

greater impact on the reader. The following chapter by Chown and others on invertebrates concludes that it will be hard to keep the island free of introduced species without much greater efforts than hitherto, a point also made with respect to the flora in the previous chapter. H. Dartnall provides a data synthesis of the freshwater fauna of the island, which is significantly depauperate but otherwise little different to Iles Kerguelen. The same appears to be true of the nearshore fish fauna reviewed by R. Williams. Birds, as might be expected, have attracted rather greater scientific interest over the years, and E. Woehler's major account puts into print a great deal of detailed data on each of the species reported from the island and its surrounding sea. The maps showing distribution at sea will appear very confusing until the reader finally locates the outline of the island, which would have been much easier to identify if it had been solid.

The chapter by K. Green on marine mammals provides accounts for seven species of seals and one paragraph on whales, and is followed by an interesting historical account by M. and E. Downes of nineteenth-century sealing. Indeed, the following chapters on sealing, and the various ANARE expeditions by G.D. Munro and K. Green, will be of particular interest to many general readers who will know little of the history of the island. In the light of this, it seems curious that only two pages are devoted to the last three expeditions from 1999 onwards, when the greatest number of people and activities have taken place and there have been international participants in the expeditions. There is clearly much more to be told about the most recent visits. I know that a considerable effort has been made by one of the editors to locate all the known photographs for Heard, and I can only hope that these will be properly printed at some point, as the postage-size pictures used here as historical illustrations simply do not do justice to an amazingly dramatic island. The final short chapter by N. Gales and others describes how the island and its waters are providing a focus for a new approach to conservation at an ecosystem scale.

This volume is very much a scientific and historical compilation, presented in a scientific format with few concessions to the general reader. For a small, uninhabited island with a limited history, perhaps this is the only way that the existing data can be sensibly treated. But it would have been an improvement to have had a more general introductory chapter by the two editors melding the key facts into an easily read narrative and illustrated by some of the spectacular colour pictures that exist for the island.

The simplicity of its ecosystems, its sensitivity to climate change, and its freedom from most human impacts does indeed make the island a sentinel for the Southern Ocean. The provisions invoked by the Australian government to manage it recognise its unique features. This volume provides an important benchmark against which change can be measured, as well as underpinning the scientific basis for management in the future. Despite the limited illustrations and, for some at least, the rather

forbidding nature of the text, this is a most welcome addition to the limited literature on Heard Island. (David W.H. Walton, British Antarctic Survey, High Cross, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0ET).

#### **TANANA AND CHANDALAR: THE ALASKA FIELD JOURNALS OF ROBERT A. MCKENNAN.**

Craig Mishler and William E. Simeon (Editors). 2006. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. xxx + 266 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-889963-77-1. \$US45.00. doi:10.1017/S003224740727634X

Robert A. McKennan is certainly not the best-known anthropologist to have written about northern Athabaskans. Indeed, his two ethnographies, *The Upper Tanana Indians* (1959) and *The Chandalar Kutchin* (1965), have both been long out of print despite their relevance to the study of Alaska's aboriginal peoples. In editing McKennan's field journals, Craig Mishler and Bill Simeon have done a great service by providing insight into field experiences resulting in work that should be better known. I first encountered McKennan's work after reading that of another anthropologist who perhaps should be better known, Richard Slobodin's ethnography on the Teetl'it Gwich'in, in which he referred to 'McKennan's long awaited monograph on the Tanana' (1962: 3). These were tantalising words to a new student of northern Athabaskan peoples, and they encouraged me to find and read McKennan's writings, for which I was thankful. Mishler and Simeon's work in exposing more anthropologists and historians of the discipline to McKennan's contribution to Athabaskan studies is well warranted. Furthermore, the book is engaging in its analysis of McKennan's contribution to Alaskan studies, and the journals are a pleasure to read.

The body of the book is organized into four parts. First there is a 'biographical sketch' written by Mishler, which contains much about McKennan's academic life, including his long history with sociology and anthropology at Dartmouth. This history started with his first undergraduate anthropology course taught by Malcolm Willey (a student of Franz Boas) and ending with his retirement and appointment to professor emeritus in 1969 after almost 40 years as an active faculty member. His time at Dartmouth was interrupted twice, first by his doctoral work at Harvard where he worked for, and was influenced by, A.L. Kroeber, and then by three years of military service during World War II, which he spent in Alaska.

The biography is followed by an introduction to the field journals, authored by both Mishler and Simeon. In the introduction, we learn that McKennan was a prolific writer of letters and was religious in his keeping a record of daily events while he was in the field during the winter of 1929–30 (for the Tanana material) and the summer of 1933 (for the Chandalar material). The authors explain their choice of entries to publish in this book, keeping those of anthropological interest and editing out those with 'no or little ethnographic content' — the authors

also provide the reader with synopses of the entries that have been omitted. It is also in this introduction that the authors analyse McKennan's ethnographies, returning often to the theme of the Boasian influence on his work. McKennan attempted to describe Tanana and Gwich'in culture holistically and with scientific objectivity by always writing about his findings in the third person. Mishler and Simeon are correct in establishing the fact that this emphasis on distanced description left many anthropologists dissatisfied with a lack of theory in his work, while maintaining that McKennan's methodology has deep theoretical roots in American anthropology.

The authors also introduce the fact that McKennan's field journals are very different from his published ethnographies. The journals were written in the first person, reported on what he thought about certain situations, are rich in descriptions about his personal relationships with people, and perhaps most interestingly they contain a great deal of information on the Euro-American residents of the area. For the scholar interested in the history of the northwest part of North America, his descriptions about the relationship between European agents, trappers, and traders and Aboriginal people during the early 1930s are invaluable. The only dissatisfaction that I have with the introduction is that I would have liked more discussion about the reasons for such a long delay between his fieldwork and the publication of his ethnographies. There is mention of the Depression and then World War II delaying the books' publication but not much discussion about the change in the academic climate, namely a shift to an ecological-evolutionary orthodoxy that dominated American anthropology when he was trying to get the books published. Many of McKennan's descriptions — like those of several other scholars working in Alaska and northern Canada — challenged the assumptions used as evidence for culture change by the leading figures in this neo-evolutionary school of thought. However, the picture that Mishler and Simeon present is perhaps more true to the temperament of McKennan if we are to take his field journals as a guide. They focus on the positive relationships that he had with people like Elmer Harp instead of the conflicts that he had within the discipline.

The last two parts of the book comprise McKennan's field journals annotated by Simeon in the case of the Tanana and Mishler for the Chandalar. As stressed by Mishler and Simeon, the journals represent the humanist side of McKennan's work that is often downplayed in his 'scientific tradition' of writing ethnography. As an illustration of the two sides of McKennan's writings, the authors have added a few quotations from his ethnographies below corresponding passages in his journals, so that the reader may easily refer between the two versions. The journals are full of adventure and document the highs and lows that he encountered while doing anthropological fieldwork. McKennan openly questioned some of his own methods, referring to the anthropometric measurements he was to take as part of his funded research as 'a nuisance'

and 'the worst feature of my work' because this method was regarded suspiciously by his informants. Certainly some of his methods and some of his activities while in the field would be frowned upon today; however, the journals would be a most valuable read for any student preparing to go to the field. While the technologies, methodologies, and ethics of fieldwork have changed, the need to form good relationships to be successful has not; McKennan was particularly skilled at forming good, lasting associations with his informants or teachers. For those more interested in the area, the many annotations are highly informative, providing background to cultural matters mentioned by McKennan and documenting almost all the people mentioned within the text. There are also photographs (many taken by McKennan) of the people that he worked with, most of which have never been seen by their descendants. The inclusion of some of the photographs shot by McKennan while in the field aids in repatriation, highlights his humanistic side, and assists in reinvigorating the relationship formed between anthropology and these communities. Those interested in Athabaskan material culture will find the colour photographs of beaded clothing curated at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan, in the Robert McKennan collection a welcome addition.

While both Mishler and Simeon's own research with the Gwich'in and the Tanana have contributed to the anthropological record on Alaskan Athabaskans, their work in re-introducing anthropology to McKennan's ethnography and journals is laudable. Not only does it have potential for further exegesis on the history of the discipline, but it allows anthropologists an opportunity to connect to one of our own ancestors in a positive manner. (Robert P. Wishart, Department of Anthropology, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 3QY.)

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**COURAGE SACRIFICE DEVOTION: THE HISTORY OF THE US NAVY ANTARCTIC AIR SQUADRON VXE-6, 1955–99.** Noel Gillespie. 2006. West Conshohocken, PA: Infinity Publishing. vi + 513 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-7414-2912-8. \$US35.95. doi:10.1017/S0032247407286346

This is not a book to read through but to dip into. It is a fine collection of flying stories largely compiled from the accounts of the airmen involved. The title words *Courage sacrifice devotion* are taken from the inscription on the US Antarctic Service medal. The stories extend from 1955