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Bean: *Mukat's People: The Cahuilla Indians of Southern California*

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tic ethnographic analyses of California Indians produced by Kroeber and many others in the '30s and '40s. It is doubtful that among Harrington's many surviving manuscripts or notes will be found much of value to add to the presently small store of knowledge of groups like the Costanoans, since he himself had probably interviewed the last effective informant of that group, around 1906 or 1907. Evidently he spent a good part of his life searching for informants in southern California and elsewhere, and then attempted to sequester them from other anthropologists, on the grounds that something that he had delicately cultivated would thus not be unduly disturbed.)

J. P. Harrington's eccentricities—including many opinions which now would be considered unusual for a person trained in anthropology—on such subjects as diet, religion, death, the military draft (World War I), Jews, and the upbringing of children, all figure in Laird's autobiography. In general the quirks and kinks are recounted in a wry, sometimes humorous way. Obviously these personal reminiscences could be subject to considerably more unfavorable coloration than appears here, by a person who spent a relatively trying time of her life, from about 1916 to 1923, in Harrington's company, or at least under his influence. There is not the least question that Harrington's peculiarities were almost legendary among anthropologists or linguists who knew of him at any time before his death in 1961. Observations by his ex-wife 50 years after the dissolution of the marriage, accordingly, may be looked upon as restrained, tolerant, and consistent. In all, this book stands as a significant human document which happens to deal with parts of the lives of three vivid persons involved in one way or another with anthropological studies in California.



Mukat's People: The Cahuilla Indians of Southern California. Lowell John Bean. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972. x + 201 pp. No price given. (Reprinted in paperback, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

Reviewed by NAOMI KATZ
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Mukat's People, by Lowell Bean, is a delight to work with and a joy to read. In form and in spirit, this book is a descriptive ethnography in the best American tradition—in this case, of the Cahuilla Indians of southern California. Bean subtly combines an "insider" view with a functional/ecological approach to the study of Cahuilla culture. Treating the Cahuilla as a single grouping which incorporates the customary divisions of Mountain, Desert, and Pass, Bean takes us through the usual ethnographic categories of physical environment, settlement pattern, social structure and organization, ritual, and world view. In each section, the author brings together material from a variety of sources—works from history, geology, botany, geography, as well as from anthropology, and of more importance from his own archival research and extensive fieldwork. Bean interweaves his descriptions with a careful look at the adaptive significance of the particular aspect of culture under scrutiny. The ecological explanations which emerge rest comfortably on a view of Cahuilla culture as part of the larger ecosystem, a view which also involves a subtle integration of physical and social environments.

Bean's presentation is consistently knowledgeable and sensitive, and it appears to afford careful attention to the voices of his Cahuilla friends and informants. Correspondingly, the treatment of women's roles is thoughtful and full; Bean has worked with women informants and has taken them seriously. His work has

been well received by members of the Cahuilla community (personal communications, Cahuilla members of the Malki Museum).

To the outsider (read anthropologist) this clear, factual account has an additional dimension of interest. As specialists in California anthropology know, the Cahuilla, along with so many California peoples, present an intriguing exception to the usual generalizations about hunting-gathering cultures. The problems posed by these differences are only beginning to be dealt with, and further work requires considerable detailed and reliable data. *Mukat's People* contains a well-documented and detailed discussion, to cite only two examples, of the elaborate Cahuilla kinship system, including as it does lineage, sib, and moiety groups, and of Cahuilla concepts of land ownership which we have learned to consider "atypical" for hunter-gatherers. This work then provides for and compels a new look at the hunting-gathering adaptation and, at a minimum, the reevaluation of old hypotheses. At the same time, Bean's repeated assertions of the ecologically adaptive value of each aspect of Cahuilla practice and belief, convincing in the context of Cahuilla culture, become problematic in a wider comparative context. Bean is at his best when demonstrating the facilitating role of world view and ritual in relation to the exploitation of environmental resources. He is aware of the importance of the Cahuilla data to larger comparative understandings. The reverse also applies, however, and it is in just those puzzling areas of social structure and economic relations that comparative considerations would give Bean's own analysis a finer edge.

Mukat's People also explicitly tests a series of hypotheses concerning the relation of religion and ideology to ecological adaptation. Although Bean convincingly demonstrates their positive adaptive role among the Cahuilla, this part of the book is somewhat wooden in construction, and lacks the rhythm,

subtlety, and sensitivity that characterize the remainder of the work. No matter; the reader remains impressed by the book's many merits and by its expression of Bean's genuine relationship with the Cahuilla people and their culture.



December's Child: A Book of Chumash Oral Narratives. Thomas C. Blackburn, ed. and analysis. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975. \$12.95.

Reviewed by EUGENE N. ANDERSON
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A child born in December is "like a baby in an ecstatic condition, but he leaves this condition" (p. 102). The Chumash, reduced by the 20th century from one of the richest and most populous groups in California to a pitiful remnant, had almost lost their strange and ecstatic mental world by the time John Peabody Harrington set out to collect what was still remembered of their language and oral literature. Working with a handful of ancient informants, Harrington recorded all he could—then, in bitter rejection of the world, kept it hidden and unpublished. After his death there began a great quest for his scattered notes, and these notes are now being published at last. Thomas Blackburn, among the first and most assiduous of the seekers through Harrington's materials, has published here the main body of oral literature that Harrington collected from the Chumash of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. Blackburn has done much more: he has added to the 111 stories a commentary and analysis, almost book-length in its own right, and a glossary of the Chumash and Californian-Spanish terms that Harrington was prone to leave untranslated in the texts.