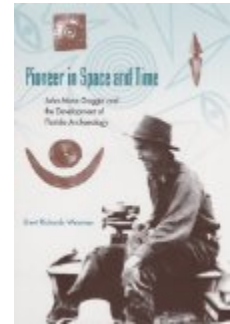


# H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences

**Brent Richards Weisman.** *Pioneer in Space and Time: John Mann Goggin and the Development of Florida Archaeology.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. xxi + 176 pp. \$49.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8130-2573-5.

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## A True Pioneer of Florida Archaeology

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Anyone who was trained in Florida archaeology in the second half of the twentieth century is familiar with the name John M. Goggin. Serious students will have read many of his written works, a number of which were truly groundbreaking and are still relevant today. This thorough biography by University of South Florida archaeologist Brent Weisman is both an excellent interpretive summary of Goggin's work and a detailed study of the man himself.

I remember hearing stories and anecdotes about Goggin when I was an undergraduate student at the University of Florida in the 1970s. As I recall, Charles Fairbanks always made sure that students knew that John Goggin had begun the statewide system for recording archaeological sites, had collected many of the artifacts that were used as type specimens in our classes and research, and had devised the basic prehistoric cultural chronology for the state that is still valid today (with refinements, of course). When I returned to UF as a graduate student in the 1980s, I became more interested in the artifacts associated with early Spanish explorations and settlement in Florida. I found myself seeking out publications by none other than John Goggin, who did important early studies on glass beads, Spanish pottery, and other European artifacts found not only on Spanish contact sites in Florida, but in the Caribbean and Latin America as well. Fellow graduate students were involved in Seminole archaeology and Spanish mission studies, and they

were also drawn to publications and artifact collections made by Goggin. When we did research into previously recorded archaeological sites, the files typically included his distinctive site file cards.

While most students were exposed to the fruits of his research, Goggin the man remained a shadowy figure to most of us. Weisman's book will change this for present and future students of Florida archaeology. The book is based on detailed study of Goggin's voluminous papers (most are curated at the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History at the University of Florida) and interviews with surviving friends, relatives, and colleagues. It begins with a chapter on Goggin's boyhood. One might be tempted to skip over this chapter, but it enlightens the reader on his personality traits and experiences that led to his near fascination with tree snails, the Everglades, and archaeology. Weisman follows with a chapter summarizing Florida archaeology up through the 1930s, including a discussion of concepts of archaeological space and time prior to Goggin's focus on these aspects.

After he left the University of Florida because of failing grades in his freshman year, Goggin enrolled at the University of New Mexico in 1935, and chapter three of the book covers the seven years he spent as a student there, earning a B.A. and beginning graduate studies. Goggin did not forsake his interest in Florida archaeology, however. He frequently returned to make forays to various parts of south Florida to record archaeological sites and to make collections of artifacts. The important

factor is that he was also conducting research in New Mexico, Mexico, and the Caribbean during those years, and his thinking about aspects of archaeology in general matured. Weisman highlights some of the questions he was asking and thinking about: broad anthropological questions that required a great quantity of data to answer.

Chapter four covers the years from 1942 through 1948, the beginning of Goggin's prolific period when many of the concepts he had been thinking about and implicitly testing with fieldwork began to gel in his mind. This was a busy period for Goggin. Not only was he heavily involved in archaeological excavations in south Florida, but he also earned a Ph.D. at Yale University and produced a dissertation that was an ambitious attempt to synthesize all that was known about Florida archaeology. But as in all human lives, there was strife and disappointment. His first marriage fell apart, and we learn of serious bouts of alcoholism, which plagued him throughout his life, and arguably shortened it. Weisman skillfully summarizes the importance of the many writings of Goggin during this period. He also discusses the activities and views of other archaeologists working in the state at the time.

Chapter five begins with Goggin's hiring (as the sole anthropologist) by the Sociology Department at the University of Florida. It was here that he really began to shine as a researcher, producing several major written works that are still valuable to researchers today. Weisman successfully imparts the almost superhuman quantity and breadth of Goggin's research interests. It is interesting to learn that he was not a particularly riveting lecturer, but that he also had a devoted cadre of students who gave up weekends and nights to work in the field and laboratory with him. Among a great many other accomplishments at the university, he developed a program in underwater archaeology in Florida rivers and sinkholes and began the statewide system for recording archaeological sites. Through an interesting series of events, Goggin was able to create a Department of Anthropology at the University of Florida in 1962, which has thrived ever since.

The sixth chapter focuses on Goggin's research during the 1950s and 1960s, when he zeroed in on historical archaeology in the entire circum-Caribbean region, including Florida and Latin America. Historical archaeology in the New World is most simply defined as the archaeology of the period from 1492 and later. It is important to understand that historical archaeology as a sepa-

rate discipline was in the embryonic stages at the time, so Goggin was breaking new ground in our understanding of various artifact classes. It is truly remarkable that he was able to gather the voluminous historical and archaeological information and to put it into coherent form. His studies of majolica, glass beads, and Spanish olive jars are still important reference works today, although subsequent researchers have added to and refined our knowledge of these objects. The end of this chapter is an interesting discussion of Goggin's research into Seminole archaeology and his peculiar, strained relationship with living Seminoles.

The seventh and final chapter is a discussion of Goggin's legacy to today's archaeologists and anthropologists. Since Goggin's death in 1963, both Florida archaeology and the broader discipline have changed immensely. Weisman cites several examples of Goggin's contributions and their effects on the way Florida archaeology is practiced today, but readers may not agree with all of his (Weisman's) views.

To see an example of the legacy of John Goggin, both in Florida and elsewhere, one need only look at his publications and the number of those which have been reprinted and are still in print. Charles Fairbanks, Irving Rouse, and William C. Sturtevant took responsibility for cleaning up some of Goggin's unfinished publications and seeing them through to publication after his death. They also collaborated in compiling a collection of Goggin's articles, both previously published and unpublished.[1]

Recent years have witnessed a burgeoning interest among archaeologists in the past of their discipline. This has resulted in examination of the theoretical changes in the field as well as the writing of biographies of some of the major practitioners. Biographical treatments have proven to be essential for understanding the development of archaeology. J. Jefferson Reid summed it up nicely: "Personal loss reminds us, albeit too late, that *people* do archaeology, reconstruct prehistory, present papers, squabble over interpretations, and teach other people to do the same, but, we hope, a little bit better. And these same people have biases, preconceived notions, personal experiences and agendas—dare one call it a subjective element—that must be comprehended at some level if we are to treat the whole past fairly" (p. 195).[2] Brent Weisman's biography of John Goggin is thorough and balanced, and even skeptics will be satisfied that Goggin's contributions to archaeology were truly pioneering. Those interested in the history of sci-

ence in Florida will profit from reading this book. For Florida archaeologists, it is essential reading.

Notes

[1]. John M. Goggin, *Indian and Spanish: Selected Writings*, compiled by Charles H. Fairbanks, Irving

Rouse, and William C. Sturtevant (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1964).

[2]. J. Jefferson Reid, "Editor's Corner: The History of Archaeology and Archaeologists," *American Antiquity* 56, no. 2: pp. 195-196.

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