

Reviews

POLAR REGIONS ILLUSTRATED

POLES APART. Flegg, J. 1990. London, Pelham Books. 192 p, hard cover, illustrated. ISBN 0 7207 1838 4. £18.99.

This work very lavishly illustrated (at least as many colour plates as pages) with photographs by Eric and David Hosking combined with several from classical sources. Although largely concerned with the animal life of both polar zones it has introductory chapters about the geography and history of the regions, and one on the plant life. The work presents a popular account of Arctic and Antarctic natural history with particular attention to the present effects of human activities. It is intended for the non-specialist reader and does not include a bibliography (although eight 'further reading' references are provided). Similarly vernacular rather than Linnean names are used for species and the Imperial system of weights and measures appears.

This treatment leads to a somewhat insubstantial approach to some subjects. A few instances are; Robert Peary's claim to have attained the North Pole is credited without question or any indication of the substantial doubt about it, estimates of whale populations are given without indications of their reliability (or sources), Ny Ålesund is credited as the most northerly town, and the indications of current environmental problems are decidedly simplified. The photographs are of high quality throughout and greatly enhance the attractiveness of the book; many were mainly obtained during several tourist cruises. A proportion are from the Falkland Islands which I consider an unusual extension of the boundary of polar regions. There are Arctic and Antarctic maps, and three pages of index. (R. K. Headland, Scott Polar research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER UK.)

ANTARCTICA: A PORTRAIT

ANTARCTICA, THE LAST FRONTIER. Laws, R. M. 1989. London, Boxtree. 208 p, hard cover, illustrated. ISBN 1 85283 247 9. £14.95.

The author has been involved with Antarctic regions for over 40 years and was Director of the British Antarctic Survey for 14 of these. The book thus has a very comprehensive scientific foundation and is an excellent introduction to the region and its current circumstances. It was produced in conjunction with an Anglia Television programme with the intention to 'bring to as wide a public as possible the uniqueness and importance of the Antarctic, both in its resources and the key role it can play in helping to avert environmental disaster on our planet'. The first chapter gives a description of the physical aspects of Antarctica which is followed by an account of the Southern Ocean. Several chapters on the biology of various systems follow with accounts of the recent research. A

final chapter 'Man and the Antarctic' gives a concise note on exploration and exploitation of the resources of Antarctica from the earliest discoveries to the present. This continues with a note on possible mineral resources and several contemporary world problems affecting Antarctica. The chapter concludes with a note on the development of the Antarctic Treaty system and some speculation about the future.

A helpful selection of diagrams and maps is included (although Chile will not appreciate the unfortunate omission of Territorio Antártico Chileno from the territorial chart). There is a brief bibliography with a good selection of appropriate works and three pages of index. The book is very well illustrated with the author's material, the resources of the British Antarctic Survey and other organizations. The publisher has managed to produce it at a very reasonable cost. (R. K. Headland, Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER UK.)

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

SADIE BROWER NEAKOK: AN INUPIAQ WOMAN. Blackman, Margaret B. 1989. Seattle, University of Washington Press. 274 pp, photographs, maps, hard cover. ISBN 0-295-96813-3.

The daughter of Charles Brower, who came to Barrow, Alaska, as a commercial whaler, and his Inupiaq wife Asianguataq, Sadie Neakok grew up between two worlds. She learned to sew skin clothing and to run a dog team, but she also had to obey her father's curfews, and at age fourteen she was sent to San Francisco for high school. Upon her return she began a career dedicated to helping to ease Barrow's Native community into the American educational, legal and political system.

Endowed equally with courage and compassion, Sadie began as a schoolteacher, moved on to become a public welfare worker, and eventually took on her most challenging position: magistrate. When she started school in San Francisco, 'I didn't know what a president was, or his cabinet, Congress, all those things' (p 88). Thirty years later, as magistrate, she had to apply the laws of the state to the residents of Barrow. As the wife of an *umialik*, or whaling captain, Sadie also had a full slate of work at home. In between raising a dozen children and spending time hunting, trapping and fishing. Sadie had to make the clothing for her husband's whaling crew, and distribute the bounty of the whale to the community when the crew was successful.

Margaret Blackman compiled Sadie's life history from taped interviews, which evolved from a field school in archaeology and oral history for Barrow High School students. Most of the book consists of lightly-edited transcripts of those interviews, interspersed with Blackman's notes, giving background and other relevant information. Blackman also includes a lengthy opening