance from one another. Big bare spots opened, where whalebacks of naked bedrock reared up and plunged into ponds.

There are other parts of the book that cannot be quoted, particularly those words spewed out by Chuck Fipke, a man who has become well known for losing his temper. No wonder, then, that Krajick mentions the impending breakup of his marriage. This has now happened since *Barren Lands* was published. As a result, Marlene Fipke’s worth in DiaMet Minerals, the diamond mining company based in Kelowna, B.C., that owns 29% of the Ekati mine, is quite substantial after a lucrative divorce settlement with her estranged husband in February 2000.

To sum up, *Barren Lands* will appeal to readers interested in the life of a fascinating person, Chuck Fipke. Those searching for information on the environmental effects of diamond mining in the Northwest Territories will be disappointed, and so will those who want to find out