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Rogers: *An Early Human Fossil from the Yuha Desert of Southern California: Physical Characteristics*

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Author

Schulz, Peter D

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aroused." Echoes of these old hatreds indeed exist today in academic and legislative debate.



An Early Human Fossil from the Yuha Desert of Southern California: Physical Characteristics. Spencer L. Rogers. San Diego: San Diego Museum of Man *Papers* No. 12. 1977. 27 pp., map, figures, bibliography. \$3.00 (paper).

Reviewed by PETER D. SCHULZ
University of California, Davis

Debate over the antiquity of man in the New World has been a recurrent theme in modern archaeology for much of this century, but only in recent years has the controversy tended to concentrate in southern California. Numerous finds of purported great antiquity have now been recovered there. These are distributed from the Channel Islands and the San Diego Coast to the Colorado and Mojave deserts, with estimated ages ranging from 16,000 to more than 100,000 years. Lest conservative readers envision little old scientists in tennis shoes, it should be noted that the finds have attracted many of the lumina of both archaeology and chronophysics, who have subjected at least some of the sites to detailed investigation. Such finds consequently deserve careful consideration.

Prominent among recent discoveries is the Yuha skeleton, a human burial found in the arid Imperial Valley, a few miles north of the Mexican border. The bones were covered by a rock cairn and associated with unifacial flaked stone tools. Subsequent to the time of burial, the bones were covered with precipitated caliche, which has been dated at $21,500 \pm 1000$ B.P. by ^{14}C and at $19,000 \pm 3000$ B.P. by ^{230}Th . The archaeology and chronology of the site have been the subjects of two previous reports

(Childers 1974; Bischoff *et al.* 1976). In the present monograph the skeleton itself is analyzed.

Rogers' report, as might be expected from his previous work, is detailed and fully professional. Though hampered by the highly fragmented and eroded condition of the find (the skull vault alone was crushed into some 90 pieces), he establishes the sex as probably male, age as late adolescence (17-20), stature as less than 160 cm., and provides a series of osteometric and morphological observations.

Although the main contribution of the work is a straightforward osteological study, the greatest interest will undoubtedly center on the two short sections entitled "Racial Characteristics" and "Comparisons." Unfortunately, these are the weakest sections of the report. Although the Yuha find is assessed (on non-metric features) as "a cranium with more Caucasoid than Mongoloid elements," the two terms are never defined—a serious omission in view of the variability in their use, even among physical anthropologists, and particularly in view of the discussions of "proto-Caucasoid" affiliations which have been popular of late at Early Man symposia. Since we do not know how Rogers would classify recent Native American peoples, the value of his terminology is limited. It is worth noting, however, that the rather gracile appearance of the cranium is not particularly reminiscent of Asian "Caucasoids," and the relatively large teeth which he compares to those of Javanese and aboriginal Australians, could in fact be easily lost among those of any number of recent California or Great Basin populations. No statistical tests are performed, but the metric data (in so far as they can be trusted) do show, as Rogers notes, a close similarity to the La Jolla crania from the San Diego coast. This would not be surprising in a contemporaneous individual, but is worth wondering at in one proclaimed as twice the age of the Holocene.

The report is well presented, but several

points deserve comment. A large number of radiocarbon dates are now available for the La Jolla culture, nearly all of them *post*-dating 8000 B.P.; the osteometric comparisons are with the *Early* period (Windmill) populations of the lower Central Valley; and the age of more than 6000 years ascribed to the Tranquillity site was based on a possible association with Pleistocene fauna which neither archaeological analysis nor radiometric dating has substantiated. Some will find the flesh restoration (Fig. 5) interesting, but my preference would have been for a good view of the dentition—the one area of the skeleton conspicuously slighted in the morphological assessment. It is also worth noting that while the publisher has numbered 27 pages, a full third of these are blank—providing an ideal space for the reader to calculate the per-page price of this report.

REFERENCES

- Bischoff, James L., Richard Merriam, W. Morlin Childers, and Reiner Protsch
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Flowers of the Wind: Papers on Ritual, Myth, and Symbolism in California and the Southwest. Thomas C. Blackburn, ed. Socorro, New Mexico: Ballena Press *Anthropological Papers* No. 8. 1978. 194 pp., 6 figs. \$8.95 (paper).

Reviewed by ARNOLD R. PILLING
Wayne State University

Seven articles on aboriginal California and the Southwest, with their introductions by the

editor and the editors of the series, form the rather uneven group of statements which comprise this volume. They are far from being a tract on Native American belief in the West.

Two of the pieces are derived from new field work among Southwesterners: Elizabeth Brandt writes on secrecy concerning the sacred at Taos; while Donald Bahr discusses the Pima concept of breath in shamanistic curing. Three papers deal primarily with what little survives of memory culture in three California groups: Maurice Zigmond summarizes the supernatural world of the Kawaiisu, from the notes of T. D. McCown (1929), Stephen C. Cappannari (1947-1949), as well as Zigmond himself (1936-1940, 1970-1974). Carobeth Laird presents a gloss of behavioral patterns abstracted from Chemehuevi myths related by her husband George Laird prior to 1940; while John and Donna Bushnell consider the concepts of wealth, work, quest for the extraordinary, shame, the sacred and the ordinary among the Hupa and the culturally-similar Yurok, Karok, Chilula, and Tolowa, drawn primarily from research done in the 1940's and earlier, rather than their own more recent Hoopa Valley field seasons. Two essays are surveys of the literature: C. Patrick Morris catalogues the elements of the Dying God myth among Arizona and California Yumans; while Richard Applegate reviews concepts of afterlife among Native Californians.

In reading through this array, I am struck by its parochialism and/or *ivory-towerism*. Granted that Thomas C. Blackburn (p. 7) refers to *Man the Hunter*, while Bahr (p. 30) notes that comparison with a New England group would be useful, I am still puzzled why I do not, in relation to this work, but rather in Australianist Jeremy Beckett's preface to the new edition of A. P. Elkin's *Aboriginal Men of High Degree* (1977), find reference to works by Carlos Castaneda. Have California scholars' command of ethnography become so restricted by political boundaries that they find nothing