

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-