paper, by Frits Böttcher, states an extreme view: that there is little evidence of global warming and little need for current international treaties emphasising environmental issues. The assertion that the 'well orchestrated efforts of the inner circle of science policy makers' have manipulated governments and the public to further their own scientific aspirations is not worthy of a member of the scientific community.

This account of the global warming debate is a useful source of information for the side of the debate that has decided that the issue has been blown out of proportion, leading to a waste of scientific resources. There is, then, a real danger that the casual reader of this volume will be left with a one-sided view of the global warming issue. I would caution the reader that there is as much, if not more, evidence pointing toward a very real risk of environmental catastrophe. It is short-sighted indeed to criticise the findings of theoreticians, without whom there would be no reason to investigate the practicalities of the situation with a view to preventing any possibility of an ecological disaster. Nevertheless, the book is useful for an introduction to the political considerations of the global warming issue and as part of wider reading for the person wanting to consider all the current issues associated with this debate. (Norman Davis, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

THE VANISHING ARCTIC. Bryan and Cherry Alexander. 1996. London: Blandford/Cassell. 192 p, illustrated. Hard cover: ISBN 0-7137-2530-3; £20.00. Soft cover: ISBN 0-7137-2699-7; £14.99.

The vanishing Arctic is a book every polar reader should have. The photographs, as one would expect from Bryan and Cherry Alexander, are stunning, but I was unprepared for the flow of the text. I began by scanning the book for this review, but soon found myself reading it avidly. Bryan Alexander paints word pictures of Arctic life just as well as he photographs it. All who have had the good fortune to travel to high latitudes will be transported there by this book; I could hear the swish of runners across snow and feel the wind buffeting my back as each tale progressed.

The reader is led by well-written text and beautifully composed images into the lives of five Arctic families. The Cree from the Canadian sub-Arctic and Saami from Lapland seem strange bedfellows with northwest Greenland Inuit and Siberian Nenet, but the mixture works well. All have been affected in one way or another by encroachment from the south, and much of the value of the book lies in the account of how these different groups have managed the changes. The Saami, perhaps, have changed most and have, one feels, become almost westernised. This is a path it appears the Nenet will rapidly have to tread, yet each culture manages to retain traditional practices of hunting or herding. Time and again Bryan Alexander shows that these people have far more sympathy for the Arctic environment than most 'developed nations.' Just one example: the Inughuit of northwest Greenland have always banned the use of snowmobiles for hunting.

Each chapter starts with a brief history and short description of a native group. This leads with a simple break into the story of a family from that group. How much better it would have been to start the chapter with Bryan Alexander's text — as each is clearly an account of a journey that he has made — and put the history and generic descriptions into a box. Indeed, my main criticisms of the book are about the general poor standard of design and, sad to say, very poor quality reproduction of the pictures. A token map is included at the beginning, but it is insufficient and does not even show the areas that each group occupies nor all the places mentioned in the text. This is irritating and requires the reader to find an atlas to follow some passages. The index is similarly rather shallow; for example, the Inughuit have only one entry, yet a whole chapter is devoted to them.

But these are minor deals in such a glorious book, and it is to be hoped they are corrected in future editions. This is clearly an environmental book that starts with a pictorial essay of the great northern wilderness and, after visiting the five cultures, ends on the disastrous development of oil and gas fields in the Yamal Peninsula and the personal tragedy it causes to one Nenet family. It is well worth buying for the stories Bryan Alexander weaves, and even more so for the images. (David Rootes, Poles Apart, PO Box 89, Bourn, Cambridge CB3 7TF.)

SCHWATKA'S LAST SEARCH: *THE NEW YORK LEDGER* EXPEDITION THROUGH UNKNOWN ALASKA AND BRITISH AMERICA. Arland S. Harris (Editor). 1996. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. xviii + 278 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-912006-87-0. $US20.00.

Frederick Schwatka is best remembered as the leader of the American Geographical Society's Franklin search expedition of 1878–1880, an expedition made famous by the writings of the second-in-command, William Henry Gilder of *The New York Herald* (Gilder 1881). Schwatka's search,' as it became known throughout the western world, was significant for three reasons: it was an early instance of white expedition members voluntarily adopting the same diet as the Inuit and of them following Inuit practices by living off the land; the members not only completed the longest sledge journey then on record, 3251 miles, but did so without any deaths or serious illnesses; and in the spring of 1879 they found a number of relics and skeletal remains from Franklin's expedition that had not previously been discovered (see related article beginning on page 327).

Schwatka was a multi-talented, hard-driven graduate of the United States Military Academy, who was not only a lieutenant in the US Army, but a bar-certified lawyer and a qualified medical doctor from Bellevue Medical College in New York City. In 1883, at the direction of General Nelson A. Miles, then commanding the US Army's Department of the Columbia, Schwatka made a military reconnaissance of relatively unknown and uncharted parts

of Alaska, crossing the Chilkoot Pass to Lake Bennett — which he named for the owner of *The New York Herald* (Schwatka 1885a: 100) — and on to the headwaters of the Yukon River, following which his party built a large raft and commenced a voyage of 1829 miles to the river's mouth (Schwatka 1885b).

In 1885, Schwatka left the army and became one of the world's first professional explorers, a man who would travel anywhere for the correct financial incentive. The next year he led an expedition sponsored by *The New York Times*, which had the goal of making the first ascent of Mount Saint Elias, then thought to be the highest peak in North America (Johnson and others 1984: 12). In 1887, *The World*, Joseph Pulitzer's New York flagship newspaper, sponsored Schwatka's attempt to make the first winter crossing of Yellowstone National Park, and in 1889, *The Chicago American* sponsored his expedition to the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico (Schwatka 1893).

The goal of Schwatka's last expedition was to explore as much unmapped country in the interior of Alaska and British America as possible. Schwatka, Charles W. Hayes of the US Geological Survey, Mark C. Russell (a local miner), and seven Alaska natives left Juneau in May 1891, following the Taku River into British Columbia. Upon reaching Teslin Lake, they headed northwest into the Yukon, navigating the Teslin River and parts of the Yukon River to Fort Selkirk, from where they made their way west, partly over land and partly upon rivers. In late August they reached Nunchek on Hitchinbrook Island. This was in many ways Schwatka's most important expedition, exploring, mapping, and assessing huge tracks of previously little-known country.

Remarkably, it seemed for many years that no major account of this journey was ever published. Schwatka died the next year in Oregon, having overdosed himself with the laudanum that he took for acute gastric problems. Hayes, meanwhile, published a paper in *National Geographic Magazine*, but it concentrated on the geology and geography of the areas in which they travelled, while giving little detail of the actual expedition.

It was left for more than a century for the full account of the expedition to become available to a wide audience. Arland Harris, a retired forester who had believed that a writer as prolific as Schwatka must have had a journal and notes even if nothing had been published, discovered that Schwatka's account *had* indeed been published the year after the expedition. For years, Hayes' note that the expedition had been sponsored by a syndicate of newspapers was accepted, but Harris found a reference to the expedition having been sponsored by *The New York Ledger*, a small-circulation magazine. This proved accurate, and Harris discovered that *The Ledger*, which ceased publication in 1903, had run a series of 18 letters from Schwatka, giving full details of this important expedition.

Schwatka's last search thus gives the first major account of Schwatka's final expedition. Harris has not only provided an excellent introduction to Schwatka and the expedition, but the 18 letters that appeared in *The Ledger*, and also Hayes' journal and photographs from the expedition. It is the combination of these — Schwatka's vivid and exciting prose, written by an explorer who made his living generating popular tales for a broad audience, and Hayes' clear, concise, and detailed geological and geographical observations, professionally recorded about a virtually unknown region by a scientist for scientists — that provides such a remarkable picture of Alaska and the Canadian northwest in the era before the gold rush opened them up to settlers from around the world.

Harris is to be commended for his efforts, which have produced a major contribution to the knowledge about early Alaska, Yukon, and British Columbia. This book will well reward those who read it, whether they be primarily interested in exploration, anthropology, geology, botany, or many other aspects of Alaska and the Canadian northwest in the nineteenth century. (Beau Riffenburgh, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

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BOUNDARIES AND PASSAGES: RULE AND RITUAL IN YUP'IK ESKIMO ORAL TRADITION.

Ann Fienup-Riordan. 1995. London and Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. xxiv + 389 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-8061-2646-9.

Boundaries and passages is an exploration of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Yup'ik Eskimo cosmological views, as embodied in traditional stories and in accounts of private and public ritual. Ann Fienup-Riordan focuses on a prevailing metaphor that emerges in the recollections of contemporary elders: that of creating and maintaining difference in an essentially undifferentiated universe. While the bulk of the data comes from the Nelson Island area, the work includes accounts from other parts of the Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta, and the author generalizes on this basis.

Fienup-Riordan's main argument is that a Hobbesian notion of society as a diversity of individuals united through self-interest is presumed in anthropology: 'Contemporary anthropological analysis continues in this tradition insofar as it assumes the innateness of cultural differ-