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Robert L. Kelly. *The Foraging Spectrum: Diversity in Hunter-Gatherer Lifeways.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995. xi + 446 pp. $29.50 (paper), ISBN 978-1-56098-466-5; $60.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-56098-465-8.

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Although archaeologist and anthropology professor Robert L. Kelly wrote *The Foraging Spectrum* for anthropology professors, anthropology students, and archeologists, scholars from many disciplines (especially environmental scholars) will both enjoy and learn from this work. Kelly explicitly states two goals. The first is to combat the tendency among anthropology professors to oversimplify hunting and gathering societies, and the second is to correct the tendency of anthropology students to misunderstand the factors that condition human differences. The monograph consists of nine cogently written chapters. These emphasize and underscore the author's theoretical argument that the anthropological classification and understanding of hunter-gatherers has struggled for more than a century to overcome its excessive simplicity in articulating and defining this group. Kelly seeks to elucidate the evolution of anthropological thought in recognizing that hunter-gatherers comprise a diverse body of human beings and engage in a variety of human activities. Kelly produces his own archaeology of anthropological thought about hunter-gatherers. Lay persons and scholars in other fields today, from their perspectives, might question the need for Kelly to emphasize such an obvious point as diversity in human behavior and populations. However, Kelly does a brilliant job of describing why this elucidation is needed and how this need came about in the field of anthropology.

Kelly points out in his preface that understanding who hunter-gatherers really are is critical because they "are used by the popular media as a foil to our industrialized society to demonstrate its failures or successes" (p. xii). They are also used by many other institutions and people as a representation of either a simpler or more egalitarian past or as evidence of a hostile and brutish "club wielding troglodyte heritage" (p. xii). Neither of these assumptions is true and both, according to the author, come from the incorrect theory of unilineal evolution. This theory holds that all human societies, though they may progress at different rates, pass through the same evolutionary stages by improving their moral or mental capacities. The author does an excellent job in establishing and supporting the key points for the monograph: hunter-gatherers are not the alter ego of Western civilization; they are not simplistic societies; they are not humanity in a virginal state of nature; they are not Pleistocene relics; they do not preserve ancient ways of life; and we cannot reconstruct ancient human society by extrapolating backward from living hunter-gatherers (p. xiii). Throughout the text Kelly achieves his objectives by elucidating the variability which has been observed in the foraging lifestyle and by giving account of the factors which have led to variability; these include differences in subsistence activities, mobility, trade, sharing, territoriality, demography, and socio-political organization (p.6).

Chapter 1 provides an excellent historical overview of the changing conceptual understanding of and theories about hunter-gatherers over the last one hundred years. The bulk of Kelly's text is consistent with a current theoretical stance, originating in the mid-twentieth century, that is driven by an ecological perspective. Kelly does a thorough job in this section of describing the evolution of the three basic hunter-gatherer models developed by anthropologists: the patrilineal or patrilocal model, the generalized foraging model, and the interdependent model. His description of nineteenth-century thought outlining the social and ideological foundations of anthropology and the precursive theories about hunter-gatherers provides a superb background for the rest of the work. The author points out that it was in the nineteenth century that the discipline of anthropology emerged and it did so with a heavy influence from Enlightenment philosophy. This philosophy emphasized human "progress" and held that "diversity in humanity was related to differences in the degree of perfection.... Just as God could be ranked above the whole of humanity, so could cultures and ethnic groups be ranked in their

respective degrees of perfection" (p. 6).

Human communities less technologically advanced than Western European societies were perceived as being less rational and dominated by nature. This ideological approach, according to Kelly, was due in part to the sparseness of the archaeological data available at that time, but also to the momentuous decision by early anthropology to use the "comparative method developed by Auguste Comte, Charles Darwin, and Herbert Spencer" (p. 7). An important point made by Kelly in this chapter is that this comparative method was ethnocentric and racist, and ranked societies against a Western standard; this justified "the placement of hunter-gatherers at the lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder" (p. 8). Unfortunately this comparative method, despite its critics such as Franz Boas, would be accepted and continue to influence anthropologists for a large portion of the twentieth century (at least until the mid-1960s). Kelly provides his readers with an explicit discussion of the emergence of the patrilineal model formulated by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown in 1930-31 that was based upon observations of the Australian Aboriginal social organization (pp. 13-14) and the eventual rejection of this paradigm at the *Man the Hunter* conference that took place in Chicago in 1966, with participation from seventy-five scholars from around the world.

Kelly refers back to the 1966 *Man the Hunter* conference throughout the text for examples drawn from research past and current that supports the existence of variability among hunter-gatherers. This conference serves as a reference point for the author because it was, as he describes it, the "century's watershed for knowledge about hunter-gatherers" (p. 14). The organization of the conference was motivated by the amazing discoveries at Olduvai Gorge during the 1960s, and it would be the place where the generalized foraging model was introduced. It was also at this conference that the importance of environment and subsistence as critical factors emerged. A large array of topics was also introduced and discussed, ranging from marriage and demography to territoriality and social and political evolution among hunter gatherers. The author here again does a great job of situating the *Man the Hunter* conference within its socio-cultural and historical context by pointing out that in the "1960s and 1970s, many people including anthropologists were dismayed with the state of the world," including the Vietnam War, "widespread environmental degradation … and the rejection of Western materialism" (p. 15). The generalized foraging model eventually would be replaced by the interdependent model as new knowledge and re-interpretations of old data were advanced by younger anthropologists to explain the constancy in variability among modern and postmodern hunter-gatherer societies.

This book is as much an explicit study of the causes of shifting paradigms among anthropologists in their description of hunter-gatherer societies as it is an incredible textbook for students and senior scholars in the field of anthropology and archaeology. Each chapter provides an historical account of changing theories and practices as well as explicit models and data tables used to justify these shifts in theory. Another critical argument that Kelly makes is the pervasive tendency for the field to try continually to simplify this group of people and not look upon them as being part of and influenced by modern and postmodern technological societies. This has and continues to be a challenge for many, including anthropologists, despite the fact that "long before anthropologists arrived on the scene, hunter-gatherers, had already been contacted, given diseases, shot at, traded with, employed and exploited by colonial powers, agriculturists and pastoralists" (p. 25).

Kelly repeatedly makes this point. In chapter 2 he notes that "anthropology still faces the daunting task of relating cultural diversity to environment in a consistent theoretical fashion" (p. 39). His elucidations of the emergence of behavioral ecology as one of the more recent and comprehensive paradigms (based upon ecological and evolutionary perspectives) after the failure of its antecedents (cultural area concept and cultural ecology) is excellent. Kelly points out that cultural ecology as an effective model was weakened because of its inability to recognize the variation among individuals in hunter-gatherer communities, who would not always work toward a balanced stability for the good of the larger social body.

Readers who are not formally trained anthropologists and archaeologists should be aware that beginning with chapter 3, Kelly engages his audience in terms of optimization and systems theory; he does this to make his point about the various trade-offs that hunter-gatherer societies make with respect to their environment, which account for some of the variability among these groups. This is fascinating and interesting to one familiar with and interested in this type of intellectual discourse, but it can prove a bit overwhelming for the uninitiated.

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