

from a little known area, it also fills a gap in our ethnographic knowledge for the period between Zagoskin's 1844 explorations and the arrival of missionaries in 1877. VanStone has skillfully edited the manuscript, providing a helpful introduction as well as generous and scholarly footnotes.

The native peoples concerned are the Ingalik, so fully reported in this century by Cornelius Osgood; the Holikachuk as designated by the linguist Michael Krauss, and possibly some Upper Kuskokwim Athapaskans. (The exact route of Nelson's journey is not fully known). Chief emphasis is on winter festivals and myths, but there is also unique material on the life cycle, subsistence patterns, inter-native trade and manufactures. In short, VanStone has given us yet another valuable contribution to the ethnography of northwestern North America. Together with his own more recent *Ingalik Contact Ecology* (1978), his *Historic Ingalik Settlements Along the Yukon, Innoko, and Anvik Rivers, Alaska*, (1979), and Osgood's monographs, this work helps to bring alive the past of the Ingalik Indians and their near neighbors. After contact their history was often a tragic one, but nobody who takes the trouble to read these reports can dismiss these northern Athapaskans as "simple" hunters and gatherers leading unchanging and colorless lives. We are indebted to VanStone for publishing Nelson's slim but important manuscript.

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ESKIMOS AND EXPLORERS. BY WENDELL H. OSWALT: Novato: *Chandler and Sharp*, 1979. 349 pp. illus. \$15.00.

In this skillful blend of historical and anthropological scholarship, Wendell H. Oswalt has put together a picture of aboriginal Inuit culture based on documentation by early northern explorers. Geographical and temporal factors provide the main obstacles to a task of this nature: the immensity of the area concerned, and the length of time required to bring the Inuit fully into the historic period. As a result, Oswalt has had to condense, mention only in passing, or even omit, many events of historical importance. Nonetheless, *Eskimos and Explorers* provides an excellent overview of the topic, and is a sound base for anyone contemplating in-depth ethnohistorical research in this area.

In the first part of the book, Oswalt deals primarily with exploration. The historical perspective on the process of Inuit contact begins with the tenth-century Norse expansion into Greenland. Although the available sources are second hand at best, they indicate that an aura of mystery and the supernatural was built up around the "Skrellings", probably due to ignorance and misunderstanding. Similar misapprehensions developed following the renewal of European interest in the northern waters of North America in the sixteenth century. The prime goals of this historical episode were geographic discovery and cartography. Encounters that did occur were often less than peaceful, and the Inuit were commonly described as "sun worshippers and cannibals". Contacts intensified as traders, who were often more interested in exploitation than information, became more active, and as the long-enduring interest in discovering a sea route through the arctic increased, reaching a peak in the nineteenth century. There are a few notable exceptions, but most accounts of Inuit dating from this period are incidental, and far from complete. The sad fact is that interested and trained observers were late in reaching the arctic, and met a people already in the process of being acculturated.

In spite of these limitations, Oswalt has managed to bring together in the second part of the book in impressive array of data with which to describe patterns of aboriginal Inuit culture. The theme here centers on Inuit variability, stressing the different 'types' of Inuit culture encountered by the explorers. The inhabitants of West Greenland were the first Inuit to be studied in detail. Their way of life is compared to that of the Polar Eskimo to the north, and to the Angmagsalik of East Greenland. The latter two groups were geographically isolated in what can best be described as "marginal" environments, and illustrate the adaptability of Inuit culture. Turning westward, the Central Eskimo of the Canadian Arctic possessed what has come to be a stereotyped notion of "typical" Inuit culture: people living for much of the year in snow houses at seal hunting camps on the sea ice. Oswalt takes pains to point out that although theirs was the most widespread aboriginal pattern, it was only one of the specialized ways of life found amongst the Inuit. This "typical" pattern was replaced by others as one moves farther west among the Inuit of the Beaufort Sea, and then south through the Bering Strait and finally onto the Pacific shores of Alaska. Amongst other details that were found to be different in these areas were the more complex social and ceremonial lives, due in part to the more secure resource base available.

Discrepancies in the often incomplete historical sources available to Oswalt may lead some readers to quibble with certain places and dates referred to. Others may find fault with the brevity of some of the ethnographical treatment, but this is compensated for by an annotated bibliography included at the end of each chapter. In all, *Eskimos and Explorers* is a well-conceived, well-written book complemented by handsome illustrations.

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ESKIMOS OF NORTHWESTERN ALASKA: A BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE P. L. JAMISON, S.L. ZEGURA, AND F.A. MILAN (Eds.); Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross Inc., Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, 1978.

Table A-1 in *Eskimos of Northwestern Alaska* states that almost half a million American dollars were spent over six years in support of the study of the human adaptability (HA) of Eskimos on the north slope of Alaska. This research, representing one half of the American contribution to human circumpolar investigations under the auspices of the International Biological Programme (IBP) is summarized in Volume 8 of the US/IBP Synthesis Series.

There are 22 chapters in the text and two appendices. A short description of fieldwork chronology and organization (Milan) is followed by two chapters that seek to place the northwest Alaskan Eskimos in a broader ethnic and historic context. Zegura (Chapter 2) provides the skeletal and linguistic framework with his usual thoroughness and finesse, while Jamison (Chapter 3) provides a brief but important summary of the ethnohistoric background of the five villages (Wainwright, Point Hope, Barrow, Kaktovik and Anaktuvuk Pass) in which investigations (at least one visit) took place. The next three chapters deal with morphological variability — anthropometric (Chapter 4: Jamison), dermatoglyphic (Chapter 5: Meier) and craniofacial (Chapter 6: Dahlberg *et al.*). This is followed by three chapters on biochemical variability: normal biochemical population ranges (Chapter 7: Laessig *et al.*), carbonic anhydrase (Chapter 8: Moore) and bone mineral content (Chapter 9: Mazess and Moore). Four chapters are devoted to various aspects of Eskimo nutrition: aboriginal diet (Chapter 10: Draper), modern North Alaskan diet (Chapter 11: Bell and Hella), biochemical assessment of nutritional status (Chapter 12: Bergan and Bell) and clinical observations on nutritional health (Chapter 13: Colbert *et al.*).

Metabolic parameters are discussed under the headings of cholesterol, lipid and carbohydrate metabolism (Chapter 14: Feldman *et al.*), lactose and sucrose tolerance (Chapter 15: Bell *et al.*), and plasma vitamin E and cholesterol levels (Chapter 16: Draper and WeiWo). Rennie reports on exercise physiology (Chapter 17), Way on general health (Chapter 18), and Milan on northwest Alaskan Eskimo demography. Chapters 21 and 22 summarize behavioural studies on cognitive development (Feldman *et al.*) and psychometric tests in children (Bock), respectively. Chapter 22, the summary chapter, which seeks to integrate and show the conjoint importance of the multidisciplinary findings, is written by Zegura and Jamison.

The wide range of disciplinary interests and contributions indicate why the costs associated with the Eskimo Programme were so high. That the summary report does not have as much impact as the research price tag would lead one to expect is not the fault of the editors. As they themselves attest, most of the findings have already been published in specialist journals, and their importance was recognized several years ago. On the other hand, those who tend to concentrate only on specific areas of arctic biology will find the volume useful in rounding out their fund of knowledge concerning variability in living Eskimos. Noteworthy in this respect are conclusions reached on the comparison of hybrid-nonhybrid-anthropometric measurements. These suggest that the inland-coastal dichotomy in body proportions and craniofacial form is more likely the result of mating patterns and population history than any of the microevolutionary forces, including admixture with the Athapaskan-speaking Indians (p. 64-65). Dahlberg's group found (p. 95) that in both sexes, but in particular among males, midfacial flatness increases with age, a result that lends support to the arguments that the form of the Eskimo face is dependent on the functions to which the mouth and teeth are put, and not cold-adaptation.

The chapters on nutrition are informative, especially Draper's leading chapter which dispenses goodies such as that the low serum cholesterol levels of "premodern" Eskimos might be attributed to a diet of caribou, sea mammals and fish, all of which are low in saturated fatty acids (p. 142). Draper also suggested a connection between the increased rate of osteoporosis in adult Eskimos and consumption of a high phosphorus, low calcium diet. The latter dietary is known to produce hypocalcemia and increased rate of bone resorption (p. 141). Bell, Draper and Bergan's finding of lactose and sucrose