UC Merced

The Journal of California Anthropology

Title

Hardesty and Fox: Archeological Investigations in Northern California

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4s3357xv

Journal

The Journal of California Anthropology, 4(1)

Author

Hughes, Richard E.

Publication Date

1977-07-01

Peer reviewed

Dover was indeed a worthy event, but, at least for students of California Indians, was not so significant as the reappearance of the Powers volume. After all, Kroeber's 1925 book has gone through two reprintings in the past 25 years, while Powers' work, first published in 1877, has been practically unavailable and has assumed the status of a rare classic. While it is not of the same high caliber as Kroeber's book, it certainly has its merits, especially since it was the first comprehensive work produced on native California. Moreover, Powers had a critical 30 years' advantage over Kroeber in his synthetic treatment.

In retrospect, Powers' illustrations, all engravings taken from original drawings or photographs, now massed at the front of the present book and somewhat reduced from the 1877 size, are still most attractive, and Power's journalistic prose still delightful. His sometimes excessive statements are now made more understandable or are tempered by Heizer's introduction and notes, which serve also as corrections of certain misapprehensions of Powers or as needed sources of supplementary information.

At the beginning is a list of Powers' writings on California—most of these were published in the Overland Monthly and have also been reprinted by the University of Calfornia Archaeological Research Facility (Contributions No. 28, 1975). It is from these various articles that most of the materials for the book were drawn, evidently with some restraining hand at work, either Powers' or some government publications editor's, or both: the writing in Overland Monthly assuredly is saltier and more florid than the book's, and the opinions more strongly phrased.

It is remarkable that a volume definitive as this one could have been produced after so relatively little field work. Powers was undoubtedly a sharp observer, good listener, and a zealous reporter, and this reprinting of his book 100 years after first publication is a tribute to his skills. Even though he reflected to some extent the common biases of Anglo-Americans toward Indians, it is clear that he was in general a sympathetic man, and this quality makes reading of his book a most worthwhile experience—it is for all, as Alfred Kroeber wrote, "the best introduction to the subject."



Archeological Investigations in Northern California. Donald L. Hardesty and Steven Fox (with an appendix by Thomas Burke). Reno: University of Nevada, Nevada Archeological Survey Research Paper No. 4. 1974. i-v + 77 pp., 4 maps, 3 figs., 1 pl., 1 table, bibliography, 1 appendix. \$4.00. (paper).

Reviewed by RICHARD E. HUGHES University of California, Davis

Despite the state-wide acceleration in archaeological research within the last 25 years, northeast California remains today one of the poorest known regions. For the most part, reports on archaeological investigations remain in manuscript form, and fewer than 20 published papers have appeared on this ecologically diverse region. The present paper is, therefore, a welcomed addition to the meager corpus of data on this region of California.

The monograph under review grew out of an archaeological survey conducted in 1971 for the U.S. Forest Service by the University of Nevada, Reno, in the Lava Beds National Monument and Medicine Lake Highlands areas of Modoc and Siskiyou counties, northeast California. One purpose of this work was to investigate the differential use of resources in these two areas by past human groups.

An introductory chapter includes a succinct summary of the archaeology and ethnography of the area under consideration in REVIEWS 137

which 768 new sites were recorded. These were classified as either semi-permanent camps, chipping stations, hunting blinds, quarry sites, or fortifications used during the Modoc War of 1872-73.

Nearly 900 artifacts were collected during the course of the survey, including 38 typeable projectile points. The occurrence of Northern Side-notched points suggests that human use of the study area may have begun as early as 6000 years ago, while the presence of Elko series and Gunther Barbed types documents use of the area from that period to protohistoric and historic times.

This otherwise straightforward study of resource utilization and ecological patterning, however, is marked by two omissions.

- 1. A study which has as its goal the explication of differential use of resources in two regions by extinct human groups should, in the reviewer's judgement, include a map, series of maps, table, or tables that document the articulation of functional site categories and time-sensitive artifacts with the various microenvironments under consideration.
- 2. Nowhere in the publication is there a map of the exact areas surveyed within the Lava Beds and Medicine Lake Highlands regions, a statement of how many total acres were surveyed, a breakdown of the surveyed areas by acreage per microenvironment, or any explicit statement of survey method. Omission of this information greatly diminishes the explanatory and predictive potential of data generated from the survey.

Elsewhere, we find that the projectile points recognized from the survey do not always match the original type descriptions. For example, the authors state that Rose Spring Corner-notched and Side-notched types were recovered, yet an inspection of Fig. 2 (p. 41) and the ranges on measurement of length, width and thickness suggest that the authors' Rose Spring Corner-notched type may fit better within the Elko series, while their Rose Spring Side-notched type should

probably be considered Northern Sidenotched. Cottonwood Bi-pointed projectile points are described (p. 32), but later apparently confused with Cascade points and assigned a temporal equivalence with Northern Side-notched (p. 50).

Another problem is that the trinomial site designations (4-Mod-#) used in this paper represent those assigned by the University of Nevada, Reno, but another set of trinomials (4-Mod-#) was previously assigned in the area by the University of California Archaeological Survey. To avoid confusion for other researchers, a concordance would have been helpful.

Kroeber (1925) and Murray (1959) are cited to the effect that "a close association existed between the Klamath and Modoc until 1780, when the Modoc separated and moved south to occupy the area around Lower Klamath Lake, Clear Lake, Tule Lake, and Lost River." Later the authors state that "the Modoc were comparatively late entrants into the southern half of the Klamath Basin" (p. 4), and hypothesize that "prior to the Modoc entry, the Achumawi occupied a vast area up to and including the southern shores of Tule Lake, and that they evacuated the region only because of pressure from the intruding Modoc. After this time they (the Achumawi) continued to exploit the resources of the Lava Beds, but at considerably greater risk" (p. 4). While it certainly may have been possible that the Modoc were late entrants into the southern Klamath Basin, and it may have been possible that the Achumawi once occupied the territory up to the shores of Tule Lake, no evidence is presented here to persuade us of the concreteness of these postulated occurrences.

These critical comments should not obscure the contribution of the present volume toward the understanding of several aspects of northern California prehistory. The authors have done a commendable job in mustering evidence for ecological patterning of resource utilization in their study area, and have presented a testable hypothesis relating to shifts in

prehistoric and protohistoric group boundaries in the Lava Beds and southern Klamath Basin. In these respects, the present study will be relevant to research being conducted in other areas of California and the Great Basin.

REFERENCES

Kroeber, A.L.

1925 Handbook of the Indians of California. Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 78.

Murray, K.A.

1959 The Modocs and Their War. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.



Rock Camp Site: Archaeological Excavation of an Indian Campsite Near Lake Arrowhead, San Bernardino Mountains. Ruth Dee Simpson, Gerald A. Smith, Robert Reynolds, Doris Hoover Bowers, and Arda Haenszel. San Bernardino: San Bernardino County Museum Association Quarterly Vol. 20, No. 1, Fall 1972. 174 pp., maps, tables, bibliography, 31 plates.

Reviewed by KEN HEDGES San Diego Museum of Man

Rock Camp Site is presented as one of the first archaeological reports for the Transverse Range of southern California. Work at the site, located in the San Bernardino Mountains northwest of Lake Arrowhead, was conducted by the San Bernardino County Museum from 1965 to 1968.

The report consists of two introductory chapters; a chapter on "Rock Camp Ecological Setting" containing sections on Geological Background, Biological Survey, and History; a "Regional Anthropological Background" with both archaeological and ethnological overviews; and discussions of the site, the excava-

tion, and the artifacts.

The sections on geological and biological background are useful additions, but both suffer from a total lack of bibliographic citation. In the case of the ethnobotanical discussions, the bibliography lists no ethnobotanical references for either the Serrano or any other southern California Indian group. It appears that plant uses were derived from popular books on early uses of plants in California and the West. These sources are not culturally specific and cannot be used as citations for Serrano uses at Rock Camp; as a result, the ethnobotanical data lack validity as presented in the Rock Camp report. The history section, written by Arda Haenszel, is complete, wellwritten, and beautifully referenced, with numerous footnotes containing full bibliographic citations and additional notes. It is by far the best section of the Rock Camp volume; however, the discussion of post-aboriginal history of the area is the least essential part of the report. As fine as the history section is, it does not provide much assistance in archaeological interpretation.

The "Regional Anthropological Background" contains a few citations, but it also is essentially without references. One must assume that the statements have basis in fact, but it would have been useful to have them properly cited in the text.

The archaeological report itself is the most frustrating part of the Rock Camp volume. Although it appears that considerable effort went into the discussion of site layout and excavation procedures, the section is disorganized and difficult to follow. The site map shows that pits were laid out apparently at random—some approximating north, others magnetic north, northwest, or other orientations. The artifact discussion is even more exasperating. Artifacts are discussed in general typological categories with some information on materials used, size ranges, and whether the artifacts were from "western," "central," or "eastern" pits. There is a tabulation of artifact types by