

If the emphasis on "public" in this kind of folklore leads to a "just do it" approach, I must say that the way these "folk" do their work could teach us ethnographers a lesson or two. Implicit in the cases discussed in this volume is a refreshingly honest, humane, and ambitious approach to the people and the subject under study. Bess Lomax Hawes writes unequivocally of the need for researchers to not "pay back," but to recognize the changes set in motion in subjects' lives by research. When she argues that researchers must be prepared to follow through on these changes to maintain relationships, and ensure that the results of the research are in keeping with subjects' desires and best interests, she's talking about lifetime commitments. It is also intriguing how many of these case studies show folklorists' willingness to let the subject actively shape the direction of research and its presentation, something very current in ethnography. I get the sense from these essays that ethnographers would do well to study the ways in which public folklorists have faced the implications of representations controlled by outside elites for the members of marginalized peoples with whom they work, and how they have dealt with the long-term effects of fieldwork on research subjects.

I also admire the ambition of anyone willing to speak in terms of research intended to "purposefully refram[e] and [extend]... tradition in collaboration with folk artists, native scholars, and other community members" [p.1], or to create "public dialogues about traditional culture within and often beyond a community" [p.80]. As minority groups attempt to maintain their identities through heritage activities, among other means, such work has the potential to assist many peoples in adapting distinct heritages to serve them in the present and future. Given that much folklore is oppositional to mainstream society, though, this is very political work, fraught with the perils and the possibilities of cross-cultural miscommunication on all sides. I am leery therefore, of the general lack of critical attention in this volume to the broader issues surrounding such relations between folklorists and their subjects. How does public folklore find a balance between what elite outsiders value in "folk" cultures and how minority groups use folk activities to represent their own identities to themselves and others? How do folklorists justify preserving specific cultural activities which are, in many cases, relics of a past with no future, remnants of a culture destroyed by the culture which seeks to preserve them? I find much of value in this book, but much that is also irritating and, ultimately, disturbing.

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Bernd Herrmann and Susanne Hummel, eds.

1994 *Ancient DNA*.

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The study of ancient DNA is a very young but exciting field in archaeology, anthropology, palaeontology, medicine and forensic sciences. So-called ancient DNA refers to the DNA preserved in remains of organisms such as archaeological materials,

museum specimens and even fossils. Because ancient DNA covers a long span of time, it can provide some very useful genetic information about prehistoric populations. With the advancements of techniques such as Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) in molecular biology, ancient genetic information can be accessed. Since 1984, when the first attempt to extract ancient DNA was made by Higuchi, a great deal of work has been done on a variety of material from around the world. Due to the fact that the study of ancient DNA involves many experimental skills, which are often critical to its success, practical protocols and experiential tips are badly needed by those who are interested in ancient DNA study.

Ancient DNA is a contribution made by many "first generation scholars" of ancient DNA study, and consequently, it has been much awaited. The volume consists of an introduction, two articles in a chapter entitled "Access to Kinship and Evolution" and fourteen articles under the chapter heading "Sample Preparation and Analysis". Readers will find the introduction valuable. It not only gives a brief history of ancient DNA study, but also presents a set of pictures showing how well cellular structures and DNA can be preserved in ancient remains.

Although this book can be mainly regarded as a "how-to cookbook", the first chapter does deal with some theoretical questions regarding ancient DNA study. Epplen discusses the theory of DNA fingerprinting of simple repeat loci and its potential applications in ancient DNA study, although to date not many ancient DNA fingerprint studies have been done. Villablanca explores an important aspect of ancient DNA evolutionary analysis by mitochondrial DNA. Ancient DNA can improve our understanding of spatial and temporal aspects of ancient populations. Although DNA has been used in phylogenetic study for a relatively long time in living populations, some of its assumptions are problematic. For example, mutation rate or the molecular clock can only be indirectly calculated based on extinct fossils. However, ancient DNA can provide a unique opportunity for direct calculation of mutation rates.

In the second part of this book, there are fourteen articles dealing with DNA sample preparation and analysis. It provides a set of practical protocols from many different sources, such as fixed and embedded samples (pathological materials and amber inclusions); mummified tissues; museum specimens; bones, plant seeds and fossils. For each kind of material, the detailed protocols are given regarding sample preparation, DNA extraction, PCR preparation, PCR primer, PCR amplification and PCR result analysis. Because the protocols are given for many different kinds of materials, readers can easily find a possible candidate for their own research and try to modify it for their own purposes. Due to PCR's high sensitivity, contaminations can be a potential problem when PCR is used in ancient DNA study. Therefore, Hummel and Herrmann give a detailed depiction of the contamination controls in their article entitled "General Aspects of Sample Preparation". Readers will find this article very useful in order to prevent contamination and to explain some unexpected results. The authors analyze the contaminants which result in false-positive results and the inhibitors which cause false negative results: where do they come from? how can they be monitored and avoided?

Some of the articles will of be particular interest to anthropologists. Grody reviews the usage of DNA techniques to diagnose diseases on fixed and embedded human tissues. Hauswirth and co-authors, Nielsen and co-authors, Rogen and co-authors report

that they have successfully extracted and amplified human nucleic DNA and mitochondrial DNA from the human brain of Florida's Windover, the arctic human burials and South American mummies, respectively. Herrmann and Hummel demonstrate that DNA sex determination is practical on human bones; this is important for physical anthropology and archaeology, because for some juvenile skeletons, it is extremely difficult to use morphological traits for sex determination.

Overall, this is a very good book for both general interest readers and researchers. General readers can learn what has been done to date in this interesting field and what can be accomplished in the future. Researchers can use this book as an "ancient DNA recipe book" along with other lab manuals in their ancient DNA study. The only drawback is that some of the contents of the book cannot be regarded as the latest achievements because ancient DNA study is a rapidly growing field.

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Nathan Caplan, John K. Whitmore, and Marcella H. Choy.
1992 *The Boat People and Achievement in America: A Study of Family Life, Hard Work, and Cultural Values.*
The University of Michigan Press.
[viii + 248 pp., illustrations, appendix, bibliography, index]

The Boat People and Achievement in America examines adaptation to life in the United States by refugees fleeing Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in the late 1970s. Despite common factors of severe poverty and violence in their countries of origin, the authors write that these people have achieved financial and academic success in America. The authors set these accomplishments in the context of a national economic recession and a school system identified as educationally bankrupt.

The text is divided into five chapters which examine and attempt to explain the accomplishments of these refugees. Chapters One and Two introduce the reader to the 'Boat People', comparing and contrasting Laotian, Vietnamese and Chinese refugees in terms of Employment, Household Composition and Cultural Values. In Chapter Three, Caplan *et al.* illustrate the economic and educational success of these refugees through quantitative data analysis.

In their interpretation of these findings, the authors combine statistical techniques with an examination of qualitative life-history data, arriving at several important conclusions in the Fourth Chapter. First, although these refugees originate from economic and social backgrounds very different from many other North Americans, Caplan *et al.* illustrate that the 'Boat People' generally possess certain values including an emphasis on education and hard work, and a willingness to sacrifice immediate fulfilment for future gain. These characteristics correspond with middle-class American values which are "considered to be chiefly responsible for the prosperity and high level of life quality