Title
Horr: American Indian Ethnohistory: California and Great-Basin Plateau Indians

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/06r4r1hm

Journal
Journal of California Anthropology, The, 3(2)

Author
Heizer, Robert F

Publication Date
1976-12-01

Peer reviewed
operations which should be undertaken to facilitate the evaluation of the resources present.

As should be the case in all such endeavors, King is careful to state the theoretical bias that governs his evaluations and recommendations. Essentially, this bias is that of the logical positivistic search for regularities in human behavior utilizing archaeological materials as evidence. This bias is also reflected in his statement that "Above all else, archaeological resources are research resources," and that the overview "...is...a tool for the management of archaeological resources in the interest of future research."

Within this framework, the document covers the material well, and some new and interesting historical details are revealed in the process.

Only one major point of concern emerges, and this may have originated in circumstances not fully apparent in the document itself. This involves the orientation of the overview to the management of archaeological resources for research purposes. Especially for an agency such as the National Park Service, directed as it is to public service, there should also be a concern with the management of archaeological resources vis-à-vis the non-specialist public. It may be hoped that other studies address this aspect of resource management in the monument.


Reviewed by ROBERT F. HEIZER
University of California, Berkeley

This series of 8 volumes is a major contribution to a special aspect of California Indian history. They contain most, but not all, of the formal written reports submitted by expert witnesses (mostly anthropologists) as evidence in the Indian Claims case of the California Indians (combined Dockets No. 31 and 37), plaintiffs, versus The United States of America, defendant. This case was heard by the three Indian Claims Commissioners (E. Witt, L. O'Marr, W. Holt) in a series of court hearings in the 1950's. The verbal testimony was taken down by a court stenographer and prepared in typewritten form. Its length runs to many thousands of pages, and it is probably of more importance than the data contained in the 8-volume set here reviewed because it contains the direct testimony and give-and-take cross-examination between witnesses, lawyers, and the Commissioners. This is available in the National Archives or the Indian Claims Commission. Other copies of the courtroom transcripts are held by the plaintiffs' lawyers. Since the Commission decided against the defendant, it therefore is probably that the most powerful arguments for the decision lie in these courtroom transcripts. As the Docket 31/37 case progressed through the years, there were prepared by both sides a series of Proposed Findings of Fact (not published here) which were offset printed. Some of these contain summaries of data contained in the 8 volumes under review, and in addition legal arguments favorable to either the Indians of California or the U.S. Department of Justice. These are also of interest.
to anyone attempting to follow the development of the case which was finally decided on July 31, 1959 in favor of the Indians of California.

Brevity allows only a listing of contents of the volumes. Vol. I (actually comprising 3 volumes totaling 1155 pp.) is a lengthy land use and occupancy review organized by ecological types prepared by R.L. Beals and J.A. Hester. Vol. II contains a collection of 95 pages of tribal distribution maps; a paper on changes in patterns of land tenure among the Luiseno; and a reprint of a publication of 1963 on division of labor among California Indians. Vol. III has a valuable ethnohistory of the Pit River (Achumawi-Atsurgewi) Indians and a historical survey (also previously published) of Fall River Valley in Achumawi territory. Vol. IV holds Kroeber's important paper on the nature of the land-holding unit (also published earlier), extracts from Kroeber's earlier writings on land use and political organization, and a useful survey of Mexican land grants. Vol. V is a historical sketch of northwestern California from the time of discovery to the late 1870's. Vol. VI contains two important documents: Beals and Hester's 264-page summary of occupancy, subsistence, and land use patterns, which can serve as an encyclopaedic ecological reference work, and the findings of the Indian Claims Commission. Of the 8 volumes, I rate VI first, to be followed by the 3 volumes called Vol. I.

The cost of the volumes may prevent many from purchasing the entire set, but for serious students of California Indians Vol. I (Parts 1-3) and VI are essential. It is hoped that enough California libraries will stock this set to make it available to scholars.


Reviewed by A. B. ELASSER
Lowie Museum of Anthropology
University of California, Berkeley

This is a collection of sixteen articles, mostly concerning social or spiritual aspects of California Indian life. It is almost inconceivable that anyone could pick up a substantial book on this subject which does not include even one section by A.L. Kroeber, but that is here the case. Nonetheless it is reassuring to find Kroeber cited more than any other author in the cumulative terminal bibliography. Also comforting is the realization that some of the older authors, e.g. B.W. Aginsky, George Devereux, Thomas Garth, Anna Gayton, Walter Goldschmidt, and Katharine Luomala were either Kroeber's students or at least partly influenced by him and other early California ethnographers like S. A. Barrett and E.W. Gifford. The remaining authors in the present work, Lowell Bean, Thomas Blackburn, Richard Gould, Donald Handelman, Chester King, Peter Kunkel, Harry Lawton, and Raymond White may thus loosely be classified as "post-Kroeberian."

Immediately following the authors' (editors') introduction are short paragraphs presenting a sort of explanation or rationale for the appearance of each of the articles. This seems a good device for indicating the spirit or intent of the collection as a whole. Unfortunately, the editors have neglected to give much specific information about original sources and dates of the articles, although this information is included in a second printing.

Obviously the only way to evaluate the wisdom of the editors' choices in such a work is to read the articles—they cannot be reviewed here briefly one by one. In summary, then, at