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not have been constructed with trees and brush because basalt boulders were more accessible.

This study deserves attention by all interested in approaches to the analysis of surface sites, especially hunting features. Furthermore, the report, like much of Thomas's work, shows how the archaeological record can provide interesting glimpses of prehistoric behavior.

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Man and Environment in the Great Basin.
David B. Madsen and James F. O'Connell,
eds. Society for American Archaeology
Papers No. 2, 1982, 242pp., SAA mem-
bers \$10.95, nonmembers \$14.95 (paper).

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All but three of the papers comprising this volume were first presented at one or another of two symposia organized for the 17th Great Basin Anthropological Conference held at Salt Lake City, Utah, September 4-6, 1980. However, the papers are said to have been prepared for publication in this volume from the start; i.e., the work under review was apparently designed with a specific objective in mind. That objective is hinted at in the editors' introduction (p. 1):

Though various overviews and sets of collected papers on specific topics have appeared in the years since [the great debate over the Desert Culture concept], no new regional synthesis has yet emerged. In fact, it has often seemed to us that much of the recent literature is either unconnected with problems of genuine anthropological and historical importance or else addresses those problems largely in terms of the debates of the 1960s. While some scholars have taken steps to redirect discussion and define new problems, their efforts have all too often been ignored or lost in the recent flood of 'management' and 'mitigation' reports.

The editors go on to claim that the papers included in the volume "review many of these extant problems and focus in on future directions" and in the process "raise a number of important issues" which they will touch on in their introduction to the volume. The issues mentioned in the introduction (also referred to as themes: environment, cultural chronology, settlement and subsistence patterns, culture history and directions for future research) appear to be *ex post facto* extrac-

tions from the various papers. That is, there does not appear to have been a specific set of "problems" that the individual writers were to attack from a particular perspective or set of perspectives. In the conclusion to their introduction, the editors express disappointment at the failure of the contributors to have "paid . . . attention to the explanation of what might be called stylistic or cultural variation such as differences in projectile point form, ceramic decoration and basketry manufacturing techniques[;] it seems to us that Basin scholars might well reexamine this general problem, perhaps most appropriately by appealing to theoretical research on the behavioral determinants of variation in material culture now being pursued by ethnoarchaeologists" (p. 6).

From this, I would conclude that the contributors did not have any overriding objective in mind when they prepared their individual papers, that they were either unaware of or did not fully understand what the instigators of this volume had in mind when they requested the individual contributions. This volume could have served as an important turning point in the archaeology of the Great Basin, not only by providing a systematic review of extant problems (which it does not do), but also by providing a well thought out set of guidelines for restructuring research in the directions sought by the editors. As it is, the volume is another collection of "current status of research, etc., in Great Basin Archaeology," which is not to say that the individual papers are not worth reading. They are, and the whole collection of these papers is worth having in a reference library. Whatever the shortcomings of the volume as a whole are, they appear to be those of the editors.

The individual papers are organized into two parts as follows: *Part I: The Environment*: "Paleoecological Models in the Southern Great Basin: Methods and Measurements"

by David L. Weide; "Paleoenvironments of the Northeastern Great Basin and Northeastern Basin Rim Region: A Review of Geological and Biological Evidence" by Donald R. Currey and Steven R. James; "Bits and Pieces: The Last 35,000 Years in the Lahontan Area" by Jonathan O. Davis; "A Perspective on Great Basin Paleoclimates" by Paul A. Kay; "Toward a History of Great Basin Mammals During the Past 15,000 Years" by Donald K. Grayson; "Great Basin Paleoenvironments: Summary and Integration" by David B. Madsen; and *Part II: Prehistory*: "Great Basin Archaeology: A Historical Overview" by Don D. Fowler and Jesse D. Jennings; "Settlement Patterns and Subsistence Systems in the Great Basin: The Ethnographic Record" by Catherine S. Fowler; "Archaeology of the Northern Great Basin: An Overview" by C. Melvin Aikens; "An Overview of Central Great Basin Prehistory" by David Hurst Thomas; "Prehistory in the Southern Great Basin" by Margaret M. Lyneis; "Good Times, Hard Times: Prehistoric Culture Change in the Western Great Basin" by Robert G. Elston; "Get It Where the Gettin's Good: A Variable Model of Great Basin Subsistence and Settlement Based on Data from the Eastern Great Basin" by David B. Madsen; "Some Thoughts on Prehistoric Archaeology in the Great Basin" by James F. O'Connell, Kevin T. Jones and Steven R. Simms.

The first group of papers, those treating reconstruction of late glacial/Holocene environments in the Great Basin, are generally sound, workmanlike summaries of extant literature. They provide a general view of what the regional environments might have been like during the time of human occupation, allowing for the difficulties inherent in a highly variable assemblage of data (as one writer put it, a mixture of apples, oranges, etc.). In his summary and "integration" of these papers, Madsen states that "it is becoming clear that the goals of most paleoecolo-

gists and those of archaeological anthropologists are not necessarily the same and that we must be careful to keep that distinction in mind." I find this remark rather puzzling. If, as editor, Madsen requested general reviews of regional paleoenvironments in the Great Basin, that is what he got, competently done. On the other hand, if he had requested what he seems to have been seeking—"more specific paleoenvironmental data against which specific groups of people [could] be examined" (p. 103), then he might have received quite a different response from the writers in question than that evident in their papers. By focusing more precisely on a particular time period or a given set of conditions, the paleoecologists might have approached the problem with a different set of parameters in mind and drawn on other data to provide a clearer picture of what would be required and of what the results might have been when attempting to examine [the behavior of] specific groups of people in specific paleoenvironments. If the archaeologist has a certain objective when working with paleoecologists of various persuasions, he must let them know exactly what it is he is seeking. Otherwise, they will go on doing what they have been doing—drawing a general picture of past environments while pursuing their own special interests.

The second group of papers is more wide ranging than the first, combining regional reviews of prehistory with a good, concise historical overview of archaeological research in the *cultural* Great Basin by Don Fowler

and Jesse Jennings and an interesting paper on the ethnographic record by Catherine Fowler. The regional reviews are remarkable because they differ so markedly in their perspectives, especially with reference to what the editors consider an underlying issue, the utility of the Desert Culture concept and Julian Steward's ethnographic model. Clearly, this is not and was not an issue everywhere in the Basin. It is of central interest in central Great Basin prehistory, where there is a good fit between the archaeological and ethnographic data, but seems to have been largely ignored in the southern Great Basin. At the same time, however, prehistoric adaptations are better understood in the central Great Basin than they are in the southern Great Basin. In other areas of the Basin, the issue is of only passing importance. There is an urge to explore new frontiers, to leave the familiar ground and to tackle a different set of questions. It is the writers on these areas (Elston, Madsen, O'Connell, Jones and Simms in their papers) who come closest to meeting the not very well expressed objectives of the editors, and it is their papers which are among the most provocative in the volume. They demand attention if for no other reason than their insistence on asking questions that cannot be answered on the basis of existing knowledge and research strategies. These writers will not be satisfied until the existing paradigm in Basin archaeology is abandoned and a new one formulated with their particular interests in mind. Perhaps the volume under review will stimulate broader movement in that direction.

