

Culture



Jerome H. BARKOW, *Darwin, Sex and Status: Biological Approaches to Mind and Culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989, 435 pp., \$45.00 (cloth)

Pamela R. Willoughby

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remains very dominant (with all its claims to authority) and the voices of the Haida are muted, homogenized into generalizations, or are even non-existent in much of the book. The irony is that Boelscher proposes to root her work in Bourdieu's Practice Theory, which is not just a locus from which to analyze the practices of the "ethnographic other", but also provides the means to assess the ethnographer's own *praxis*.

Another serious problem is the almost complete disconnection of the proposed theoretical frame, which is discussed intensively only in pages 8-10, and is mentioned explicitly only four more times in the remainder of the work. The proposal to examine Haida cultural discourse via Bourdieu's work is an exciting and enticing possibility, but it never materializes. This by no means renders the work without value, but the proposed theoretical connection of Bourdieu's Practice Theory to Haida practices and discourses is simply not made. We are left with the feeling that an obligatory theory chapter for a dissertation has been tacked on to the front of a work carried on by other, largely implicit, theoretical means.

The implicitness of the theoretical frame is the problem. Bourdieu's powerful concept of "symbolic domination", which could be a wonderful asset in analyzing Northwest Coast ranking and political rhetoric is explicitly mentioned only three times outside the theory chapter. It really is very difficult to see how Boelscher's work is substantially directed or informed by Bourdieu's work, despite her claim that it is.

Jerome H. BARKOW, *Darwin, Sex and Status: Biological Approaches to Mind and Culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989, 435 pp., \$45.00 (cloth).

by Pamela R. Willoughby

Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Alberta.

In *Slaughterhouse Five*, Kurt Vonnegut (1968:8) writes that he once "was a student of Anthropology. At that time, they were teaching that there was absolutely no difference between anybody. They may be teaching that still". A tenet of anthropology is the basic unity of humans: an infinite diversity of cultures in a single biological subspecies. But along

with anthropology came another paradigm which stressed both biological and cultural differences between groups and explained their presence using the latest "scientific" criteria. In the 19th century, differences in human body form were equated with intelligence and success, in the 20th, genetics took this role, and both provided justification for repressive social policies. Stephen Jay Gould's *The Mismeasure of Man* (1981) and Daniel Kevles' *In the Name of Eugenics* (1985) present good reviews of science in the service of social Darwinist ideology.

To some extent social Darwinism persists today under the rubric of sociobiology. Defined by E.O. Wilson, it attempts to explain animal social behaviour in terms of reproductive fitness and individual competition. It has had mixed results when applied to human behaviour and many social scientists feel it has no role to play here at all. A more common assumption is that, while biological factors were important in hominid evolution, once modern humans appeared, cultural adaptation becomes paramount. In this book Jerome Barkow tries to synthesize information from psychology, sociology, primatology, anthropology and biology to come up with a general Darwinian model for human behaviour, emphasizing the continuity between biological and social sciences. It follows a general sociobiological line, despite repeated protestations to the contrary by the author.

When confronted with this approach, I must declare a personal bias. I am a specialist in the archaeology of the earliest human societies operating within the framework of paleoanthropology. As practiced, this discipline is a long way from Barkow's, even though we are discussing similar issues. While they are (in)famous for popularizing origin models, some of which are analyzed here in Chapter 13, most paleoanthropologists would insist that hard facts are needed before any one viewpoint can be accepted unequivocally. The facts are composed of fossils and archaeological sites in time and space, and they give a clear picture of what happened, if not why. But we are dealing with a subject where the facts have never been adequately mixed with the theories. Remember that models of human origins, such as Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1871), preceded the recognition of any fossils, and many more recent ones still ignore them.

What then can we say about Barkow's approach? Few paleoanthropological facts are included here; indeed, the fossil record of human evolution is almost completely ignored. Instead, Barkow relies on information from modern groups, both human

and non-human, and concentrates on psychology and behaviour. The earliest works on human sociobiology stressed the link between genes and behaviour: if a certain trait exists, it must be adaptive. Adaptation is measured by reproductive fitness, so the goal is to find out how particular behaviours increase fitness. Barkow accepts this, but argues that complex models are required in order to link the two. For him, the key issues to be discussed are the evolution of human social psychology, and the evolution of culture and the capacity for culture. Barkow begins with a review of the biological bases of behaviour, and also describes key sociobiological variables (inclusive fitness, altruism, cost/benefit analysis, etc.). Culturally patterned behaviour is an expression of genetic evolution, and should be analyzed as such. This is best done by examining how knowledge is obtained, processed, and used to further ultimately biological goals. The units of analysis are goals, plans and codes, and their subsets. Goals are built into the system by natural selection, plans are ways to achieve these goals, and codes organize and communicate information. For humans, cultural evolution initially reflected biological drives fueled jointly by autopredation (intergroup conflict such as warring, raiding, and individual competition) and sexual selection (both male-male competition and mate choice). He argues that, early in human evolution, permanent monogamous bonds were selected for with females preferring males best able to invest in provisioning and protecting their offspring (as was proposed by Owen Lovejoy in *Science* 211: 341-350, 1981).

Barkow presents his model first, then applies it to three West African cases. He also critiques alternative explanations of human behaviour, including Marvin Harris' cultural materialism, and two other sociobiological approaches. The first, Lumsden and Wilson's *Genes, Mind and Culture* (1981), centres on the identification and study of culturgenes, information units of culture, and how natural selection controls and modifies them. Boyd and Richerson's *Culture and the Evolutionary Process* (1985), presents a more acceptable model for anthropologists, as they see culture and biology as joint systems of inheritance, what Barkow calls the middle ground between sociobiology and anthropology.

In summary, Barkow presents a good review of sociobiological research and how it is being applied to human behaviour. His model is different, but still overemphasizes the role of biology. As someone whose first physical anthropology textbook was Carleton Coon's *The Origin of Races* (1968), I can tes-

tify to the persistence of biological determinism. Reading this book will give you an accurate picture of research on the genetics of human behaviour. But as a Paleolithic archaeologist with a strong biocultural evolutionary perspective, I still prefer an approach which integrates the fossil data over any sociobiological one, however presented.

Joanne DRAKE-TERRY, *The Same as Yesterday: The Lillooet Chronicle the Theft of their Lands and Resources*, Lillooet, B.C. : Lillooet Tribal Council, 1989, xviii + 341 pp. \$29.95 (paper).

Order from Chief's Mask Books, 73 Water Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6B 1A1

by Jillian Ridington

I read Joanne Drake-Terry's comprehensive study, *The Same as Yesterday: The Lillooet Chronicle the Theft of their Lands and Resources* during the period when Elijah Harper was stopping passage of the Meech Lake Accord through the Manitoba legislature. Up to that point in Canadian history, no member of a native nation had so dramatically and effectively brought about a reversal of the course set by the white-dominated "powers-that-be." The process of design and ratification of the Accord had been similar to that of the events chronicled in Drake-Terry's book. Once again — just as when the British North America Act was signed in 1876, and when the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was drafted in 1982 — Canada's aboriginal people had been denied input into legislation that would profoundly affect their lives and their identities as the definitive first nations in their country. The process of exclusion was the same as it had been for over three hundred years. The existence of this book is further evidence of strength and determination among first nations people. Its production required the same courage and tenacity that led Elijah Harper to his courageous and defiant stand. The book came about as the result of a decision of the chiefs, elders and councillors of the *Stl'atl'imx* (Lillooet) nation. When the federal government urged them to file a comprehensive land claim, settlement of which would have required the extinguishment of their aboriginal title, the eleven *Stl'atl'imx* bands said, "No." Instead they decided to document the process by which they had been deprived of their homelands without treaties, without compensation, and without their consent.