REVIEW

SHUKÁ KÁA CAVE, SOUTHEAST ALASKA: ARCHAEOLOGY, ECOLOGY, AND COMMUNITY

Edited by E. James Dixon, 2024. Contributors: Tom Ager, Elaine Anderson, James F. Baichtal, Joan Brenner Coltrain, E. James Dixon, Heather J. H. Edgar, G. Lang Farmer, Terence E. Fifield, Frederick V. Grady, Timothy H. Heaton, Melyssa H. Johnson, Richard E. Hughes, Brian M. Kemp, Craig M. Lee, Heather Mrzlack, Douglas W. Owsley, Erich Parrish, Robert A. Sattler, David Glenn Smith, William Timothy Treal Taylor, Christy Turner, Mark R. Williams, Rosita Kaaháni Worl. Aurora, Alaska Anthropological Association Monograph Series IX, Anchorage; xxxvi + 345 pages, figures, maps, tables, references, appendices, index. ISBN 978-1-890396-09-1 (paperback) $50.00.

Reviewed by Amira F. Ainis
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This monograph delivers an exceptional presentation of the impressive results of about 25 years of multidisciplinary investigations at a site that fundamentally changed our understanding of the early peoples and lifeways of the Northwest Coast: Shuká Káa Cave (also known as 49-PET-408 and On Your Knees Cave). Volume editor E. James Dixon has expertly brought together the extensive work of more than 20 authors comprising a diverse multidisciplinary team of research scientists and Indigenous specialists in this all-encompassing presentation. The editor and authors intertwine diverse perspectives, including the archaeological record, which is presented in impressive specificity with chapters dedicated to various artifact types and a wide array of specialized analyses; detailed ecological studies and paleoenvironmental reconstructions of dramatic climatic shifts and how these affected the terrestrial landscape, flora, and fauna during the Late Pleistocene and Holocene; and Indigenous community voices, histories, and perspectives throughout the entire process.

Initiated in 1996, this was one of the first applications of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) to older human remains in the U.S. The truly collaborative partnerships that developed and were maintained among the U.S. Forest Service, Tribes and Tribal associations, and scientific researchers throughout the course of the project testify of their commitment to meaningful collaboration and distinguish the project "as a model for conducting archaeological research in the twenty-first century" (p. xxxiii). This "odyssey of transformational science and tribal relations stood in stark contrast to other archeo-political events of the same period" (p. 9) as "an exemplary model of consultation and collaboration between scientists and Native Americans" (p. xxxi). Before reburial in 2008, a council of Native Elders bestowed the Tlingit name Shuká Káa, meaning "Man Ahead of [before] Us" upon the young man whose remains were found in the cave.

The book begins with the foreword by Rosita Kaaháni Worl, who describes herself as "a Native person and an anthropologist." She sets the tone for the complex dynamics that are often involved in archaeological research in North America, explaining Tribal perspectives and ways of reasoning that informed the decision to collaborate with archaeologists and scientists on this project, as well as appreciation for the "relationships that evolved" and all that was learned and further understood about the ancestors through these analyses. Following, Dixon provides an overview of the project and synthesis of the primary results, providing the big picture and key highlights that are explained in detail throughout the book, emphasizing the goal that the scientific results be "interpreted within the framework of indigenous knowledge and history" (p. xxxiii).

The first chapter, by Dixon, introduces the monograph and provides the context for initial discovery by paleontologists, along with the history of research at the site. The second chapter, by Fifield, describes the partnerships that evolved from this truly collaborative

process, which was intentionally fostered from day one and continued throughout the project, as well as the history of NAGPRA implementation and the Shuká Kúa Honor Ceremony. Chapters 3 and 4 contribute to the extensive paleoenvironmental background and reconstructions that were a foundational part of this project, describing the island and archipelago as Shuká Kúa and his ancestors and descendants would have experienced it. Chapter 3, by Ager and Baichtal, provides a diachronic history of terrestrial ecosystems on the archipelago along with the results of pollen analysis from coring at multiple locations with detailed diagrams and tables. Chapter 4, by Heaton and Grady, describes the fauna that inhabited these ecosystems during the past 60,000 years, including shifts in animal populations through time. This environmental background is followed by descriptions of the fieldwork and post-field processing components, including methods of lithic and ochre sourcing studies by Lee and colleagues in chapter 5.

In chapter 6, Sattler and colleagues describe the geoarchaeology of the site, which indicates at least seven periods of intermittent human use of the cave and its vicinity between around 12,080 and 1,175 years ago. Chapter 7 presents the contributions of 14 authors who gleaned an impressive amount of information about the life and death of Shuká Kúa about 10,260 years ago from only a few bones. This chapter contains anatomical illustrations of the 11 human skeletal elements found in Shuká Kúa Cave, along with a map of where each was recovered. This chapter also presents the results of all the analyses that were conducted on the human remains, including radiocarbon dating, stable isotope studies, and analyses of taphonomy, dentition, and ancient DNA.

Chapters 8 through 12 describe the results of the thorough artifact analyses, all of which contain helpful spatial distribution maps. In chapter 8, Lee and colleagues describe the results of lithic debitage analysis and material sourcing studies, demonstrating that trade networks were in place during early occupations of the site and likely involved the use of watercraft. Chapter 9 presents Lee's analysis of the microblade assemblage, demonstrating this technology spread from north to south along the Northwest Coast soon after the end of the Pleistocene. Dixon provides descriptions and analysis of the bifacial lithic artifact assemblage in chapter 10, including some impressive rearticulations of fragments accompanied by photos and line drawings. This chapter is followed by Taylor's analysis of the unifacially flaked stone tools with maps of spatial distribution. Morphological analysis, spatial distributions, and functional interpretations of grooved stones, abraders, and hammerstones are presented by Williams in chapter 12. In chapter 13, Dixon and Heaton describe the few bone and shell artifacts found within Shuká Kúa Cave, which include what may be the earliest evidence for basket making and/or weaving on the Northwest Coast: a bone bodkin radiocarbon dated to more than 12,000 years ago. The only shell artifact is a mussel-shell knife found with burnt black bear bones that may have been part of a ceremonial offering associated with a successful bear hunt deposited at the site ~1,600 years ago.

The concluding chapter beautifully weaves the entire monograph together, intertwining the many lines of scientific evidence, perspectives, and Indigenous knowledge to tell the story of human presence at Shuká Kúa Cave. This account spans thousands of years and ties this intimate, personal story to the larger story of the First Peoples who may have entered this region as early as 17,000 years ago. In this final chapter, Dixon merges Indigenous oral histories pertaining to coastal migration with the archaeological, geological, and environmental evidence that supports so many flood and migration narratives remembered by Northwest Coast First Peoples. All these ways of knowing come together in this monograph to tell the story of experienced coastal navigators and traders who lived in the Alexander Archipelago during the Terminal Pleistocene and Early Holocene, relying on watercraft and an economy primarily focused on maritime resources and forest products.

The appendices are noteworthy additions and include a detailed timeline of Tribal consultation (appendix A), anatomical photographs of human skeletal elements, which were respectfully not included in the primary chapters (appendix B), debitage distributions by material type depicted on color contour maps (appendices C and D), and details regarding the bear remains found with the mussel-shell knife (appendix E).

My only minor critique is that I wish the authors' names were included with the chapter titles in the table of contents as is customary in edited volumes. This monograph is a welcome addition and must-have for Northwest Coast archaeologists, cave archaeologists, and anyone interested in learning more about Late Pleistocene environments of the Northwest Coast and the coastal migration route into the Americas. It will also appeal to archaeologists, agency specialists, and Tribal representatives look.

REVIEW

IMAKEN IMA'UT—*FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE: 7500 YEARS OF KODIAK ALUTIIQ/SUGPIAQ HISTORY*

Edited by Amy F. Steffian, 2024. Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository, Kodiak; vi + 179 pages, 200 color and black-and-white figures, 17 tables, index. ISBN 978-1-929650-28-6 (paperback) $25.00; also available as an ebook at https://alutiiqmuseum.org/museum/publications/

Reviewed by Angela Lunda
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The State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) requires all students to earn 0.5 credits of Alaska history as a condition for high school graduation. The lack of quality texts to support this requirement has plagued school districts, and Alaska history teachers in particular, since 2009 when this requirement was codified in state statute (4 Alaska Admin. Code §06.075). The publication of *Imaken Ima'ut—From the Past to the Future: Seventy-Five Hundred Years of Kodiak Alutiiq/Sugpiaq History* provides an innovative resource for Alaska history teachers and others interested in a comprehensive historical account of one small corner of Alaska—Kodiak Island. What *Imaken Ima'ut* lacks in geographic breadth, it makes up with a deep and thorough examination of Kodiak from multiple perspectives, including the often-missing perspective of the land's original inhabitants, the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people. Expertly edited by Alutiiq Museum archaeologist Amy Steffian, with contributions from museum colleagues, including archaeologist Patrick Saltonstall, Alutiiq scholar Dehrich Chya, and executive director April Laktonen Counceller, *Imaken Imu'at* is the creation of four people with deep connections to the place and people of Kodiak Island.

The first chapter, written by Steffian, sets the stage for why it is important to study history and how history prior to written records is studied. She gives credence to sources of information for learning about Alutiiq history not often seen in high school history books, such as language studies and oral histories, as well the more typical archaeological evidence, ethnographic objects, and written records (p. 7). By mentioning language studies and oral histories as legitimate sources of information, Steffian allows the voices of ancestors to be validated, thus nurturing the cultural identity development of students descended from those ancestors.

The second and third chapters, co-written by Steffian and Saltonstall, provide a fascinating and well-supported account of Kodiak's first inhabitants from about 7500 years ago until the arrival of Russian ships at the end of the seventeenth century. Steffian and Saltonstall hold the first Kodiak Islanders in high regard. They trace the evolution of cutting implements, shelters, oil lamps, and subsistence technologies, with obvious respect for the strength and ingenuity of Alutiiq ancestors. At times their writing slips into the present tense, conveying the reader into contemporaneous existence with Alutiiq ancestors; it is as if the reader is watching a scene from thousands of years in the past unfold in front of them:

> Flashes of silver break the water, sending ripples toward the grassy riverbank. Salmon fin and jump as they enter Karluk Lagoon on the rising tide. An Alutiiq family watches as fish begin to mass in the slow-moving water of a shallow pool. A *kugyasiq* – net made of nettle fibers stretches from the shore into the pool. (p. 53)

The authors go on to describe fishing floats, weights, and webbing, the arrival of the salmon swimming into the net, and the work of the family as they clean and preserve the fish. The writing is descriptive and engaging, conveying respect for the brilliance of Alutiiq ancestors. Readers, whether they are Alutiiq/Sugpiaq or more recent newcomers to Kodiak Island, will be drawn in and perhaps begin to share that respect for Alutiiq accomplishments.

In the fourth chapter, Alutiiq scholar Dehrich Chya provides a recounting of the arrival of the Russians in 1741

until the sale of Alaska to the United States in 1867. The voices of Alutiiq ancestors sing throughout this chapter, providing stories of Indigenous survivance so important for nurturing the cultural identities of the island's first inhabitants. For example, on pages 81–83, under the heading "The Awa'uq Massacre," Chya describes how a ship captained by Russian Grigori Shelikhov approached an islet on which over 2000 Alutiiq people, including women and children, were seeking refuge from the invaders. According to Shelikhov's journal he "only used violence when necessary and insisted that he tried not to kill Alutiiq people" (p. 83). However, Chya goes on to provide a description of the massacre that ensued from the perspective of an Alutiiq survivor, Arsenti Aminak:

> After firing at several Alutiiq people who tried to leave the rock in the darkness, Shelikhov waited until dawn and then commanded his men to open fire on the refuge. Then Shelikhov ordered his men to storm the refuge rock to fight the Alutiiq directly and capture any who remained. The villagers were utterly defenseless against his five 2½ pound cannons, and three hundred Alutiiq people were killed. . . . Some died in combat. Others perished trying to escape when they jumped off the islet into the sea. Hundreds of people were taken captive. Children were among the hostages, a tactic used to compel their parents to comply with Russian demands. (p. 83)

These stories of Indigenous resilience and survivance are critical to countering the Russian narrative of the event.

In the final chapter, Alutiiq scholar April Laktonen Counceller continues the story of Kodiak Island during the American period following the 1867 sale of Alaska to the United States until the present. Counceller chronicles Kodiak's early industries, including the establishment of whaling stations, salmon canneries, and fox farms. She tells the story of education during the American period with snippets about mission, boarding, and village schools (pp. 123–132). Particularly impactful is Councellor's use of historical photographs and personal stories. For example, she quotes an Akhiol Elder, Nick Alokli:

> We used to get punished so much by the teachers and that is the truth. We couldn't speak our own language. Aleut was my first language, that is what I knew how to speak. I had to learn English. When I try to talk English, I'm always going back to Aleut, so it was hard. We'd get punished every time we talked in Aleut. We'd get slapped in the hand with those [hip wader boot] straps, you know the ones with the buckle, and they hurt. They were long and it had a buckle at the end. Then they had them pointers you know like rulers, if you point at the blackboard they would hit you over the head, and boy that hurt. (p. 124)

Similarly, the author integrates firsthand accounts as she writes about historical turning points such as the 1958 earthquake, statehood, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and others, allowing readers to develop empathy for those providing their personal perspectives. Chapter 5 concludes on an uplifting note with information on the language and cultural renaissance currently being experienced on Kodiak Island.

Imaken Imu'at includes several features that make it ideal for use as a high school history text. Although a spot check of 10 different passages yielded a relatively high Flesch-Kincaid reading level (11.2), comprehension is supported by over 200 figures. Drawing from the museum's extensive collections, there are maps, photos, or drawings on nearly every page that enliven the text, adding visual interest and aiding in comprehension. Another feature of the book is the inclusion of 35 sidebars, up to two pages in length, that describe intriguing stories related to the chapter topic. These may be read as stand-alone narratives, for example a sidebar about the origin of ground squirrels on Kodiak Island (p. 28). A creative teacher might use this sidebar as an extension for students needing an additional challenge. Other sidebars include a first-hand account of a 1912 volcanic eruption (p. 117), a discussion of blood quantum (p. 148), a description of the repatriation of the remains of nearly 1000 Alutiiq ancestors from the Smithsonian Institution back to Larsen Bay (p. 163), and many others. Each sidebar could be the basis for critical thinking extension lessons or discussion starters. Each chapter includes a glossary, key words in the Alutiiq language, and additional resources to assist the reader. An extensive index in both the print and digital versions and the search tool in the digital edition provide for ease of navigation. Descriptive headings serve as guideposts for younger readers who may require extra support with comprehension. Printed on high-quality glossy paper, the book is beautiful, informative, and well-organized, but what makes *Imaken Imu'at* stand out from other Alaska history texts is the expertise and the stance of the authors and editor. This text will be a welcome addition for Alaska history teachers seeking to share a balanced history of the state. *Imaken Imu'at* opens the door for teams from other regions to write their true histories emphasizing the perspectives of Indigenous peoples.

REVIEW

TREATY JUSTICE: THE NORTHWEST TRIBES, THE BOLDT DECISION, AND THE RECOGNITION OF FISHING RIGHTS

By Charles Wilkinson, 2024. University of Washington Press, Seattle; xvi + 350 pages, 30 black and white figures, 5 maps, notes, index. ISBN 978-0295752723 (hardcover) $34.95.

Reviewed by Courtney Carothers
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It is an honor to review the late Charles Wilkinson's (1941–2023) *Treaty Justice: The Northwest Tribes, the Boldt Decision, and the Recognition of Fishing Rights*. This book is an immense contribution to the documentation of Tribal advocacy and legal history of the long fight for justice for the Indigenous Salmon Peoples of the Pacific Northwest.

As Wilkinson shares in the book's preface, Billy Frank, Jr. (1931–2014), a member of the Nisqually Indian Tribe of Washington and chairman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, asked him to write this book. Frank wanted Tribal youth to know the history and importance of the Boldt Decision. This volume provides an essential history of that monumental ruling as we assess its impact and the continued fight for Tribal sovereignty. The Boldt Decision "belongs in the same company as Brown v. Board of Education and a select few other court cases in terms of bringing justice to dispossessed peoples. . . . [T]he Boldt Decision vividly displays the brilliance and worth of the American system of justice and the moral and tangible benefits it can achieve at its heights" (p. 8).

One of the greatest strengths of this book is the detailed descriptions of the Tribal leaders who paved the way for this monumental ruling for justice. Billy Frank, Jr., is perhaps the most well-known of the bold and tireless Tribal advocates who fought for decades for the protection of Tribal fishing rights that culminated in the Boldt Decision. Frank's legacy—from being jailed some 50 times for standing up for Tribal fishing rights to his memorialization as a national hero—is one of many stories shared in this volume. Washington Governor Jay Inslee replaced a statue of an early pioneer with a statue of Frank in 2015, saying "We expect to send our best from the state of Washington to be memorialized in the United States Capitol in Statuary Hall. We can't send the Nisqually River or Mount Rainier, but we can send Billy Frank Jr." (p. 267).

The book opens with tales of violence of the "fish wars" of the 1960s and 1970s in Washington State between Tribal fishermen and non-Natives. I learned about this violence—police raids; confiscation of gear, fish, canoes; desecration of encampments; gunshots; boat ramming; arrests; and on and on—from fierce Tribal advocates in Alaska such as Mary Anne Mills, member of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe. She shared with me how the brutality and violence faced by Tribal fishermen in the Pacific Northwest catalyzed their decision to send their women and children to stand up for their fishing rights in their homelands of the Kahtnu, or Kenai River, in the hopes that state enforcement and non-Native fishermen would be less violent to them.

Treaty Justice next works through enough history to understand how we got here. The treaties signed in the 1850s with the Tribes guaranteed their perpetual right to fish. Isaac Stevens, first governor of the Washington Territory, who negotiated with Tribal leadership, conveyed clearly "this paper secures your fish." Chapter 4 focuses on Stevens, "one of the most consequential figures in the history of the Pacific Northwest" (p. 51). *Treaty Justice* also describes Tribal leaders' perspectives on specific treaties. Wilkinson provides a brief description of the Salmon

People, the Indigenous peoples of this region, focusing on the Lummi Nation, the Makah Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, Nisqually Indian Tribe, and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe. The cultural and economic lifeblood that salmon were and are to the Indigenous Nations of this region cannot be overstated. Wilkinson describes how Tribal Nations enforced their sovereignty, engaged in trade and commerce, and governed travel and social relationships.

About halfway through the book, Wilkinson turns attention to the fisheries history of the canneries, dispossession of Indigenous fisheries, and violence against Tribal fishers. Tribal advocates who fought for fishing rights are numerous, including Clyde Warrior (Ponca), Karen Rickard (Tuscarora), Mel Thom (Walker River Paiute), Herb Blackford (Navajo), D'Arcy McNickle (Flathead), Hank Adams (Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux), Bruce Wilkie (Makah), Janet McCloud (Tulalip), and Ramona Bennett (Puyallup), among many others. We are given a front row seat to some of the organized "fish-ins" and other acts of civil disobedience. Pictured in the book are the "Getting Arrested Guys" or the "Renegades," Jack McCloud, Don McCloud, Billy Frank, Jr., Neugen Kautz, Herman John, Jr., and Al Bridges (p. 128). The fish-ins were highly effective for publicizing the plight of Tribal fishermen. Among the powerful words of these fish warriors are those of Ramona Bennett:

> The treaties provided a means of support, for hunting and gathering and harvesting salmon, and shellfish. If you can support your family you can live with dignity. If you have no means of taking care of your family, if you're on your bloody knees in some welfare line, then you don't have dignity. And our people suffered a deprivation of fishing for ninety years, ninety years. That's twice the length of our median life span. (p. 124)

As Tribes were gathering force, attorneys recognized that a major lawsuit—"a case to end all cases" (p. 141)—brought by the federal government in both Oregon and Washington was needed. An early litigation request from the Department of Interior to the Department of Justice was a "lengthy, informative, and well-presented history of state violation of Indian fishing rights in the Pacific Northwest" (p. 133). Coverage of this topic is another strength throughout *Treaty Justice*—how the states violated Tribal sovereignty again and again. The text consistently documents how the states' promotion of commercial and sport fishing "without any concern about a Tribal share . . . amounted to discrimination against Tribal treaty right and violated overriding federal law" (p. 138). Anthropologist Barbara Lane from the University of Victoria, British Columbia, was considered "the most important witness in the trial" (p. 158) and her work "to be a leading source for academic research about Northwest Tribal life, culture, and history" (p. 161).

At the trial, 29 Tribal witnesses demonstrated "salmon and the elaborate relationship between these Indian people and salmon remained vivid, alive, and lastingly important" (pp. 170–171). Judge Boldt expected that the attorneys for this case would "put together the most extensive factual record on Indian culture ever produced in litigation" (p. 186). Tribal witnesses such as 83-year-old Lena Hillaire (Puyallup-Skagit) shared the brutality their people faced. "They took us for animals, and it was not right" (p. 167).

Tribal relationships with salmon included deep spiritual and cultural identity and wellness, but also markets and trade. In the *United States v. Winans* (1905), the first Supreme Court case on Pacific Northwest treaty fishing rights, Justice Joseph McKenna explained that salmon "were not much less necessary to the existence of the Indians than the atmosphere they breathed" (pp. 183–184). Tribal fishing rights are political and governmental rights, not racial or individual rights (p. 206), a point worth repeating.

Wilkinson documents how Washington State legal officials refused to enforce the Boldt Decision, which emboldened non-Native "outlaw fishermen" to fish illegally and escalate violence with rammed boats, cut nets, and slashed tires. But "within just a few years, all Boldt Case area Tribes were managing their own fisheries and members" (p. 221).

My only minor complaint about this volume is that the 267 endnotes that provide references and additional detail are not internally referenced in the text. They are organized by chapter, but cumbersome to locate for specific points or quotations.

As Tribal leaders continue to fight for access to salmon that are central to life for Salmon Peoples, this comprehensive history of the fight for justice in the Pacific Northwest is one that will help show how Tribal advocacy and justice can align for positive movement. Ron Allen, chairman of the Jamestown S'Kallam Tribe, says "'Every river has a people.' The Boldt Decision was an epic point in our history. It restored our peoples' right to our rivers and the salmon that is our cultural identity. The decision recognized that the treaties reserved our sovereignty and

traditional practices for our people and grandchildren forever" (p. 249). As I reflect on my learning from this volume closer to home, to the Salmon Peoples of the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers who face a catastrophic crisis of salmon declines and Tribal access, I know the power of Tribal advocacy will bend toward Indigenous governance for future fisheries. Every river has a people, and those people are the ones who know best how to steward salmon long into the future.

REVIEW

STRONGER TOGETHER/KAMMANATUT ATAUSIGUN/ IKNAQATAGHAGHLUTA QERNGAAMTA*: BERING STRAIT COMMUNITIES RESPOND TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC*

Edited by Amy Phillips-Chan with R. B. Smith and Carol Gales, 2024. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks; viii+208 pages, 140 color and black-and-white figures, appendices, references, index. ISBN 978-1-64642-551-8 (hardcover) $95.00; ISBN 978-1-64642-552-5 (paperback) $27.95; ISBN 978-1-64642-553-2 (ebook) $21.95.

Reviewed by Taylor P. van Doren
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It is a special thing, to be wise enough to collect history as it happens. In *Stronger Together*, editor Amy Phillips-Chan draws on the importance of collective and community histories to collate a series of personal stories, diverse artistic expressions, and poetry, with contributions by R. B. Smith and Carol Gates, to produce a volume that captures how communities in the Bering Strait region of Alaska experienced the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020–2021. These stories produce a fascinating mosaic of perspectives from the beginning to middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, including stories of resilience, uncertainty, fear, and the essence of community. Most importantly, as Phillips-Chan states in the introduction of the volume, the larger goal of collecting these experiences is to create a centralized place to remember the COVID-19 pandemic in Western Alaska by people while they were experiencing it (pp. 40–41). The result is a robust source of historical memory to which future generations of Bering Strait communities may return long after the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

One of the motivating factors in the initial development of *Stronger Together* was the high value Alaska Native peoples place on preserving historical memory and traditional knowledge. Phillips-Chan acknowledges this, and states that in the development phases of this collection, it became clear that communities lacked firsthand accounts of the 1918 influenza pandemic, "particularly stories from Indigenous community members" (p. 4). In the pages that follow, Phillips-Chan gives what I believe to be the most complete existing account of the 1918 influenza pandemic in Western Alaska, detailing the pathway of the influenza practically day-by-day, made possible by the tireless reporting by *The Nome Nugget* (pp. 10–17). Yet the first-hand accounts of the 1918 pandemic with individual perspectives, wisdom, and resilience were still missing. The primary goal of *Stronger Together* is to make sure that in another century, future generations will have those first-hand Alaska Native accounts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This book is split into five main parts. First is Phillip-Chan's introduction to the main ethnographic content of the book, which includes the account of the Bering Strait region's initial preparation when the COVID-19 pandemic first started spreading throughout the world, the masterful accounting of the 1918 influenza pandemic in Western Alaska, and the origins of the historical memory project that eventually became *Stronger Together.* Sections include "Oral Histories 2020," "Artists Respond," "Oral Histories 2021," and "Poems." The personal stories took shape from interviews conducted with R. B. Smith (2020) and Carol Gates (2021). These read as first-person narrative accounts rather than interviews, speaking strongly to the editors' skill and priorities in giving voice to the individuals.

The community members' narratives were a strong mix of perspectives. Even though Western Alaska communities are remote and geographically distant from the rest of the country, the community of Nome included highly diverse opinions and outlooks of the COVID-19 pandemic. In part I ("Oral Histories 2020"), opinions sometimes deviated on the city of Nome's approach to social distancing and masking. Some expressed criticism about the focus on

masking as opposed to how to keep people working (p. 80), while others explained how complicated it is to make the correct governing decisions in a rapidly changing epidemic situation (pp. 78–79). Some individuals expressed apprehension about the information circulating about the pandemic, explaining how they thought it was not that big of a deal and that maybe the social distancing and other public health measures were premature (pp. 57, 82). Interestingly, part III is full of stories that shifted perspectives on this latter point. A handful of people, especially those who became sick with COVID-19, explained how their experience with the disease helped them develop a sense of seriousness about their behaviors after initially expressing apprehension of its severity (pp. 170–171).

Two sections, "Artists Respond" and "Poems," are particularly valuable additions to this project. Importantly, stories are not always captured—indeed, do not *need* to always be captured—in words. Stories are also effectively transmitted through art and verse. In total, the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum in Nome commissioned 12 original pieces from artists in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Unalakleet, Savoonga, and Nome, and three pieces of artistic written expression were published in the volume. The artwork immortalized in the volume ranges from life-sized watercolor depictions of nurses (p. 118) to a painstakingly detailed seal gut mask (p. 135), to walrus ivory sculptures (pp. 101, 149). Each piece of art is accompanied by a discussion of the origins, making, and intentions behind the work. Readers who are unaccustomed to consuming knowledge and stories in a nonwritten format will be captivated by the deep wisdom and purpose behind every detail of these one-of-a-kind works.

One thing that unites nearly all 47 stories of the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020–2021 is a strong sense of resilience. The primary theme of the book is echoed many times throughout individuals' personal outlooks. Many people harkened back to the survival of the communities in the Bering Strait region after the devastating 1918 influenza pandemic, and they spoke hopefully about how the knowledge of surviving that pandemic provided solace for surviving COVID-19 (pp. 78, 129, 161). Others spoke about how they knew the "new normal" would not necessarily reflect the pre-COVID-normal, but they were strong enough to thrive anyway. James Ventress, a youth pastor, described the pandemic as "a liminal moment, a doorway we all step through together" (p. 89). Overall, *Better Together* is an exceptionally well-illustrated volume of first-hand narratives, art, and poetry that not only provides an important snapshot of the Bering Strait communities' experiences with the largest pandemic in a century, but the knowledge imbued in these pages is critical wisdom to which future generations can return. This volume is not only a valuable contribution to the region's history, but an example of how the preservation of history can be pursued anywhere there are people keen on recording it.

REVIEW

CROOKED ON THE STRETCHER BOARD: CH'ATS'Ą' VIZHIT TECH'IRIKII*: COLLECTED ESSAYS ON GWICH'IN HISTORY, LANGUAGE, AND FOLK CULTURE*

By Craig Mishler with Kenneth Drizhuu Frank; foreword by Leslie McCartney, 2023. International Polar Institute Press, Hanover, NH; 432 pages, color & black & white figures, 2 maps, 2 tables, references, index. ISBN 979-8-9884732-2-0 (hardcover) $45.00. Distributed by Casemate Academic.

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Craig Mishler brings forth a series of essays in which he examines Gwich'in history, language, and folk culture. This collection of essays is a culmination of 50 years of field work, research, and friendship with the Gwich'in people. While the essays can be read sequentially, almost all of them stand alone and can be enjoyed individually.

Crooked on the Stretcher Board really shines in essays such as "Missionaries in Collision: Anglicans and Oblates among the Gwich'in" and "That's a Rubbaboo: Slavey Jargon in a Nineteenth Century Subarctic Speech Community." "Missionaries in Collision" opens the reader's eyes to an aspect of history that rarely gets attention in conversation around missionaries and their work in Gwich'in Country. Mishler's attention to detail brings out the dramatic interplay between religious sects that reads almost like a screenplay for a prestige drama. The crisp writing departs greatly from what could be an otherwise dry analysis of conflict and brings to life the cast of characters that would play such a significant role in the metaphysical lives of an entire group of people. In "That's a Rubbaboo," Mishler explores Slavey trade jargon, an almost entirely forgotten pidgin language that was essential for Canadian traders to conduct business with the Gwich'in. This section of the book reads like a who's who of influential outsiders who made their way into Gwich'in territory in the 1800s. Mishler's real insight is the social aspect of the language, in that it really had value in its support of relationships with people who didn't have a shared understanding of the world. While it came into existence due to the need to communicate for trade, Slavey Jargon lasted beyond that need, as it played a role in social status.

One of the goals Mishler states for *Crooked on the Stretcher Board* is to "make parts of that culture freshly visible and accessible to those living inside the culture, where certain distinct practices, customs, beliefs, ingrained understanding, texts, and patterns of speech have diminished or faded from view" (p. 24).

As a Gwich'in person myself, I am greatly appreciative of this, as I recognize and see things that weren't a part of my own upbringing in the culture. From an Indigenous perspective, this is where *Crooked on the Stretcher Board* plays an important role in knowledge preservation. Traditions such as the lobstick (a trail marker) and *mizhur* (a card game) are now made accessible to a wider audience of Gwich'in people, and this book serves as a springboard for re-engaging with those traditions.

The weakest point of this volume is Mishler's attempt to examine the Gwich'in language while not being a speaker of the language himself. Instead, he relies heavily on the insight of Kenneth Frank, an Elder from Venetie and Arctic Village. At times, these sections do not fully convey the complex mechanics of the language. For example, in chapter 9, Mishler makes leaps at explaining the usage of *nyaa* (a Gwich'in verb stem with multiple meanings) without having the linguistic background to make those assertions. Perhaps this will be fleshed out in future works.

Why should you read this book? Mishler does an excellent job in examining the historical developments and impacts of Western encroachment on traditional Gwich'in society, while noting that the Gwich'in are not hapless victims of circumstance. Especially touching is Mishler's remembrance of Elijah John. Meeting and befriending a knowledgeable Elder such as Elijah John early in his career clearly impacted the trajectory of Mishler's work, as it allowed him exposure to the Gwich'in mindset. This perspective on the Gwich'in cannot be elicited through questioning but can only be observed in an ethnographic approach to understanding culture. In each essay in which Mishler was conducting field research, it is clear that he is an exceptionally good listener, a trait that no doubt endeared him to his Gwich'in consultants. Too often researchers come to do work in Indigenous communities with a research question that doesn't account for the interests of those being researched. Mishler's long-running partnership with Kenneth Frank shows how research can be done collaboratively, and this has allowed him to do work that has been truly unique, as evidenced by this book.

Especially strong is Mishler's friendship with the Frank family and Kenneth Frank in particular. In many ways this book reads as a heartfelt "thank you" to the Franks and to all of the Gwich'in people who have opened up their lives to someone from an outside culture. Mishler's enduring friendship with the Gwich'in people truly is a testament to the man himself, as respect amongst the Gwich'in is something that can only be earned. Mishler has earned it.

REVIEW

IÑUPIAT OF THE SII: HISTORICAL ETHNOGRAPHY AND ARCTIC CHALLENGES

By Wanni W. Anderson and Douglas D. Anderson, 2024. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks; xvii + 132 pages, 40 black-and-white figures, 2 tables, references, appendices, index. ISBN 978-1-64642-604-1 (hardcover) $85.00; ISBN 978-1-64642-606-5 (paperback) $20.95; EISBN 978-1-64642-606-5 (ebook) $17.95.

Reviewed by Shelby Anderson
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Iñupiat of the Sii: Historical Ethnography and Arctic Challenges, by Wanni W. Anderson and Douglas D. Anderson, is aimed at providing detail and context for the archaeological and ethnographic research carried out by the authors in the Selawik River region from the late 1970s through the 1990s (e.g., Anderson and Anderson 1977, 2019; W. Anderson 2005). Anderson and Anderson take experience-near, lived-experience, and sense-of-place approaches to this historical ethnography (p. xvii). The book is divided into two sections with an introductory prologue. Part 1 is a geographic and historical overview of the Selawik region prior to the late twentieth century that—along with the prologue—provides background for the rest of the book. In part 2, the authors weave their personal experiences together with ethnographic research to explore the lived experience and perspectives of Selawik community members. Topics include winter and summer seasonal activities (chapters 7 and 8), community connections and relationships (chapter 9), and self-determination (chapter 10). The text only briefly mentions the authors' other research in Northwest Alaska, but the influence of decades of collaborative ethnographic and archaeological research in these communities (e.g., Anderson and Anderson 1977, 2019; D. Anderson et al. 1998) is apparent throughout the book.

The strength and uniqueness of this book is in the focus on the Selawik region, and the personal and local perspectives that were gathered through decades of close collaboration between the authors and the community. For example, the Chapter 3 discussion of the founding of Selawik village and school includes specific local knowledge and information woven together with historical details (pp. 19–24). Part 2 is particularly rich in local history, experience, and knowledge. The chapter 9 review of community building and sustaining activities and communication contains local nuance that is not available in other works. For example, the authors describe how people in Selawik rapidly adopted new technology such as radio, CB radio, and tape cassettes (pp. 79–80) to sustain long-distance connections between villages and to share family and community knowledge through storytelling. Another strength is the prologue to the book, which provides context for both sections with a brief but rich discussion of the authors' personal history living and working in Selawik over several decades, as well as an outline of their theoretical and methodological approach to this ethnographic work. The prologue conveys the researcher experience of working and living in communities like Selawik during the study period and is an enjoyable read for those who work in similar environments. Furthermore, the authors have conducted multiple key archaeological and ethnographic investigations across Northwest Alaska that laid an important foundation for work that continues today. Thus, better understanding their experiences and the setting in which their work was conducted are important contributions. Personal reflections such as these are not often included in technical reports or older ethnographic works, and as such are valuable additions to the literature that contextualize other important sources (e.g., Anderson and Anderson 1977).

The impact of this book is reduced somewhat by the lack of sources and reference to other relevant research conducted after 1990 (e.g., Burch 1998, 2005, 2012). This is particularly evident in part 2, where it is difficult for the reader to know what information is based on historical research versus ethnographic observation, interviews, oral histories, or the inferences and interpretation of the authors. It is difficult to understand to what extent the authors are drawing on knowledge and experience Native community members shared with them. Greater attribution of source material throughout the book would acknowledge the community participants' knowledge and contribution to the study, while strengthening the observations and conclusions of the authors. In addition, references would facilitate further research by readers interested in exploring the information presented here in more depth. An additional issue is the lack of information regarding the methodological and theoretical approach, which are only explicitly addressed in the prologue (p. xvii). The reader is left to try to understand how these different approaches shaped the focus and content of the book and to connect to broader anthropological literature and practice.

Overall, *The Iñupiat of the Sii* is a quick, enjoyable, and informative source that covers a particularly dynamic time period in Alaska Native communities. It is a good companion volume to other Alaska and Arctic ethnographic and archaeological works and provides important background for other research conducted by the authors. Scholars and academics focused on Arctic history, anthropology, and geography will be interested in this book, and members of the general public will welcome its narrative style.

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REVIEW

LOWER TANANA DENE DICTIONARY

Edited and compiled by James Kari, 2024. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks; 918 pages, 89 figures, 28 tables, 9 appendices. ISBN 978-1-55500-138-4 (hardcover) $120.00; ISBN: 978-1-55500-140-7 (paperback) $80.00.

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The new *Lower Tanana Dene Dictionary* (henceforth *LTDD*) is a wonderful and much needed addition to the material resources available for the Lower Tanana language. Users may be familiar with other dictionaries compiled by James Kari for Dene languages, such as the *Ahtna Athabaskan Dictionary* (1990). However, the *LTDD* also presents the latest development in this lexicographic tradition, and the format can thus be understood as the culmination of many years of experience in theoretical and practical refinement. The dictionary is organized around morphological roots with the initial sound of the form serving to order the root alphabetically. A reverse English–Lower Tanana index is provided, facilitating the searches. The alphabetical order and sound system of Lower Tanana are explained in detail, making this aspect of the language clearly accessible to learners at all levels.

The *LTDD* is aimed at learners of the Lower Tanana language as well as linguists working on Dene languages. Overall, the dictionary is a dense work replete with a wealth of useful and interesting information. The linguistic and lexicographic content is enriched by imagery and vignettes highlighting cultural and historical aspects. Those truly interested in the Lower Tanana language will find detailed information here that they can draw on for many years of study. However, this abundance of information comes at the price of accessibility. Potential users with little familiarity with Dene linguistics are likely to find the learning curve in using the dictionary quite steep. That is not to say that the effort is not worth it. Opportunities for learning abound in this dictionary. Nevertheless, the dictionary may serve best as a resource for linguists and language-teaching experts in whose hands the work can serve as an excellent foundation for research projects and the development of pedagogical materials.

A discussion of a single entry will serve to illustrate some of the qualities of this dictionary. The example comes from the entry for *trax*, "cry" (p. 399). The head entry is bolded and immediately followed by a reconstructed Proto-Dene form, a gloss, and a root-type identifier. This last item belongs to a system of semantic classification which is particular to Kari's own approach to Dene lexicography. The system organizes roots according to semantic domain, which is intriguing, but remains underdeveloped in the current work. However, it shows some potential for the development of derivative works such as learner and topical dictionaries. Since *-trax* is a verbal root, the entry shows the stem sets arranged in a table according to mode and aspect forms. Here, the experienced Dene scholar will recognize the division into perfective, imperfective, future, and optative modes. It might have been helpful to label the columns for those users unfamiliar with Deneist conventions. The information just described presents the most general and abstract characteristics of this form. It is followed by the verb themes, which are combinations of roots and affixes presented as an abstract schema, for example "*Ø*+trax," "something cries, mourns," forming what could be considered the closest equivalent of words in dictionaries for European languages. This abstract schema is then exemplified in actual expression where the inflectional morphology has been added, e.g., *etsex*, "he is crying." The wordform is also identified as being used in the Chena and Toklat-Bearpaw dialects of

Lower Tanana. These examples are then followed by a verb paradigm with the word forms conjugated for person and number in positive and negative (i.e., *he is crying/he is not crying*). Placing the inflected paradigm as part of the entry is a welcome innovation in the *LTDD* and greatly increases the accessibility of the lexicological data, since users can now more easily see the pattern of conjugation and apply the word in their own linguistic practice.

The entry then provides more information on further derived themes as well as other morphologically related forms. Of particular note here is the subentry *Beghw Tr'etreghi*, which is the name of a place that was once a village. Kari has added historical, ethnographic, and geographic information to this entry in an example of the cultural richness of the dictionary. The detail of the entries varies, with verb forms typically having the most detail and longest entries.

The etymological, grammatical, and cultural information provided in the *LTDD* is sure to warm the linguist's heart. The lack of page numbers in the index aside, the dictionary is well-organized and invites deeper study. The language teacher with linguistic training is also going to find the dictionary an invaluable resource and, as the author suggests, there is plenty of material for the building of a large variety of language lessons. The learner without some background in linguistics, however, will find the *LTDD* a challenging resource to use. However, a beginner learner is perhaps not the intended audience. In fact, Lower Tanana language revitalization, at the current state, requires the emergence of a class of Indigenous language experts capable of transforming the technical knowledge of this complex and beautiful language into a body of practical language-learning opportunities supporting learners at all levels. Happily, this requirement is now one step closer to being met, thanks to the excellent work of James Kari and the long list of contributors who have given their time, energy, and expertise to providing Dene enthusiasts far and wide with this wonderful new dictionary.

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