

INUIT BEHAVIOR AND SEASONAL CHANGE IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC. By RICHARD G. CONDON. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983. *Studies in Cultural Anthropology*, No. 2. 217 p. incl. tables, figs. and maps, bib., index. Hardcover. No price indicated.

Dr. Condon spent a continuous period of 17 months at the settlement of Holman on Victoria Island and later returned for another stay of 11 months and is to be complimented on this degree of commitment. The title and initial programmatic statements lead the reader to expect the bulk of the volume to be devoted to examination of the effects of seasonality on Inuit behavior. However, after a short chapter on the environment, about 40 percent of the book deals with historical, ethnographic, and medical background information. It is only in the summary chapter that we learn that there is a dual purpose: "to provide a complete ethnographic description of contemporary settlement life" and the study of "the effects of extreme seasonal change upon physiological functioning, activity rhythms, birth seasonality, and social stress", objectives that by then had been met in detail and in general had been discussed with considerable insight.

The book will not prove to be entirely satisfactory to social anthropologists, for Condon regards Jenness's statement that Copper Eskimo society had been significantly altered by the time of contact as justification to avoid discussion of both traditional and contemporary kinship and voluntary associations.

Linguists will be disappointed in Condon's orthography of Inuit words, which could have benefitted from an emerging literature on Inuit linguistics. An example of oversimplification is ignoring the contrast between the "k", or velar sound, and the "q", or uvular sound.

For the general reader the above criticisms will not be crucial but some of the English vocabulary will be obscure. While Condon has taken pains to define a number of terms that are largely the jargon of the geographer rather than the anthropologist, some like "acrophase" and "inceptical", as well as a large number of medical terms, are not explained.

The sections describing the life cycle, child-rearing practices, and Inuit personality will find consensual support among experienced observers. Condon's arguments concerning seasonality in health, activity rhythms, and demographic responses to seasonality appear to me to be supported by his investigations. Briefly, he found that factors of decreased daylight, increased cold combined with wind, as well as the social factor of intense human contact resulted in higher sickness and death rates during the winter. Reproductive patterns also appear to show the effects of seasonal factors. However, with respect to his analysis of social stress, I find difficulty in his correlations with seasonality.

Condon admits with creditable honesty that his hypothesis that social stress would be greatest during the dark part of the year did not bear up. Instead he inferred from his data that stress was most intense during the early fall, with a secondary peak being reached in May. He measures social stress according to number of criminal offences, which is correlated to alcohol consumption. Increased consumption is, in turn, linked to periods of relative immobility and in-gathering before and after the summer period of population dispersal. In assigning secondary weight to availability of cash to purchase liquor during the early fall, I feel that Condon misses what may be the crucial factor. At \$35 a quart, cost of liquor must be vital. I would submit that the early fall is not necessarily a period of greater social stress than other times but rather that stress is expressed more openly when alcohol is abundant. Ultimately this thesis must be checked by intra-areal comparison. His attempt at comparison is incomplete. Condon cites RCMP statistics that show, indeed, that "actual offences" reach a peak during the third quarter of the year, and probably in September, throughout the Northwest Territories. However, I have observed that alcohol consumption is considerable at that period in arctic communities where the pattern of summer dispersal is not nearly so pronounced as it is at Holman. Not only is more cash available for purchase of liquor because of summer and early autumn

employment in these communities, but often large quantities of beer reach the settlements on annual supply ships at that time.

The book supplies fine insight into contemporary life in the smaller centralized communities of the North as well as some important findings regarding seasonality and Inuit life. It should be added to university libraries and used in courses dealing with life in contemporary Inuit communities as well as in those treating environmental effects on human behavior. It is handsomely bound and displays a high quality of printing, with only a few typographical errors.

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INUA. SPIRIT WORLD OF THE BERING SEA ESKIMO. By WILLIAM A. FITZHUGH and SUSAN A. KAPLAN. National Museum of Natural History. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982. 295 p., 366 captioned figs. Softcover. US\$15.00.

This book is about the Bering Sea Eskimos and their material culture, but it also is a tribute to the American naturalist Edward William Nelson. In 1877 Nelson was appointed to serve with the United States Army Signal Service at its meteorological station in St. Michael, on the Bering Sea coast of Alaska. During his three-year stay he travelled widely through the Norton Sound and lower Yukon River region. The aboriginal inhabitants of that area, the Bering Sea Eskimos, were still relatively unacculturated at that time, as the major impact of white civilization was being felt along the coasts bordering the more northerly whaling grounds. Although he was by vocation a naturalist, Nelson made efforts to understand these people and described what he observed and experienced in a classic anthropological treatise *The Eskimos About Bering Strait* (Nelson, 1899).

While in Alaska, Nelson assembled a huge ethnological collection for the Smithsonian Institution. *Inua: Spirit World of the Bering Sea Eskimo* can be modestly described as a catalogue to accompany an exhibit of the same name that was assembled from the Nelson collection. But it is more than that. As explained in the Introduction, in the traditional world view of the Bering Sea Eskimos each of the artifacts made by man possessed a spirit, or *inua*. Fitzhugh and Kaplan have succeeded in demonstrating the exceptional quality and character of Bering Sea Eskimo material culture — its *inua* — by placing it within the context of nineteenth-century Bering Sea Eskimo life, stories, religion, and art that Nelson encountered. The result is a book providing a comprehensive visual and literary portrait of the Bering Sea Eskimo that is itself an important contribution to anthropology.

The volume includes sections by several contributors that complement the anthropological overview prepared by Fitzhugh and Kaplan. Anthony C. Woodbury provided an oral history recounted by Tom Imgalrea of Chevak, Alaska, which tells about the old ways as they are remembered today. Henry B. Collins prepared a biographical sketch of Nelson's experiences in Alaska. Thomas Ager wrote a chapter describing the natural environment that shaped Bering Sea Eskimo Culture. Dorothy Jean Ray describes and analyzes a traditional art form unique to the area — engravings on bow drills — and Saradell Ard Frederick discusses the contemporary art.

Inua is a high-quality production. Care has been taken in selecting the artifacts which are illustrated in pleasing layouts. The writing is clear and comprehensive while not being unduly technical, and maps, graphs, and line drawings are used to convey information where confusion might otherwise arise. Serious students of arctic ethnology will still study Nelson's monograph. However, this volume will appeal to a wider audience that otherwise would not have the privilege of being exposed to the culture of the Bering Sea Eskimos.