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Hittman: *Corbett Mack: The Life of a Northern Paiute As Told By Michael Hittman*

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occupies a page, and consists of the current scientific name, the taxonomic authority, synonyms and their taxonomic authorities, and common name. Intraspecific taxa are treated within the species. As a botanist, I was delighted to see not only the authority listed, but also the journal, pages, and date of the publication. In each monograph, a detailed description of the species is given, including its habits and habitat, and general notes on its relative abundance and distribution both within and outside the Middle Rocky Mountains. Endemic taxa are noted as such. But the descriptive information for the species does not stop here. Each monograph also contains either previously published or original line drawings that highlight discriminable features, and a dot distribution map based on herbarium collections. Not all the line drawings are the finest ever made and the shaded topography on the distribution maps is not the best possible, but all are of good quality and the reader will find them enormously useful. Salient features of the maps are the locations of rivers and state and county lines. These features, along with the shaded topography, allow the reader to easily recognize the mapped locations of the species.

The book concludes with four useful appendices, an extensive bibliography, and indices for both common and scientific names. The first two appendices are excellent glossaries of alpine terminology and botanical terms, respectively. Appendix 3 allows the reader to look up the abbreviation of a taxonomic authority and find the individual's complete name, their institutional affiliations, and some of their major works. Appendix 4 is a completely referenced listing of the 1n and 2n chromosome numbers of the entire Middle Rocky Mountain alpine flora. To the serious student and investigator, this appendix alone is probably worth the price of the whole volume. Conveniently, Appendix 4 also serves as a comprehensive species list, alphabetically ordered by family. The bibliography is excel-

lent and comprehensive. In future editions, I would appreciate journal titles spelled out instead of abbreviated. Finally, the two indices work so that the reader can quickly find the species of his or her interest.

I looked long and hard for mistakes while reviewing this book, but could find none. Instead, *The Alpine Flora of the Rocky Mountains, Volume 1: The Middle Rocky Mountains*, by Richard W. Scott, serves as a model for such research in the next century. It is a fine volume, and a welcome (and now essential) reference book on my shelf.



Corbett Mack: *The Life of a Northern Paiute As Told By Michael Hittman*. Michael Hittman. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, xvi + 396 pp., 2 maps, 4 plates, 3 appendices, notes, bibliography, index, \$45.00 (hard cover), \$18.00 (paper).

Reviewed by:

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Above all, ethnography as it relates to field encounters is a very personal experience. It has more to do with feelings and emotions than any objectivity or empirical reality. Anyone who does fieldwork knows this. As a research document, *Corbett Mack: The Life of a Northern Paiute* embodies this situation. For in its 400 pages, we gain access into the life and times of both the informant and ethnographer. The situational difference between informant and ethno-

grapher becomes readily apparent early in this volume. In a way, the incongruities that are evidenced throughout the book are the logical outcome of two persons in different worlds and times, drawn together by the unconventional relationship that the anthropological process dictates.

Hittman arranges the main text of *Corbett Mack: The Life of a Northern Paiute* into nine divisions with 159 sections. This is preceded by an introduction (with two general area maps), and concludes with three appendices (all dealing with narcotics), notes, a bibliography, and an index. Although Hittman states that the autobiographical sketch of Corbett Mack is taken from audio-transcription, he is vague about the details, giving a general context of his times with Corbett: "Between 1968 and 1972, I interviewed Corbett no less than fifty-five times, the interviews took about 165 hours, and I recorded some 30 additional hours on audio tapes" (p. 6). Within this general context, Hittman divides the main text into eight major parts and an epilogue. His groupings are slightly disparate, varying with topic and treatment. Since Hittman's specialty centers on illicit drugs (opiates and peyote) and addiction (alcohol and drugs), this focus is reflected to an inordinate degree. Be that as it may, the book is well-rounded and Hittman's attention to other aspects of Corbett's life and the social setting in which he participated are as balanced as possible given Hittman's explicit focus on drugs and addiction.

Hittman relates the circumstances of how he met and started his relationship with Corbett and the Yerington Paiute Tribe (*Tabooseedokado* or "Grass Nut Eaters") of Smith and Mason valleys, Nevada. In 1965, Hittman was selected to participate in the Tri-Institute Field Training Project in Anthropology, sponsored by the National Science Foundation and directed by Warren d'Azevedo, Kay Fowler, Wick Miller, Wayne Suttles, and Bill Jacobsen (p. 2). From his diary excerpts of that summer, he recounts

how he met and began his association with Corbett and the "Grass Nut Eaters" community. This association continued with Corbett for nine years until his death in 1974, and is presumably still ongoing with the community. In the intervening years, his relationship with Corbett was to go through a series of stages ranging from acquaintance to informant to attentive friend. His last meeting with Corbett was around Christmas of 1973 in the Yerington hospital.

Intertwined throughout the introduction, Hittman summarizes the spate of literary criticism that currently pervades the post-modernist tradition. He is inspired by Radin's *Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian* (1920), and uses Radin's style of organization as a rough guide. I concur completely with Hittman in voicing his disagreement with literary critics (Native American and others) whose criticisms about what is or is not the proper dimension of appropriateness for anthropologists to include or not include (e.g., endnotes, footnotes) when taking on such a monumental task of writing a life history (pp. 8-9). As a discipline and a profession, anthropology should not be limited to the self-styling of commentators whose ideas have nothing to do with the situations and circumstances that ethnographers experience or the conditions with which they deal.

Following a loose chronological order from Corbett's birth until his death in 1974, Corbett's own words are used to relate some of the more memorable events of his life. In this respect, Hittman has achieved a picture of a person caught between two cultures, confronting situations and circumstances that are the result of an acculturative process unique to "stolen children" or "half-breeds" (*Nomogweta*). Born of an Indian woman, Mary Mack, and a white man, Bill Douglass, Corbett was "born out in the brush" on April 15, 1892 (p. 24). He was raised by his pater, "Big Mack," or Mack Wheeler, and his maternal grandmother. His accounts of his early memories and prominent

aspects of the Paiute culture serve as an important contextual introduction to Corbett Mack's later circumstances.

In Chapters 2, 3, and 4, Corbett recollects his boyhood and teenage years through sections recounting stories of love and abuse, of school at the Stewart Institute, and of other aspects of his childhood, caught as it was between the white society that surrounded him and the traditional Indian culture in which he chose to live. Interspersed between the pages, Corbett describes and explains those traditional or acculturative activities, events, and incidents as he remembers them. The sections on traditional foods, hunting proscriptions, male puberty ceremonies, pine-nut dances, courtship, etc., are of particular interest to anthropologists.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 relate, through the personal experience of drug abuse and addiction, Corbett's life between 1923 and 1954. These sections recall his life of addiction (alcohol and opiates), and relate stories of liquor and opium use in Smith and Mason valleys by members of the Yerington Paiute Tribe. He also gives commentary on historically significant people, such as Wodziwob, Wovoka, and Chief Gray Horse (Ben Lancaster), as well as events, activities, and incidents (Ghost Dance, shamanism, supernatural power [*booha*]). Also included are his perspectives on interaction between tribal members (Smith and Mason Valley Paiute, Walker River, Mono Lake, Washo, Shoshone, Bannock, etc.) and other ethnic minorities (Italians and Chinese).

The final chapter and the epilogue recount Corbett's later life, in which he recalls major personal experiences in the period 1954 to 1974. In addition, he tells of animal teaching stories (*natoonnuu-dweba*), supernatural powers (*booha*), mythological characters (Wolf, Coyote, Mountain Sheep, Old Woman, Owl, Giants, Waterbabies), and other topics related to folklore and folktellings (designated repeater). The epilogue is both quite moving and telling of the de-

velopment of the friendship between ethnographer and informant.

The last part of the book incorporates three appendices dealing with newspaper accounts, situations, and a 1929 report on narcotics in the Mason and Smith valleys, and notes to the main text. The endnotes are extensive and document, through scholarly sources, the life experiences and topics in the text. In the final analysis, I found *Corbett Mack: The Life of a Northern Paiute* to be a superb addition to the life history literature, and its author to be an excellent field ethnographer. This book will be invaluable to anyone with an interest in Northern Paiute culture, acculturation, or life history studies.

REFERENCES

- Radin, Paul
1920 *Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology 16(7).



Kashaya Pomo Plants. Jennie Goodrich, Claudia Lawson, and Vana Parrish Lawson. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1996 (reprint of a 1980 ed.), 176 pp., 13 figs., \$12.95 (paper).

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Kashaya Pomo Plants is an extraordinary book, with authentic information on the ethnobotany of 150 common plants of coastal California. It is written by Pomo people, with information from Kashaya Pomo elders, for the Pomo