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Hoover: *Aboriginal Cordage in Western North America*

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REVIEWS

Indian Land Tenure: Bibliographical Essays and a Guide to the Literature. Imre Sutton. New York: Clearwater Publishing Company, 1975. xiii, 290 pp., 8 maps. \$18.00 (cloth). \$6.95 (paper).

Reviewed by ROBERT F. HEIZER
University of California, Berkeley

This is another of a growing list of definitive books on American Indians and their relations with whites. It is in good company with Wilcomb Washburn's *Red Man's Land/White Man's Law* which also contributes importantly to what Sutton says is "an acknowledged fact: land continues to be the crux of the conflict between Indian and white in this country." While the author characterizes this very impressive book as a "working bibliography," it also consists of a most readable text which is critical, substantive, and synthesizing. At the end are three indexes arranged by subject, tribe, and geography. The compact bibliography runs to 52 pages and over 1000 references.

Beyond a thorough review of all aspects of American Indian land tenure over time, for which scholars will be appreciative, there are two final chapters of particular interest. One deals with land tenure and culture change, which, in my opinion, is a thoughtful and anthropologically sound commentary on acculturation. The other gives us the benefit of what has been at least ten years of his thinking on the cross-cultural aspects of inequitable distribution of land to minority populations.

Altogether, this is an admirable work of scholarship—informative, sensitive, and thorough.

Aboriginal Cordage in Western North America. Robert L. Hoover. El Centro, California: Imperial Valley College Museum Society, *Occasional Paper* No. 1, 1974. 52 pp.

Reviewed by LAWRENCE E. DAWSON
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This work discusses the variations of cordage in aboriginal western North America, covering all kinds except those made exclusively for weaving into textiles such as mats, bags, baskets, and cloth. Techniques of fabrication such as thigh spinning, use of spindles, and preparation of fibers are given, and there is a roster of plant and animal fibers used. There are twenty-eight maps of the distribution of varieties of cordage, techniques, spindle types, and materials. In the summary, the author points out that techniques using accessory implements are far more limited in distribution than those performed without tools. Moreover, cotton was the only cultivated fiber plant in the region covered, and it was restricted to the farming tribes of the southwestern states.

The presentation is flawed by a number of unfortunate defects: (1) It is apparently put together entirely from published sources, without benefit of museum research or fieldwork; even so, many major ethnographic works were evidently not consulted. There are too many strange omissions such as the use of *Psoralea macrostachya* root by the Pomo and *Fremontodendron californicum* inner bark by the tribes of the southern Sierra, from the Miwok to the Tübatulabal. These lapses

suggest a certain unfamiliarity with the subject on the part of the author. (2) Some materials shown on the distribution maps are not explained or discussed in the text. (3) The distribution maps cannot be relied upon, because so many major works were apparently overlooked. Map 2, for instance, omits the three-ply cordage recorded for the Klamath River tribes and well represented in museum collections. (4) There is no discussion of differences in *S* or *Z* spun cordage among the various tribes, a work habit that varies according to cultural tradition. It would be most useful to have this, of all things, properly outlined and summarized.

The overall impression of this work is that it was hastily prepared, lacks adequate background preparation, and is therefore not to be taken as authoritative.



California Gold Camps: A Geographical and Historical Dictionary of Camps, Towns, and Localities where Gold was Found and Mined, Wayside Stations and Trading Centers. Erwin G. Gudde (Elizabeth K. Gudde, ed.). Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press. 467 pp. \$19.50 (cloth).

Reviewed by ALBERT B. ELSASSER
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So far as anthropologists are concerned, the value of this book, on first impression, would appear to be confined mostly to archaeologists or ethnologists involved in studies of the Sierra Nevada region and other places in California where there were formerly heavy Indian populations. A detailed perusal,

however, suggests a much wider field of interest.

The author (or authors, for the late Erwin Gudde frequently worked in close cooperation with his wife) of the most comprehensive book of California placenames has in the present volume compiled an impressive list with more than 4000 annotated entries, most of them applying to some five or six California counties in the so-called Mother Lode district of the Sierra Nevada foothills. This book should become indispensable to anyone associated with historical research in nineteenth century California. Looking further, this absorbing dictionary has many important implications to, for instance, demographers and linguists as well. In effect, it documents probably one of the greatest population movements in history more graphically than mere narrative description. Most of the names were given by a relatively tight-knit group composed of those directly or indirectly involved with gold within a short period of 30 years, say from 1849 to 1880. In such a compact situation as this, the names can tell us a great deal about the people who created them.

As examples of the exclusiveness of the naming group, perhaps most accurately referred to as Western European or Anglo-American, we see that less than 100 names out of the total of 4500 or so in the book were derived from the Spanish language; most of the names containing the proper adjective "Spanish," in any case, probably referred to miners from Mexico. Other Spanish-speaking miners caused the name *Chile* or *Chilean* to be used with relatively great frequency, thus confirming the rough statistics that, of all the South American countries, Chile sent the largest contingent of gold seekers to California.

Although this migration of miners or would-be miners from all over the world resulted in wholesale displacement or depredation of the native population, California Indian names like *Coloma* or *Concow* (both given as Maidu words) are extremely rare. The