

subsequently received a call from Molett. At that time, he repeated his assertion that the sextant reading in the diary had been 'corrected' by Byrd in his official report. Anyone who has ever taken a sextant reading single-handed will realize the impossibility of getting two different readings within one second; just writing down the time and the alidade reading takes longer than that. Molett also was unable to answer the following crucial questions: 1. when exactly did Byrd realize that the original reading was in error, and that a second reading was therefore required?; 2. why did Byrd write down the original reading in his diary if he already knew it was in error at the time?; 3. why did Byrd *not* write the 'corrected' reading in the diary?; and 4. how did Byrd manage to record the 'correct' reading in his official report when there was no diary record of it? Clearly Molett is in way over his head here; but that's what happens when you try to excuse the inexcusable.

To the Pole is an immensely valuable book that fills a blank space in one of the most controversial chapters of polar exploration. But it is disappointing that casual readers will not recognize just how valuable it really is. Goerler's unapologetic cheering for Byrd hides, rather than reveals, the true value of Byrd's diary, and the final truth of his remarkable story. (Keith A. Pickering, 10085 County Road 24, Watertown, MN 55388, USA.)

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HUMAN CHOICE AND CLIMATE CHANGE. Steve Raynor and Elizabeth L. Malone (Editors). 1998. Columbus: Battelle Press. 4 volumes. Vol 1: xlii + 491 p, vol 2: xlii + 451 p, vol 3: xlii + 429 p, vol 4: xii + 193, illustrated, hard cover. Set: ISBN 1-57477-045-4.

This four-volume assessment of social-science research on climate change has been produced to complement the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The many contributors tackle the issues grouped under the broad term 'global climate change' in ways that not only complement research in the natural sciences — and indeed place scientific quantifications into wider social, economic, and political perspective — but demonstrate the vital and distinct perspectives that social scientists have that are of relevance to policy-makers.

As they attempt to understand human activity in relation to climate change, ozone depletion, pollution, and loss of biodiversity, both natural scientists and social scientists appear to be in agreement that human population changes, economic growth, technological change, politico-economic institutions, and globalisation are some of the main human dimensions driving global environmental change. Yet, while the natural sciences may be concerned with assessing the anthropogenic causes and impacts of these human dimensions, the social sciences seek to understand such things as how social institutions, values, and human choices influence and shape relationships among society, culture,

economics, and the environment. At the heart of the social-science perspectives explored at length in these exceptionally well-written volumes are human agency and human choice (especially within social institutions), consideration of which rarely enters into natural-science interpretations and evaluations of the human modification of the environment.

Human choice and climate change argues that we need to gain in-depth understanding of the choices and decisions that people make in relation to how they modify their local environments, in both historical and contemporary perspective. As the editors put it in their introduction, 'humans can choose to repond to the prospect of climate change and can decide, with undetermined and perhaps undeterminable degrees of freedom, what steps to take. However, choice does not merely underlie any possible solution to climate change; it also underlies the problem itself' (vol 1: xiv). With this caveat, especially to the natural sciences, the four volumes proceed to elaborate on the theme of choice lying at the very core of the climate-change issue.

At the same time, global climate change is examined within the broader context of global social change. Indeed, the scientific concern with (and, dare one say, alarm over) global climate change is put into perspective by social scientists, such as sociologists and anthropologists, who argue that the scale, rate, and extent of rapid social change may well outpace the scale, rate, and extent of climate change for the foreseeable future. In which case, who is it that one chooses to believe over scientific climate change scenarios — and, indeed, how do people decide that climate change is worthy of scientific, social, and political attention (if at all)? Because social scientists are often working in societies more directly and immediately affected by changing social, economic, and political conditions and circumstances than by climate change (whether local or regional), global social-science perspectives on society recognise the limits that can be set by focusing merely on climate change. Thus, these four volumes go beyond the IPCC to encompass work in the social sciences that is not necessarily concerned with climate change.

Volume 1, *The societal framework*, assesses the social, cultural, political, and economic systems that provide the contexts for the kinds of human activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and other anthropogenic impacts on the environment. The volume explores population growth, health, human needs and wants, cultural discourses about climate and climate change, and the social and political institutions necessary for political action on climate change. Volume 2, *Resources and technology*, comprises chapters that analyse climate change and the social-scientific perspectives on it in relation to resources and their uses. After outlining and explaining the present state of scientific understanding of climate change, the subsequent chapters examine climate change with reference to human activities that increase greenhouse gas emissions from the use of land and water resources, energy, industry and social systems, and tech-

nological change. Volume 3, *The tools for policy analysis*, considers and evaluates the instrumental frameworks and analytical tools for public policy and decision-making with respect to climate change. The volume as a whole outlines the shortcomings of available and conventional tools and readily accepts that no quick and easy fix is forthcoming from the social sciences. However, volume 3 points to a broad-based approach to integrated assessment, which draws upon knowledge about climate-change processes from many different disciplines and which facilitates participatory decision-making processes as the best way forward for policy-making. The final volume of the series, *What have we learned?*, is essentially an editorial commentary on the material covered in the first three volumes, and considers the challenge that climate change poses for the social sciences, as well as tackling questions concerning the value of social scientific knowledge about climate change for decision-makers.

Rather than providing a state-of-the-art overview of social-science research on climate change, *Human choice and climate change* points to the essentially contested viewpoints about how the world works and recognises human agency and choice as central to understanding how it changes. In its multifaceted analyses of the human activities that cause climate change and the environmental changes that affect human beings, this work contains within it genuinely new insights into the processes of climate change as well as being a forceful document for the application of social science in policy-making. (Mark Nuttall, Department of Sociology, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 3QY.)

SEARCHING FOR FRANKLIN: THE LAND ARCTIC SEARCHING EXPEDITION 1855. William Barr (Editor). 1999. London: The Hakluyt Society (Series 3, vol 1). xv + 292 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-904180-61-1. £45.00.

At long last, in this aptly titled book, a neglected expedition in a remote part of what is now Canada has been suitably commemorated by a respected senior scholar of northern exploration. The Back River lies wholly beyond the treeline in the Barren Lands of Nunavut and flows into Chantrey Inlet, the most inaccessible part of the continental coast. This is the heart of the last great wilderness area in North America. Proposals are being formulated to preserve it from threatening development by linking up adjacent sanctuaries. As of now, the harsh natural conditions are unchanged from 1855 when the Anderson–Stewart expedition traversed the region. Hitherto their efforts have been dismissed as a sideshow in the search for Franklin or as a peculiar extra function of the Hudson’s Bay Company.

Chief Factor Anderson’s official journal was published in the *Canadian Field Naturalist* 60 years ago. William Barr has greatly improved the context and annotation. Many more documents have been culled from the Hudson’s Bay Company and elsewhere. The core journal

has been supplemented by James Stewart’s more personal diary. Frequent footnotes give fascinating detail. However, an unfortunate misprint on page 37 needs adjustment: James Anderson was born in 1812, not 1800. There are good photographs of the main characters; the one of Anderson originated with a descendant, Mrs Goodfellow of Halifax, Nova Scotia. The several maps of the route are very useful. Although its location is rather obvious, Starvation Cove could be specifically marked on the Chantrey Inlet map in order to highlight how close they were to a really big discovery. From genesis to enigmas, the chapters proceed logically. The index is quite detailed and user-friendly. The documentation is so complete and accessible that readers can make up their own minds on contentious issues.

Therefore, Professor Barr keeps his own introductions and assessments concise, focused, and sober — leaving speculation to such authors as Hugh Wallace (1980) and David Woodman (1991). His brisk historical background is referenced to primary published accounts. Among these, a comparable work of scholarship could be included: Richard C. Davis’ edition of Franklin’s journal and correspondence (1995). Dr John Rae’s notorious report of Inuit testimony about cannibalism on the last expedition is treated at length; recent scientific confirmation is readily accepted. Although the search could then be narrowed to the estuary of the Back River, the Admiralty declined to send yet another ship, having abandoned several in the Arctic already and being preoccupied with the Crimean War. It was logical to ask the Hudson’s Bay Company to organize a reconnaissance along the route pioneered in boats by George Back 20 years earlier. Rae declined the assignment but recommended using canoes. As leader he suggested Anderson, the senior officer in the district that would be the staging area. Governor Simpson agreed and added as second officer Stewart, who had shown extraordinary zeal in desperate work in the Yukon area. Many letters show how the great corporation was cranked up to facilitate the enterprise. Only the essential Inuit interpreters failed to make the rendezvous.

The leaders lacked rapport. Barr excuses Stewart’s unexpected shortcomings due to incipient agoraphobia and homesickness for a new wife. Anderson made some rather fussy criticisms, but his main complaint about the younger man’s strange lethargy is more credible. They had radically different perceptions of what some Inuit told two of the voyageurs who knew some words of Inuktitut. On his way east with the official report, Stewart gave increasingly dramatic interviews to newspapermen. He claimed that an Inuit woman had actually witnessed the death of the last of Franklin’s men. He repeated this to Sir George Simpson and later under oath in a Scottish court. Would he dare to lie when the ersatz ‘interpreters’ could be grilled for the truth? Yet Anderson denounced the story as a complete fabrication. Simpson did not pursue the matter.

Like many then and now, Barr has little patience with that perennial gadfly, Dr Richard King. As second-in-