

THE ROAD TO NUNAVUT: THE PROGRESS OF THE EASTERN ARCTIC INUIT SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR. By R. QUINN DUFFY. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988. 332 p., illus., index. Hardbound. Cdn\$35.00.

This is a handsomely produced, descriptively ambitious book. It attempts to document the nature of various Canadian public policies directed towards the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic (although most policies cited applied equally to the Western Arctic) from their substantive beginnings after World War II to the present. Further, the author wishes to relate these policies to the social, economic, cultural, and political development of the affected Inuit peoples. Following a rather brief introduction, which attempts to document the reasons for a pre-World War II reluctance on the part of the federal government to become involved in dealing with Inuit economic, and thus social, decline, the book describes post-war federal attempts to provide better housing, health care, education, and economic opportunities for the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic, concluding with a wandering, though quite rewarding, chapter on the devolution of federal policy responsibilities first to the territorial and increasingly to the local level of government in the Eastern Arctic. In this context a discussion of various proposals for Inuit self-government and territorial restructuring is pursued.

The justification for this volume is provided in its preface, where it is noted that "if the future of Canada is linked to the North" then we cannot postpone dealing with the problems of its principal and original inhabitants indefinitely. Further, "from a more intellectual standpoint, how can anyone interested in Canadian culture ignore the possible extinction, under our very noses, of a unique culture which is four thousand years old." The objective(s) of this work, one assumes then, is(are) to redress this inattention to the Inuit condition, making perhaps alternative and novel policy proposals, and/or systematically documenting the decline of traditional Inuit culture as a result of governmental and non-governmental southern activity documented in the study. If previous work dealing with these themes didn't exist, or if the author had made a significant analytic or descriptive contribution to our understanding of these events and this period of our history, then this would have been a worthy enterprise indeed. Unfortunately there is, and he didn't.

The analytic problem is noticeable immediately, as the author's framework for explaining the role of the federal government re: the Inuit is limited to "the idea of guardianship, of bringing up children until they are old enough and mature enough to look after themselves." This would be suggestive if it were more fully explored and distinguished or developed from a similar thesis put forward twenty years ago by Robert Paine *et al.* It isn't. As such, the author is left without a rigorous base from which he can substantively explain why particular policies or approaches emerged over other options. Whether dealing with housing or health care, education or economic opportunities, there were recognized choices to be made. The author describes what directions were taken in these areas but never adequately explains why. For example, why was the experimental housing of the late 1950s replaced by the "boxes" of the 1960s? Why was a northern option in Inuit health care always subservient to the whims of Western medical praxis, even when such an option had proponents in the department of government principally responsible for Inuit administration?

On the descriptive level, while the archival research is competent, it is limited to the much trodden-over archival record group "RG 85" that has been the source of numerous articles in this field and the recent monograph of Morris Zaslow. Missed in employing this archival source is the important work of many senior public servants in the development of the policies examined by his work. For example, there is no mention of the work of Don Snowdon, chief of the Industrial Division with Northern Affairs and National Resources at the time of the development of the co-op program, or Walter Rudnicki, who was head of the Welfare Division and the principal architect of early Inuit welfare services. More damaging from a research point of view is the absence in many areas of this study of significant secondary source material. For example, nowhere in the description of health policy is

the seminal work of John O'Neil or the 1945 report of G.J. Wherrett on health conditions among the Inuit of the N.W.T. noted. Further, there is no mention of the impact of the National Health Grants program on the nature and quality of Inuit health care. On Inuit housing, where is the work of Edmund Carpenter on the cultural significance of traditional Inuit shelter and community forms? Where is the exploration of the "domed city" concept developed for Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay) in the late 1950s? Equally problematic is the overuse of Hugh Brody's excellent *The People's Land*, which is employed throughout this volume as the principal source of analytical insight, begging the question: "What is the novel insight of *The Road to Nunavut*?" With respect to the policy histories explored here, the question is to what extent has the author advanced the descriptive detail, let alone the understandings, previously provided by Jenness, Diubaldo, Zaslow, Phillips, Dacks, etc.

As mentioned earlier, the production values are generally high for this volume, though a merciful editor might have removed the biological analogies that often run amok in the work. When describing economic development strategies, the author writes, "the prevailing opinion was that the injection of overdoses of cash into the weak industrial veins of the northern economy was threatening the traditional heart." Bewildering phrases such as "collective consciousness of identity" could also have been profitably expunged.

In short, while *The Road to Nunavut* provides a useful primer to the generalist or novice interested in post-World War II government efforts regarding the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic and the more recent political/constitutional debates there, the specialist is surely to be disappointed. The subject matter deserves better.

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THE SKUAS. By ROBERT W. FURNESS. Calton, England: T & AD Poyser Ltd., 1987. 363 p., 30 photos, 100 figs., 65 tables. Hardbound. US\$45.00.

Skuas are predatory sea birds of the north and south polar regions. They resemble their close relatives the gulls, except that they have incongruous-looking claws on their webbed feet and sharply hooked, hawk-like beaks. Skuas subsist variously as hunters, fishers, scavengers, and thieves. The three smaller species have a circumpolar breeding range and are called jaegers in North America. The three larger skua species are restricted to the southern hemisphere, with the exception of the Great Skua, which breeds in scattered areas throughout the North Sea.

Although skuas show an overall similarity in fundamental design, they also exhibit remarkable differences both between and within species. Variations on the common theme are evident in morphology, plumage colours, food preferences, feeding behaviour, migration corridors, breeding strategy, and displays. This kind of variability is grist to an evolutionary biologist's mill by providing raw material with which evolutionary explanations can be tested. For example, if two closely related species differ slightly in expression of a character such as territory size, one can reasonably attribute the differences to differing environmental influences rather than to evolutionary history.

Robert W. Furness is an evolutionary biologist who has been studying skuas since 1971, primarily the Great Skua on the Shetland Islands, but also other species as far away as the sub-Antarctic. In *The Skuas*, he uses his own research and that of his students and other workers to derive tantalizing insights into the process of evolutionary change. The book begins with background information on classification, status,

distribution, and migration. Skua taxonomy is traced from present times back through the early 17th-century ornithologists to Aristotle. The expansion in numbers and range of Great Skuas, or "Bonxies" as they are known in the Shetlands, is chronicled through surprisingly detailed historical accounts from their original colonization of Iceland in the 16th century to their expansion throughout the North Atlantic within the past 100 years.

The bulk of the book treats the evolutionary adaptations and ecological relationships of skuas. The puzzling phenomenon of "reversed sexual dimorphism" (female larger than male), found in almost all predatory birds, is discussed in some detail. Because skuas are more closely related to gulls than to raptors, they clearly evolved reversed sexual dimorphism separately from raptors but presumably as a response to the same selective pressures. Furness concludes that female defense of the young is the principal reason for evolution of larger females in skuas and, by extrapolation, perhaps in other predatory birds.

Furness discusses implications of differences in the "Long-Call" display to skua systematics and the reasons for the evolution of persistent dive-bombing nest defense familiar to all northern travellers. Considerable attention is given to documenting diet differences and similarities, and relating these to aspects of behaviour and distribution. Factors influencing the evolution of kleptoparasitism (stealing from other birds) and plumage polymorphism are treated in detail.

The book ends with practical discussions of pollution, human-skuas conflict, and conservation. Predators accumulate pollutants concentrated through the food chain and consequently are sensitive indicators of environmental pollution. Furness presents data showing that DDE levels in skua tissue have been declining since 1970 but that PCBs have remained constant. Attitudes of the Shetland sheepherders (crofters) have changed over the past 200 years. In the late 1700s, Great Skuas were protected by law because they drove off Sea Eagles, which might prey on lambs. With the extinction of eagles around 1900, this role was terminated and attitudes toward skuas changed to annoyance or antipathy resulting from dive-bombing, some limited predation on livestock, and chasing of sheep and dogs. Furness presents a reasoned approach to solution of these problems.

The book lacks the dryness one fears from technical treatises. Throughout there are sensitive pencil drawings by John Busby. Chapters are headed with obscure and quirky quotes, such as:

There is a fowl called Scutiellan, of a black colour and as big as a Wild Duck, which doth live upon the Vomit and Excrements of other Fowls, whom they pursue and having apprehended them they cause them to vomit up what they have lately taken, not yet digested: the Lord's Works both of Nature and of Grace are wonderful, all speaking forth his Glorious Goodness, Wisdom and Power.

Rev. John Brand (1701)

Furness harbours no romantic illusions about his subject animals and expresses this in refreshing forthrightness. Lack of coordination in Great Skua nest defense "leads the anthropomorphic observer to think of them as being exceptionally stupid birds." Great Skua feeding behaviour leads Furness to conclude that "the bird is unusually lazy." He treats conservation problems with pragmatism unlikely to endear him to preservation-style conservationists. He argues that the best long-term conservation strategy is to minimize human-skuas conflict by shooting a small number of skuas from specific situations.

The book's production is immaculate. The photographs are crisp and I was able to locate only one editing error. This is a worthy addition to T & AD Poyser's ornithology list, a series that is setting the modern standard for technical works in natural history. *The Skuas* is recommended to anyone interested in avian behaviour, ecology, and evolution.

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LIVING ARCTIC: HUNTERS OF THE CANADIAN NORTH. By HUGH BRODY. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre (in collaboration with the British Museum and Indigenous Survival International), 1987. xvi + 251 p., bib., index, photos, maps. Cdn\$14.95.

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest among lay people in aboriginal peoples and their future, in the face of pressures of economic development, assimilation, and denial of aboriginal land claims. Much of this international attention has been in Europe, though by no means confined there. This book attempts to capture this interest in hunting cultures, to provide those in the Canadian North with a voice, and to counter the impact of animal rights groups and various boycotts.

The overall theme of the book basically is the adaptability and flexibility of these hunting cultures. Brody illustrates how the aboriginal populations have adapted their hunting skills to the climate. He notes how in wintertime they use the tracks of animals such as rabbits; if one lies in wait, clothing such as caribou skin insulates the hunter, while if moving through the bush, one wears relatively light clothing. For housing, Brody discusses the insulating effects of snow, whether in the *iglu* or banked snow around forest cabins. But modern homes of settlements also prevail. The climate and geographic diversity lead to differing hunting patterns, whether for wildfowl or sea mammals. Moreover, the hunting lifestyle is not simply economic nor is it random and unsettled, as Westerners generally believe. As in the traditional economy, adaptability can be seen in the involvement in the petroleum or wage economy. Brody also demonstrates the flexibility and adequacy of the diet.

Another aspect Brody touches on is culture. For one thing, he discusses the role of authority within these societies, particularly how it differs from southern concepts. Authority is diffuse and based on consensus. The leaders are experts in a particular field, hence worthy of "following." Another critical aspect of the culture is the role children play: above all, the stress is on bringing them up to learn and grow at their own pace, unlike southerners. Among the learning methods is storytelling — this is particularly so in relation to learning about the animals upon which they depend to survive. In the discussion on native languages, Brody tries to break the myth of their primitiveness or inability to deal with the abstract. Language above all reflects their experience with climate and with animals. Moreover their adaptability emerges as these people learn to write in their own languages.

Concerning relations to the "outside," particularly in the chapter entitled "Frontiers," the author tries to illustrate how outside forces have affected their lives especially since the nineteenth century. In areas such as tools or music, the natives incorporated them into their culture. With the development of the fur trade, a new culture including credit, seasonal movements, and licences has emerged. Christianity has seen adaptability as they make an amalgam with shamanism. But by the 1960s and 1970s, these northern hunters were "unwillingly drawn into a web of social and economic life that paid very little heed to their long established customs and needs" (p. 217). This has led to a struggle for survival. The last chapter deals with the politics of survival — the political evolution in northern Canada as well as reaction to issues such as James Bay, the northern pipeline, and the Labrador bases. The problem is for outsiders to understand the system of authority based on the inseparability of land, animals, and a society seeking to ensure the renewability of its resources (p. 231). This is a challenge for modern political life. These hunters seek the right to choose.

The structure of the book is unusual. While the text, on one page, gives Brody's interpretation of their life, on the opposite page are photographs of the people (historic and contemporary) and citations from various natives, which show their relation to the land and their experience. In this sense, Brody accomplishes his purpose in giving a voice to the hunting societies. In giving a voice, he hopes to break the myth of their being a static society, picturing them as a hunting, not a peasant, society — as modern contemporaries.

The scholar of the North will find little that is new. And indeed Brody's approach runs the risk of creating new myths. One might ask,