

Fish drying rack with scavenger deterrent, Noorvik, Alaska, 1987.  $\hfill {\ensuremath{\mathbb C}}$  R. Drozda.

# Sociocultural Anthropology in Alaska, 1972-2002: An Overview

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Abstract: Sociocultural research done in Alaska since 1971 exceeds in volume, by several orders of magnitude, all of the work ever done in the region before that. Some of it was oriented to practical concerns, such as land claims, subsistence, and social problems, but a very wide range of other subjects was addressed as well. In this review I attempt to present a comprehensive summary of the people who carried out this research and especially of the corpus of literature they produced.

The most exciting aspect of being a sociocultural anthropologist is the breadth of the field. One can study almost anything one wants without being told, "That's not in your field." Economics, politics, religion, education, demography, culture change, ethnic relations, ecology these and many more topics are legitimate subjects for sociocultural anthropologists to investigate.

Unfortunately, that same characteristic makes the preparation of a summary of three decades of work in the field a difficult enterprise, even when it is geographically restricted to Alaska. I personally do not know where sociocultural anthropology ends and other fields begin. Until I started work on this paper I didn't really care, either. In my own research, if I am interested in something, I pursue it wherever it takes me. Whether or not I am intruding into a field other than my own never crosses my mind — unless, of course, I cannot understand the technical jargon I am reading. But in preparing this paper, I had to make some decisions. Accordingly, I devoted some time to devising a set of defining criteria. However, I gave it up as a useless exercise.

What I ended up doing was taking a sample from the literature on Alaska of what is or seems to me to be sociocultural anthropological articles, reports, theses, and books. This is not a random sample of Alaskana, because I do not know how one could properly identify a universe to be sampled. Instead, it was what I call a "haphazard" sample; I simply included in it every title I could find. This turned out to be 1500 titles published from the beginning of 1972 through the end of 2002. That seemed to be a nice round number, and since I was about out of time when I reached it, I stopped looking for any more. I wish to add the fact that compiling the sample was a humbling experience. When I agreed to do this paper I thought I was pretty well up-to-date on sociocultural anthropology in Alaska. Further investigation revealed that I had only the faintest notion about the work that has been done in the field during the period of interest here. I have since learned a lot, including the fact that I have barely scratched the surface of what is clearly a substantial body of literature.

This paper was prepared as part of a celebration honoring the 30th meeting of the Alaska Anthropological Association (aaa). Although the first meeting was held in 1974, I have taken 1972 as my starting point because the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was passed at the very end of 1971. That, it seems to me, was an even more significant threshold for anthropological research in Alaska than the founding of the aaa. At the other end, as this is being written in May, 2003, articles and books dated 2002 are still appearing, and only one item concerning Alaska with a 2003 date has crossed my desk. Therefore, my coverage is of a thirty-one year period, 1972-2002.

The paper begins with brief survey of the state of sociocultural anthropology in Alaska as it was in early 1972. Attention then shifts to the people who have conducted sociocultural anthropology in the state since then. This is followed by the main body of the paper, which concerns the corpus of work these investigators have produced.

#### **THE 1972 SITUATION**

The early 1970s was a time of great excitement in Alaskan anthropology. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was passed by Congress in December, 1971, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act followed less than a year later. Both had an enormous impact on the people of the state, and particularly on its Native inhabitants. In 1972 the influx of outsiders into Alaska in the hope of getting rich somehow from Alaska's oil had already begun. Where money leads, academics are sure to follow.

By the winter of 1974, a large and rapidly growing number of anthropologists was already working in Alaska. There were enough of them to make even the first few meetings of the aaa significantly larger than the annual meetings of the *national* association in Canada, where I was working at the time.

Most Alaskan anthropologists were archeologists in the early 1970s, as is the case today. Sociocultural types were nevertheless present in some numbers - perhaps two or three dozen. Most of them were people in their 20s and early 30s. The members of this group had done and were doing some interesting research. However, they were just beginning to get up to speed in their publications.

A rather more established group of scholars consisted of people in their late 30s and 40s who were in or approaching the most productive period of their professional careers. These mature scholars formed a much smaller group than that of the relative neophytes, so much so that its members can be counted on one hand: Norman Chance (1966), Fred Milan (1964), Wendell Oswalt (1963a, 1963b), Dorothy Jean Ray (1961, 1967), and James VanStone (1962, 1967). I should also mention Charles Campbell Hughes (1960) in this context, although he had already turned most of his attention to other parts of the world.

The final group, the senior scholars, were at or approaching retirement age. In this group I include Frederica de Laguna (1947), Margaret Lantis (1946, 1947), and Robert McKennan (1959, 1965). Cornelius Osgood (1940, 1958) and Robert Spencer (1959) were also in this group, although both had pretty well moved out of Alaskan studies by the early 1970s. McKennan, who was 69 years old in 1972, was the oldest, but de Laguna, Lantis, and Osgood were not far behind.

My sample of 1500 titles was produced by 677 people, either singly or in combination. Of the total, 401 (59.3%) were male and 244 (36%) were female; for the rest I have only their initials, and I do not know whether they were male or female. One hundred six of the authors, or 15.8%, were Alaska Natives.

The people who produced the sample represent a wide variety of disciplines, interests and professional qualifications. Many, particularly during the land claims era of the 1970s and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) era of the 1980s, were graduate students and even undergraduates. For many of them, the government or Native sponsored research programs relating to the various pieces of legislation provided the means to visit and travel around Alaska and do something constructive while they were at it. If their work was published at all, it was usually in the "gray literature" reports of the University of Alaska (Fairbanks) Anthropology and Historic Preservation - Cooperative Park Studies Unit, and the Technical Papers series of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence. The heyday of this type of activity was the tenyear period 1981-1991, during which nearly half of the total sample was published. Some of these people have stayed on in Alaska and gone on to careers in academia, government, or anthropology-related business, but others have left the field and/or the state altogether.

Those of us who had completed graduate training but who were just beginning to publish in 1972 have become mature scholars ourselves over the intervening years. Now it is we who are at or approaching retirement age. However, many of the people who were actively involved in sociocultural anthropology in Alaska in 1972 are still active in the field today. We have lost a few to death, illness, and age, and some have turned their attention to other regions, but the enterprise seems to be too interesting for most of us just to walk away from. While large numbers of newcomers have entered the field, many of the elders continued to be active into and Frederica de Laguna and Margaret Lantis - who were at the pinnacle of our profession in 1972, continued to produce important work until they were in their eighties. De Laguna's latest book was published in 2000, the year in which she celebrated her 94th birthday. As this is being written in May, 2003, she is "still actively involved in writing and research" (de Laguna 2003).

Three hundred and two titles, or 20% of the total, were produced in whole or in part by just eleven people, who are listed in Table 1. This table lists the most productive scholars in sociocultural anthropology — as measured by the number of titles in which a person was the author, a co-author or, in some cases, editor — as long as the editor made a substantive contribution to the work. The tally did not include book reviews, or publications by these authors concerning areas outside Alaska.

### TABLE 1. PRODUCTIVITY IN ALASKAN SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY, 1972-2002

Author	Titles	
Lydia T. Black	39	
Ann Fienup-Riordan	37	
James A. Fall	35	
Steve J. Langdon	32	
James W. VanStone	30	
Robert J. Wolfe	30	
Ernest S. Burch, Jr.	29	
Craig W. Mishler	23	
Arthur E. Hippler	18	
Thomas F. Johnston	16	
James Magdanz	16	

One name that does not appear in Table 1 needs to be mentioned, Richard A. Pierce. Professor Pierce, through his work with the Limestone Press and the University of Alaska Press, has had an extraordinarily productive career writing, translating, and editing volumes on the Russian era in Alaska. In one capacity or another, he was involved in the production of 54 of the titles included in my sample. We are all in his debt for the enormous amount of information he has made available to us.

#### THE SAMPLE

Turning now to results of these researchers' efforts, I show in Table 2 the major areas of interest in Alaskan sociocultural anthropology — as represented in my sample. The table shows only the areas in which the most work has been done; several others in which less research has been carried out are not listed. Some titles are included in more than one category, although many more could have been.

TABLE 2.	MAJOR AREAS OF INTEREST IN	N
AL	ASKAN SOCIOCULTURAL	
AN	NTHROPOLOGY, 1972-2002	

Category	Number	Percent
Subsistence	347	23.1
General ethnography	188	12.5
Material culture	109	7.3
Culture change	102	6.8
Ecology	77	5.1
Exploration	70	4.7
Folklore	70	4.7
Contemporay Life	61	4.1
Land Claims	59	3.8
Biographies	49	3.2
Politics	42	2.8
Ethnic Relations	36	2.4
Village History	35	2.4

The overwhelming majority of titles in all categories involved the study of Alaska's Native people. A great deal of the research was driven directly or indirectly by the ANCSA, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and ANILCA. This shows up clearly in the dominance of works focusing on subsistence, which constitute nearly a quarter of the entire sample.

Subsistence studies are discussed in a separate paper in this volume by Polly Wheeler and Tom Thornton, hence are not mentioned further here. Work in applied anthropology is discussed separately by Kerry Feldman, Steve Langdon, and David Natcher.

Given the number of titles I have to deal with in this paper, I am obviously obliged to keep the presentation brief and to the point. Thus there is a minimum of analysis and evaluation of the works under review. My objective is to give the reader an overview of the subjects that have been investigated by sociocultural anthropologists in Alaska. The quality of what they have produced must be left to others to determine. The relative emphasis on different subjects that appears in my survey directly reflects that in the sample; it has nothing to do with my assessment of their relative importance.

#### **GENERAL ETHNOGRAPHY**

The largest subject area within the scope of my responsibility, albeit the second largest overall, is what I have called "general ethnography." This category includes works that are either comprehensive in scope, or else do not fit very neatly into any other slot. Publications in this category cover an enormous variety of topics.

# Comprehensive Works

Fifty-one titles were what I call "encyclopedic summaries." These consist of works that summarize a great deal of information in fairly brief presentations. Most of these were chapters in the *Handbook of North American Indians*, primarily in the volumes on the Arctic (Damas 1984) — 16 chapters; Subarctic (Helm 1981) — 12 chapters; and Northwest Coast (Suttles 1990) — 6 chapters. A few others were in volumes that had the word "encyclopedia" in their titles (e.g., Burch 1991b; Olson 1994; Worl 1999). Still others were brief summaries in volumes produced in conjunction with museum exhibits (e.g., T. Ager 1982; VanStone 1988). A complete stranger to the state could read all of these items in just a day or two and acquire a pretty good overview of Alaska Native life, albeit one now slightly out of date.

Thirty titles were works that I classified as comprehensive ethnographies. These were books or monographs which summarize in some detail a broad range of aspects of life among the people concerned. Examples include the following: A. Clark's (1974) monograph on the Koyukon; de Laguna's (1972) three-volume work on the Tlingit; Ellanna and Balluta's (1992) volume on Nondalton; Guédon's (1974) volume on Tetlin; and Jolles' (2002) book on Gambell. A special case is the volume edited by Crowell, Steffian and Pullar (2001) on the Alutiiq in which the contrasting perspectives of Alutiiq people and non-Native researchers are juxtaposed to one another with respect to a wide range of subjects.

Finally, there were eight general texts. Examples include Chance's (1990) volume on northern Alaska, Laughlin's (1980) book on the Aleuts, Olson's (1997) text on the Tlingit, and Langdon's (2002) volume on Alaska Natives generally.

# **Focused Studies**

There were about a hundred more focused studies in the general ethnography category, the total varying according to the extent to which a given title is included in more than one category. Twenty-three titles in this group are books or monographs, six are Ph.D. dissertations, and the rest are articles in journals or chapters in books. Since a hundred titles are far too many to cover in this review, I decided to follow the basic procedure of commenting on every tenth one in the list, working my way alphabetically down it. However, I cheated a little bit in order to provide a greater range of variation in the study populations than would have been achieved by proceeding strictly by the numbers.

The first example is an article by Douglas Anderson (1974/75) on trade networks among the Selawik Eskimos during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The paper contains an ethnographic sketch of the study population, a summary of the social organization of the traders, an account of trade routes and trade goods, and a discussion of how trade fit into the seasonal round. Very little had been published about the Selawik people at the time this article appeared.

The next example is a chapter by Balluta and Cline (1990) on the Dena'ina of Kijik and Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. This is a short piece that perhaps should have been included in the encyclopedic summaries section above. In just five and a half pages, the authors summarize the late pre-contact social organization of the study population, and describe the demographic and social changes that population experienced right up until the paper was written.

The third piece is an article written by Burch (1998) about early-contact boundaries and borders in north-central Alaska. Following a discussion of relevant analytic concepts, the author reviews the latest evidence on early and mid-19th century Iñupiaq Eskimo, Gwich'in, and Koyukon distribution and interaction in the region. He concludes that the ethno-linguistic map of north-central Alaska needs to be redrawn in the light of the evidence presented.

The next example is an article by Fienup-Riordan (1984) that is somewhat similar in its subject matter to the one by Burch discussed above, except that it is focused on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The author reviews the definition and character of traditional regional groups in the region and mechanisms of interand intra-group relations, the effect that famine and diseases had on these groups through the 1920s, and the formation of modern villages since the 1930s. A volume of mid-19th century ethnographic sketches constitutes the next example. It consists of translations of several papers presented by H. J. Holmberg (1985) on his observations in southeastern and southern Alaska around the middle of the 19th century. Holmberg was a good if untrained observer, and his accounts contain a substantial quantity of useful ethnographic data on the people of those regions, particularly the Tlingit and the Alutiiq-speaking Koniag Eskimos of Kodiak Island.

The sixth example is a volume compiled by Krupnik and Krutak (2002) in which a number of old, mostly unpublished documents, transcripts of interviews with Natives, and photographs are combined into a source book on some forty years (1900-1940) of life on St. Lawrence Island. This volume was compiled with the active involvement of the Yup'ik people of St. Lawrence Island, and is intended to preserve and make available to future generations of islanders information about their past.

Next up is an article by Margaret Lantis (1972) on factionalism and leadership on Nunivak Island based on observations she made there between 1940 and 1961. She begins by summarizing the traditional system of leadership and factionalism, then describes the forces that caused it to change during the twenty-one years encompassed by her study. Throughout the paper she analyzes the relationship between the personality of individual leaders, on the one hand, and (social) structural elements on the other.

The eighth case is a paper by Moss (1993) in which she investigates the dietary and economic importance of shellfish among the Tlingit. She argues that the Tlingit "associated shellfish with poverty, laziness, and ritual impurity," and that, therefore, people who could afford to avoid eating shellfish did so. People who did not have sufficient access to alternative foods did not. Anyone studying food habits among the Tlingit would come up with a dramatically different set of conclusions about the dietary importance of shellfish according to the status of the specific people being studied.

Joan Townsend's (1980) paper on ranked societies of the Alaskan Pacific Rim is the next

example of a general ethnographic study. Townsend argues that the usual anthropological division of the early-contact Native peoples of southern Alaska into Aleut, Eskimo, and Indian is misleading in certain important respects. It is more useful, she suggests, to divide them according to their basic social structure. This would place them in one of two groups, those with classes (free & slave), and those without. The paper elaborates on this basic point at some length.

The tenth and final paper to be considered in this section is Worl's (1980) account of the North Slope Inupiat whaling complex. She describes North Slope whaling as carried on in the 1980s, and shows in some detail how it combined traditional elements (procedures, organization, equipment, values) with modern equipment and the cash economy.

# **MATERIAL CULTURE**

The next most popular general subject area was material culture, with 109 titles. Once again, there was wide variation in coverage, ranging from halibut hooks (Jonaitis 1981) and houses (Burch 1983) to peg calendars (Black 1987), totem poles (Patrick 2002), and caribou drive fences (Warbelow et al. 1975).

One important category of titles on material culture consisted of documents associated with museum exhibits. Examples include the exhibit celebrating the centennial of the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka (Corey 1987), the volume associated with the Crossroads of Continents exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution (Fitzhugh and Crowell 1988), and the University [of Pennsylvania] Museum's exhibit of Alaska Native materials (Kaplan and Barsness 1986). A similar group consisted of studies of specific collections, such as that of the Alaska Commercial Company at the Hearst Museum at the University of California Berkeley (Graburn et al. 1996), the Cook voyage artifacts in Leningrad, Berne and Florence museums (Kaeppler 1978), the Bruce collections at the Field Museum of Natural History (VanStone 1976, 1980), and the Etholén collection at the National Museum of Finland (Varjola et al. 1990).

Native art was an important focus of attention during the period under review. Black (1982) published a general volume on Aleut art, Jonaitis (1986) published one on northern Tlingit art, and Ray (e.g., 1977, 1981) published several books on Eskimo art. There were also several articles and chapters dealing with art in more general works (e.g., Blackman and Hall 1988; Fitzhugh 1988; M. Lee 1999). Finally, I should mention Himmelheber's (1993) volume on artists in southwestern Alaska, which manages to discuss in just 83 pages Yup'ik Eskimo artists' perceptions, daily life, ceremonial activities, talent, materials, techniques, and the varied uses of artistic products.

Another class of titles concerning material culture focused on particular types of objects. Popular subjects included baskets (e.g., M. Lee 1998; Shapsnikoff and Hudson 1974), boats (e.g., Braund 1988; Zimmerly 2000), clothing (e.g., Black 1991; Chaussonnet and Driscoll 1994), houses (Clark 1995; Corbin 1976), and masks (Fienup-Riordan 1996; Liapunova 1994; Sonne 1988).

A few studies included detailed descriptions and illustrations not only of objects, but of how they were made. Examples include Foote's (1992) account of a wide array of Point Hope material culture items and O'Brien's (1997) study of Athapaskan implements. A special case is the North Slope Borough's small volume on how to braid "real" thread (Utqiaġvigmiut Aġviqsiuqtit Aġnaŋich 2000). In addition to showing the skill and artistic talents of Native craftsmen, these studies demonstrate, if proof was needed, that Alaska Natives employ as much technical jargon in the conduct of their own specialties as anthropologists do in theirs.

A few other material culture studies need to be mentioned. One is the volume edited by Wendell Oswalt (1972) on modern Alaska Native material culture, which contains chapters by different authors on objects made and used in various parts of the state. Another consists of studies by Lucier and VanStone (1991, 1992) on traditional oil lamps and pottery made in the Kotzebue Sound area. Hoffman's (2002) article on the adoption, manufacture, use, and social implications of thin, grooved needles by the eastern Aleuts takes an interestingly different tack. Finally, I should note the papers on Aleut and Yup'ik Eskimo iconography by Black (1994) and Fienup-Riordan (1997), respectively, which offer particularly enlightening analyses of that subject.

### **CULTURE CHANGE**

The next most popular subject area was culture change, with 102 titles. Here again there were a number of specific areas of concentration, supplemented by studies dealing with a variety of subjects.

The specific area of greatest interest was religious change, with 18 titles, virtually all of which deal with the conversion of one Alaska Native group or another to Christianity. Specific cases include Russian Orthodox and Tlingit (e.g., Ivanov 1997; Kan 1999; Mousalimas 1995), Russian Orthodox and Yup'ik Eskimos (e.g., Black 1984b; Rathburn 1981), Moravians and Yup'ik Eskimos (Fienup-Riordan 1988, 1991), Presbyterians and Asiatic Yup'ik Eskimos (Jolles 1989), the Friends Church and Iñupiaq Eskimos (Burch 1994b), and Episcopalians and Iñupiag Eskimos (Turner 1994). Almost all of these studies touch on the syncretism of traditional Native and Christian beliefs in the resulting world view of the converts. Flanders (1984, 1991) discusses a more complex situation in which Jesuit priests competed with Protestant school teachers for the souls of the villagers.

Other topics having relatively broad interest include the following: cultural revitalization (e.g., Harcharek 1992; McNabb 1991; Pullar 1996), economic change (e.g., Flanders 1983; A. Mason 2002; Townsend 1975a), political change (e.g., Hippler and Conn 1973, 1974), technological change (e.g., Gregg 2000; Hall 1978), and the introduction of schools (e.g., Chance 1974; Cline 1974; Ducker 2002; Kleinfeld 1992). Examples of more comprehensive studies of change in particular areas include Barsness's (1997) study of a Tlingit community, A. and D. Clark's (1978) study of Allakaket, Griffin's (1996) study of change in Kotlik, VanStone's (1977) volume on Ingalik culture change, and Veltre's (1990) study of change among the Aleuts.

An idea of the further diversity in studies of culture change can be conveyed by noting some studies in the "miscellaneous" category: Davis' (1978) study of historical indicators of change, Fienup-Riordan's (1992a) study of culture change and identity, Jorgensen's (1996) paper on Alaska Natives and the Protestant ethic, Kolhoff's (1995) volume on the evacuation of the Aleuts during World War II, and Sprott's (1997) paper on the new seasonal round in an Iñupiaq village.

#### **ECOLOGY**

Ecology, or, more specifically, human ecology — in the broad sense of relations between humans and their environment, was the next most popular general area of sociocultural research. Theoretically, most subsistence studies could be placed in this category, but they are not covered in the present survey. There are a few focal areas under the heading of ecology that attracted the interest of several scholars, so I deal with them first. One area that has become popular in recent years is the study of traditional ecological (or environmental) knowledge, or TEK. Perhaps the most substantial work in this area is the volume edited by Krupnik and Jolly (2002), which contains three papers concerning Alaska. Other TEK studies include Huntington et al. (1999) on the ecology of beluga whales, Mishler (2001b) on Alutiiq weather lore, and R. O. Stephenson (1982) on Nunamiut Eskimos, wildlife biologists, and wolves.

Another area of interest within ecology is wildlife management, which might be considered a form of "applied ecology." Wildlife management involves the management of people, through the imposition of bag limits, hunting seasons, and other restrictions, almost as much as it does the management of non-human fauna. That having been said, it must be admitted that most of the literature in this area has been written by biologists. One area where social scientists have been importantly involved is co-management, by which is meant the cooperative working out of management plans by biologists and hunters, particularly subsistence hunters. Alaskan examples of work in this area include the following: Freeman (1989), Hensel and Morrow (1998), Huntington (1992a, 1992b), Kruse et al. (1998), Langdon (1989), Sneed (1998), and Spaeder (2000).

A third special area of ecology, and one I suspect is rarely included in it, is world view, which has to do with people's basic perceptions of the environment. Examples of work in this area include Black's (1998) analysis of the Aleut structuring of the semantic domain pertaining to fauna, Burch's (1994a) paper on rationality and resource use among hunters, Nelson's (1982) article on the Koyukon conservation ethic, and Pratt's (1993) paper on giant birds. Particularly instructive are the papers by Fienup-Riordan (1999) and Merculieff (1994), which contrast the perceptions of Alaska Natives with those of Western scientists.

This leaves us with a diverse residual group of ecological studies of which I will note just a few. I begin with some narrowly focused studies, of which Bockstoce and Botkin's studies of the harvest of pacific walruses (1982) and bowhead whales (1983) by the pelagic whaling industry remain definitive works. Other useful studies include Campbell's (1978) paper on the aboriginal overkill of game populations, particularly of Dall sheep, and Black's (1981) article on volcanism as a factor in human ecology. Somewhat more general are Nelson's volumes on Gwich'in "designs for survival" (1973) and the Koyukon view of the northern forest (1983). More broadly oriented still are Hett and O'Neill's (1974) systems analysis of the Aleut ecosystem, Langdon's (1979) comparison of Tlingit and Haida adaptation to the west coast of Prince of Wales Archipelago and his (1995) analysis of human population responses to climate change in northern Alaska, and McCartney's (1995) analysis of maritime adaptations in southern Alaska.

### HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Three of the categories listed in Table 2 concern historical subjects. These consist of reports of explorations, biographies, and village histories that contain useful ethnographic information.

Works on exploration consist of explorers' journals, mostly from the 18th, 19th and very early 20th centuries, which contain considerable information of ethnographic significance. That they appeared during the 1972-2002 period is due to the fact that they have only recently been discovered (e.g., Bockstoce 1988), or that earlier published versions have been translated only recently from (usually) Russian (e.g., VanStone 1977) or Spanish (e.g., Cutter 1991) into English. Their appearance has meant that we have more information on 18th and 19th century Alaska available to us now than we did thirty years ago.

The forty-eight biographies in the sample are mostly accounts of the lives of Native elders in different parts of the state which were compiled for use in village schools. In most cases (e.g., Madison and Yarber 1981), the material was presented orally by the elder concerned, and recorded, transcribed, (often) translated, and edited by someone else. In a few other instances, the book was written by the person who is featured in it (e.g., Seveck 1973), while in still others the volume was the result of a collaboration between the book's subject and an anthropologist (e.g., Blackman 1989; Bodfish 1991).

Finally, most of the thirty-five village histories are chapters in volumes concerning communities in a particular area. The primary examples are L. Lee et al. (1982) on the NANA Region, and Pierce et al. (1999) on the Aleutians East Borough. A few other titles are more in-depth ethnohistorical studies, such as Black's (1984a) book on Atka, and Lynch's (1982) report on Kijik.

#### FOLKLORE

Folklore continues to be an area of active interest for anthropologists and others. Different types of publication are involved here of which one is collections of stories narrated by different people from different parts of the state. The primary examples are the volumes edited by Morrow and Schneider (1995) and Ruppert and Bernet (2001).

Another type of collection is a compilation of stories from a particular region. Some of these compilations were put together and published by Native authors, for example Brown (1987) and Oman (1975). Sometimes they were compiled as a collaboration between narrator and anthropologist, e.g., that of Frank and Frank (1995) with Craig Mishler. More often, they were collected by an anthropologist or folklorist and published under his or her name, usually with attribution. Examples include Hall's (1975) volume of folktales from Noatak, J. Kari's (1986) collection from the upper Ahtna, and the Dauenhauers' (1987, 1990, 1994) massive collection of Tlingit oral literature.

In addition to the collections, there are a few publications of specific legends. Examples include Attla's (1990) volume on the legendary Koyukon traveller K'etetaalkkaanee, and L. Lee et al.'s (1991) volume on the legendary Iñupiaq traveller Qayaqtuagiŋuaqtuaq. This pair is especially interesting because my Koyukon and Iñupiaq friends have assured me that the two stories are Koyukon and Iñupiaq versions of the same legend, although no one has shown that definitively to be the case.

# LAND CLAIMS

Land claims have been an important area of inquiry throughout the period covered by this review. Who owns what land, who can extract oil and minerals from what land, and who can hunt or fish on what land, have been and continue to be important issues.

The period began with efforts to understand and explain the implications of ANCSA. Volumes by R. Arnold (1976) and Bigjim and Ito-Adler (1974) are notable examples. Some years later, those studies were followed by analyses of what had happened since ANCSA was passed. Examples are Anders' (1985) analysis of the land claims and Native corporate development, Berger's (1985) report of the Alaska Native Review Commission, Kruse's (1984) study of changes in the wellbeing of Alaska Natives since ANCSA, McNabb's (1992) review of the first twenty years under ANCSA, and McNabb and Robbins' (1985) study of Native institutional responses to ANCSA. Most recently, we have Mitchell's (2001) substantial analysis of the politics, economics, and history of the act's initial passage.

In addition to general works of the kind just described, there was a whole host of studies whose purpose was to document historic land use of Alaska's Native people in different parts of the state. Examples include Andrews' (1977) report on the cultural resources of the Doyon region, Arundale and Jones' (1989) paper on historic land use processes in the Koyukuk River area, Ivie and Schneider's (1988) volume on land use in the Wainwright area, and Reckord's (1983) report on cultural resources in the Ahtna region.

# POLITICS

Politics is the subject that was just behind land claims in interest during the survey period. This is perhaps appropriate because many of the political studies Alaskan anthropologists are most interested in have to do with land claims and Native self-government.

The period began with studies by Hippler and Conn (e.g., 1973, 1974) concerning the relationship between traditional Iñupiaq "law ways" and those of the dominant Western culture. Of broader concern was the relationship between the development of the North Slope oil fields and Native efforts to control their own destiny (e.g., Ervin 1976). The events of this early period were comprehensively analyzed by McBeath and Morehouse (1980).

During the 1980s, Anders and Anders (1987) did a study of the politics of Alaska Native corporations, Dorothy Jones (1980, 1981) wrote some critical accounts of U. S. administration of the Pribilof Aleuts, and Langdon and Conn (1988) wrote a piece on retribalization. Then Case (1989) raised the self-determination issue again, followed by Fienup-Riordan (1992b) and Kasayulie (1992a, 1992b). The period ended with the publication of Case and Voluck's (2002) volume on *Alaska Natives and American Laws*, and Dombrowski's (2002) interesting article on indigenism and Alaska Native timber politics.

# **ETHNIC RELATIONS**

Ethnic relations, particularly during the 18th and 19th centuries, were of considerable interest during the period under review. Specific foci included relations between Alaska and Asia (e.g., Schweitzer and Golovko 1997), Alaska Natives and British (e.g., L. Klein 1987), Alaska Natives and Russians (e.g., Dean 1994; Gibson 1987; Jacobs 1990; Townsend 1975b), Alaska Natives and Westerners in general (e.g., Hippler 1974b), British and French (Mishler 1990), British and Russian (Gough 1986), Eskimos and Indians (e.g., Burch et al. 1999; Clark and Clark 1976; Nelson 1974; Townsend 1979; VanStone 1979), and Russians and Americans (Haycox 1990b). The coverage was fairly complete. A study that is quite different from any of the others I have read is Hensel's (1996) analysis of ethnicity and discourse in Bethel. He argues that involvement in and talking about subsistence activities mark both gender and ethnicity. He finds that, in Bethel, the Native/non-Native distinction is a continuum rather than a dichotomy, and that through variations in the use of language and participation in subsistence activities people demonstrate just where they stand on that continuum. Further, he finds that association with subsistence practices for men is an assertion of their maleness, whereas for women it is an assertion of their Yup'ik ethnicity.

### **CONTEMPORARY LIFE**

Contemporary life is a somewhat nebulous category I devised to incorporate the diverse titles in my list that (1) deal with the present or very recent situation, and (2) do not fit neatly into any other category. Most of the titles in the subsistence and politics categories would also fit into this one.

One theme that has been frequently invoked is the relationship between oil and various circumstances of contemporary Native life. Examples include Berry's (1975) volume on the politics of oil and Native land claims, Davis' (1979) report on possible impacts of Gulf of Alaska petroleum development, Jorgensen's (1990) book on oil age Eskimos, Klausner and Foulkes' (1982) volume on Eskimos, oil, politics, and alcohol, and Strong's (1979) analysis of the social and economic impact of the Alaska pipeline on Alaska Natives.

Another theme is the "endangered" status of Alaska Natives. Three articles on this subject were included in Freeman's (2000) edited volume on endangered peoples of the arctic. The Alaska Federation of Natives' (1988) study of Alaska Natives at risk reflected this idea even if not presenting it in quite the same terms. In contrast are a number of works depicting Alaska Natives' circumstances in a more upbeat manner. Examples include Anderson et al.'s (1998) volume on Kuvaŋmiit subsistence, Anungazuk's (1995) piece on whaling, Bodenhorn's (2000/01) article on strategic decision-making, and Crowell and Laktonen's (2001) chapter on "our way of living" among the Alutiiq people.

Another distinct subcategory of titles under contemporary life is impact studies. The earliest true impact study within the relevant time period was Mim Dixon's (1978) analysis of the impact of trans-Alaska pipeline construction on the city of Fairbanks. Other such studies include Braund's (1986) analysis of harvest disruptions on King Cove, and Wooley's (1995) account of Alutiiq culture before and after the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. Other studies of the latter include Endter-Wada et al. (1993a, 1993b, 1992). Other relevant work consisted primarily of baseline studies, i.e., they described the "before" before the "after" happened. Examples include Ellanna (1980), Kevin Waring Associates (1988, 1992), and Worl Associates (1978).

The remaining titles in the contemporary life category are rather diverse with regard to subject matter. For example, Hamilton and Seyfrit (1993, 1994a, 1994b) published a number of studies of the town-village relationship in Native life, Kleinfeld (1985) made an assessment of village high schools, and Kruse (1986, 1991) investigated the relationship between subsistence activities and the new wage economy. Also of interest are Flanders' (1992, 1996), Haglund's (1973), Haycox's (1990a) and Richards' (1992) papers on economic development. A final work that should be mentioned here is the volume on contemporary Alaska Native economies compiled by Steve Langdon (1986).

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

The miscellaneous department consists of categories in which the titles constituted less than 2% of the total sample. It has nothing to do with my assessment of the importance of the subjects treated or the quality of the studies that were conducted. Given space constraints, my summaries are brief.

#### Ceremonies

The ceremony that attracted the most attention by far was the potlatch of various Indian groups. The Northwest Coast potlatch was analyzed by de Laguna (1988) and Kan (1986, 1989a, 1989b), for example, and Athapaskan potlatches were described by Guédon (1981), Hippler, Boyer and Boyer (1974, 1975), Kroul (1974), and Simeone (1995, 1998). Eskimo ceremonialism was investigated by Donta (1992), Fair (2001), Jordan (1994), Morrow (1984), and Turner (1992).

#### Demography

The two most comprehensive demographic works produced during the review period were Boyd's (1999) study of the impact of infectious diseases along the Northwest Coast, and Levin's (1991) analysis of the 1980 census in Alaska. Another broad but much briefer study was Milan's (1974/75) historical demography of Alaska's Native population.

More focused studies are equally diverse. For example, on the basis of demographic data from the Nunamiut Eskimos of the central Brooks Range, Binford and Chasko (1976) hypothesized that the first major demographic "transition" near the close of the Pleistocene was caused by changes in fertility rather than changes in mortality. Also on the basis of Nunamiut data, Amsden (1979) developed a model of how hunter-gatherer populations react to the extreme scarcity of critical resources. Dumond (1986, 1990a, 1990b) also studied a population under stress, but in this case the problems were caused by Western contact. In contrast, Harper (1979) investigated the Aleuts, and found both a high population density and remarkable longevity. The Aleuts were also investigated demographically by Laughlin (1972), and Robert-Lamblin (1979, 1982).

Other demographic studies include Krupnik's (1990) research on the population nadir in Siberia and North America, and the Siberian contribution to Alaskan population recoveries (Krupnik 1994), Milan's (1978) study of the Iñupiaq inhabitants of northwestern Alaska, Milan and Pawson's (1975) study of the Native population of an Alaskan city, and Wolfe's (1982) analysis of the impact of measles and influenza on a virgin soil population in Alaska. Finally, Hippler (1976) and Hippler and Wood (1977) studied the social implications of high birth rates among Alaska's Native population.

#### Food and Nutrition

The studies of food and nutrition that came to my attention were few in number, but there probably are many more in the public health literature on Alaska. Those that fell within my purview include Bell and Heller's (1978) study of the modern Eskimo diet, Draper's (1978) and Egeland et al.'s (1998) analyses of the aboriginal Eskimo diet, and Nowak's (1975) study of the impact of convenience foods. Finally, there is the very different but interesting volume by Anore Jones (1983) on edible plants in northwestern Alaska.

# Gender Relations

The subject of gender relations seems to have had a small but devoted following during the period under review. The most active writers were Fogel-Chance (e.g., 1988, 2002) and Jolles (1991, 1997; Jolles and Apatiki 1994). Other contributions were made by Ackerman (1990), L. P. Ager (1980), Ellanna and Sherrod (1994), Frink (2002), L. Klein (1980), and Shepard (2002).

# Health Care & Medicine

There is a substantial literature on health care and medicine in Alaska, most of which is produced and read

by members of the medical professions. There are, however, a few works of particular interest to anthropologists, which is what I focus on here.

The dominant writer on traditional health care among Alaska Natives is Robert Fortuine, who has produced a large number of works on that subject. His major work was the book length survey (1989) of health and disease in the early history of Alaska, but he has written many others. Examples include the use of medicinal plants (1988b), empirical healing (1988a), and traditional surgery (1984, 1985). Other papers on traditional health care include Dixon and Kirchner (1982), Juul (1979), Kirchner (1983), L. Milan (1974), and Turner (1989, 1996). I have not had an opportunity to see Garibaldi's (1999) compilation of medicinal flora of Alaska Natives but, judging from the title, it must be a major work. A special case is Krutak's (1999) paper on joint-tattooing on St. Lawrence Island, in which he describes the practice and systematically associates it with acupuncture in China.

# Kinship & Family Relations

This is a traditional area of anthropological interest, but has not been a subject of much attention in Alaska during the period of interest here. The most active scholar in this area has been Barbara Bodenhorn, who has written a number of works on Iñupiaq family life. Examples include her studies of family portraits (1988a), family stresses (1988b), sharing (1989, 2001), ecology, identity and social relations (1997), and the bases of relatedness (2001).

Other studies include Burch's (1975) study of changing family relationships in Northwest Alaska, de Laguna's (1975) analysis of matrilineal kin groups, Fienup-Riordan's (1983) volume on the Nelson Island Eskimos, Gamo's (1978) account of band structure on Nelson Island, Heinrich's (1972) paper on divorce as an alliance mechanism, Kingston's (1996) account of joking cousins, Magdanz and Utermohle's (1998) study of family groups and subsistence, Sprott's (1999, 2002) analyses of family relationships in an Iñupiaq village, and Tobey's (2002) paper on household relationships in a Deg Hit'an village. A fair amount of information relevant to this subject is also included in most of the more comprehensive studies discussed above under the heading of "general ethnography."

# Methodology

Research methods have been discussed in brief sections of larger works, but relatively little attention has been paid to the subject in documents devoted specifically to it. There are a few exceptions, however. For example, Burch (1991a), Morrow (1995), and Schneider (1995) have written about the methodology of doing oral history research, while Harkin (1996) has addressed a number of issues concerning the ethnographic study of historical documents. Huntington (1998) has commented on the use of the semi-directive interview for documenting traditional ecological knowledge, and McNabb (1990b) has discussed self-reports as a source of information. McNabb (1990a) also discussed the uses of "inaccurate" data in ethnographic research. Finally, Ellanna et al. (1986) did an evaluation of the methodology used in subsistence mapping.

#### Music and Dance

Studies of music and dance were dominated by the research of Thomas F. Johnston, mostly with respect to the Iñupiaq region. His work is too voluminous to cite in full, so a sample will have to do. He has written about songs (1974, 1976a), music in its cultural and social contexts (1975, 1976b), and context, meaning, and function in Iñupiaq dance (1990). Johnston and Pulu (1980) collaborated on a study of Eskimo drumming. Other work in this area has been done by Craig Mishler (1981, 2001a) among Athapaskans, and by Victor-Howe (1994) on St. Lawrence Island. Finally, Kingston (1999) has investigated wolf dance performances by the King Islanders.

#### Personality Studies

Personality studies were primarily the domain of Arthur Hippler and his collaborators back in the 1970s. For example, Boyer, Boyer and Hippler (1974) wrote about ecology, socialization, and personality development among Athapaskans, and Hippler published articles on the culture and personality of both Athapaskans (1973) and Eskimos (1974a). Other workers in this area include Foulks (1972), who wrote on the Arctic hysterias of the North Alaskan Eskimos, and Hughes (1974), who produced a volume about an Eskimo boyhood analyzed "in psychosocial perspective."

#### Place Names

Research on place names has been included as part of many general ethnographic studies, but relatively few titles have been devoted exclusively to the subject. Examples of exceptions include Caulfield et al. (1983) on the upper Yukon-Porcupine region, Fair (1999) on the northern Seward Peninsula coast, E. Jones (1986) on the Koyukuk, and Kari and Fall (1987) on upper Cook Inlet. J. Kari (1989, 1996a, 1996b) is the only one who has taken place-name research to a higher level in seeking the general principles underlying the names used by a particular people.

#### SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Writing this paper was a pain in the neck. It involved too much work, on the one hand, and provided too little intellectual stimulation, on the other, since I did not have time really to study most of the documents in the sample. However, it also gave me an opportunity to become acquainted with several hundred interesting studies of whose existence I was previously unaware. It also left me feeling better about sociocultural anthropology in Alaska than I did before I started. A lot of wonderful research has been done over the past thirty-one years, and I am glad that I had this opportunity to survey it.

Researching this paper also resolved a personal problem for me. For some years I have been convinced that I am getting senile, the specific evidence being that it takes me five times as long to write an article now as it did thirty years ago. After looking at the 1500 documents which I examined for this paper, I realize that to write an article now I have to master ten times as much material as I did thirty years ago. Given this perspective, my brain may be in better shape than I thought it was.

In conclusion, I wish to pay a couple of compliments. The first goes to Ann Fienup-Riordan for the most creative project undertaken during the period under review. This was her study of Yup'ik masks. For this she took a group of elders from southwestern Alaska the whole way to Berlin to study and talk about a museum collection of masks that had been taken from their region more than a century earlier. She recognized the opportunity, she had the courage to carry it out, and she had the discipline to organize a museum exhibit and write or edit several documents on the subject. The second compliment goes to Frederica de Laguna for the most awesome study published during the review period, "awesome" in the old fashioned sense of awe-inspiring. This was her threevolume ethnography of the Tlingit. It was a remarkable achievement, one that well deserves the praise that has been bestowed upon it.

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