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The Painter Lady: Grace Carpenter Hudson.

Searles R. Boynton. Eureka: Interface California Corp., 1978. 186 pp., including 64 pp. of black/white and color illustrations. \$28.50.

Reviewed by ALBERT B. ELSASSER
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Even the experience of having seen and admired one or more of Grace Hudson's Indian paintings hanging in a museum would not prepare one for the great emotional impact carried by this book. That the artist herself numbered and made clear photographs of most of her paintings has helped this illustrated biography to become a penetrating analysis of the career of an outstanding California painter. Fortunately the author brings this off without having to employ a great rash of artistico-philosophical verbiage. Searles Boynton, an orthodontist who lives in Mendocino County, has tracked down a goodly portion of Hudson's paintings and obtained most attractive color and black and white photographs of them for use in this book. In addition, he has wisely included a "catalogue raisonné" of small black and white photographs of the paintings, summarily delineating a production of nearly 700 of them, dating from 1891 to 1935.

About one-third of Grace Hudson's pictures were concerned with infants, either in or out of the Pomo Indian basketry cradle. Often similar poses are repeated for different babies; for example, small dogs are present, or perhaps older siblings or adults holding the child. The same subject is sometimes shown in different attitudes. It would seem at first that these devices would make for a general sameness of effect, but examination of the catalog reveals that even here, with the pictures arranged in lines, each one, because of the unique expression of the child, stands on its own merits. What we have, in short, is a sort of

microcosmic "Family of Man," with the heavy dependence on small children giving a solid beginning to the facial history of one or two Pomo tribelets during a period of about forty years. The pictures of growing children and grown-ups complete the record, and with the latter there is hardly a hint of sameness in pose or background. One splendid portrait, of "Kolpi-ta" (No. 678: the "medicine woman") is surely among the most impressive depictions of American Indians ever conceived.

It has been argued by one of her contemporary critics that Hudson's attention to detail makes her art perhaps too photographic. This may be so in the case of backgrounds (acorn baskets, cradles, and the like) and costumes, but for the anthropologist, among others, this is a distinct advantage. Almost certainly there were no photographers around during Hudson's early career who attempted to capture the kind of ethnographic details of Pomo life that she did. If there were, one can easily surmise that their results would not have been half as attractive as Hudson's, and certainly little more accurate.

Boynton's biographical prose is fittingly affectionate toward the main character, and his references to the Pomo Indians and to Hudson's relationship to them as the "Painter Lady" are evidently unbiased and carefully considered. Despite some ambivalence about inherent danger in the idea of depicting faces of living Indians, it seems reasonably clear in retrospect that the Pomo well knew they were being painted, and, empirically, not only tolerated, but appreciated the work of Grace Hudson. Some quotations from journalists commenting on her work on Indians 70 or 80 years ago, however, show the usual jaundiced popular White attitudes toward the natives. A painting of a beautiful Pomo woman, for example, is referred to as that of a "dusky Madonna"; the general tone of several of these writings thus tends to be irritatingly patronizing to the subjects of the paintings. This of

course is not surprising, but it does contrast markedly with the attitude which obviously shows through in virtually all of Hudson's work: in my view, she could not possibly have been patronizing the Indians.

Interface California Corporation now has to its credit at least three elegant pictorial volumes which include California Indian portraits, and "The Painter Lady" is the most handsome of these.

[A reproduction of one of Grace Carpenter Hudson's paintings appeared in the previous issue of *The Journal of California Anthropology* (Vol. 3, No. 2., p. 320) — Editor].



Models and Great Basin Prehistory: A Symposium. Don D. Fowler, ed. Reno: Desert Research Institute *Publications in the Social Sciences* No. 12. 1977, 213 pp., maps, plates, illustrations. \$6.00. (paper).

Reviewed by ROBERT L. BETTINGER
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This volume contains, for the most part, papers and comments from a symposium given at the 1975 Annual Meetings of the Society for American Archaeology held in Dallas, Texas. In all, there are seven symposium contributions including the editor's introductory comments, four symposium papers, and two discussant papers, as well as two papers contributed after the symposium. I shall restrict my comments to a few basic points.

In his introductory paper, Don Fowler argues that the study of Great Basin prehistory has been hindered by the failure of archaeologists to regard models from other disciplines (e.g., linguistics, geology) with the same healthy skepticism they accord archaeological models and reconstructions, by the tendency for individual investigators to judge the validity of archaeological models in terms of the

specific data they themselves have generated, and by attempts to link linguistics, archaeological, and skeletal evidence without proper justification. The merit of Fowler's comments is undeniable, but his major points are clearly intended as general guidelines rather than hard and fast rules and should be so taken.

Catherine Fowler's "Ethnography and Great Basin Prehistory" traces the changing role of analogies and models drawn from the historic aboriginal inhabitants of the Desert West in archaeological studies. Although I do not agree with all she says, the treatment is thorough and informative, making this a useful summary.

Perhaps the most provocative paper in this collection is James Goss' "Linguistic Tools for the Great Basin Prehistorian." Briefly, Goss rejects Lamb's (1958) argument for the recent Numic spread into the Great Basin from southern California and maintains that Numic groups or their ancestors have resided *in situ* for the last 10,000 years. In his discussion of the Goss paper, Stephen Jett appears to concur with Goss, at least in a general sense. I am not a linguist, but I find this reconstruction weaker than Lamb's, particularly given the recency of occupation implied by Numic place names. Moreover, I am puzzled by a model that rejects Death Valley as being capable of budding populations into the Great Basin, but then turns around and argues that the Intermontane Province was the staging area for massive population movements that swamped virtually all of western North America and Mesoamerica and is the ancestral homeland of such diverse groups as the Tsimshian and Maya.

In their contribution "Time, Space, and Intensity in Great Basin Paleoecological Models," David Weide and Margaret Weide discuss some of the parameters relevant to the formation of the archaeological record and the interpretation of past climatic events in the Great Basin in terms of their dating, severity, and impact on prehistoric human ecology. The