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Heizer and Kroeber: *Ishi the Last Yahi: A Documentary History*

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The human sciences today are the poorer, not because of what Xántus did, but because of what he failed to do.



Ishi the Last Yahi: A Documentary History.

Robert F. Heizer and Theodora Kroeber, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979, 242 pp., \$17.50 (hardbound).

Reviewed by PATTI JOHNSON

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The story of Ishi, the last Yahi Indian, who was discovered in northern California in 1911, has been told many times. Besides scholarly works on the subject, the public's interest has been kindled by presentations on television, by a conference devoted entirely to Ishi and his unique situation, and particularly by Theodora Kroeber's fascinating biography *Ishi in Two Worlds*. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to see yet another volume on Ishi which appears to cover the same ground. The purpose of this recent work is to present "a collection of nearly forty original documents that concern Ishi." Several of the earlier articles reprinted here provide information on the Yana and Yahi Indians and a few appeared many years after Ishi's death. About half of the articles were originally published in newspapers and magazines and follow his discovery and subsequent years in civilization until his death in 1916. There are five maps to assist the reader in understanding Yana territory (of which the Yahi were a part), language distributions, and Ishi's understanding of his own region as translated on paper. A number of good quality photographs accompany the text; most of these are of Ishi, the Mill Creek area where he lived, and artifacts owned or made by him.

Had this book not been preceded by Theodora Kroeber's previous work, *Ishi the Last Yahi* would have been a particularly informative effort. However, most if not all the sources are referenced in the earlier biography; many of the photographs and maps are the same. While the documents reprinted in *Ishi the Last Yahi* are not commonly found, they are certainly available in public and academic libraries. Considering the substantial earlier literature on Ishi, and Theodora Kroeber's thorough biography, there seems to have been little purpose for the publication of this volume.



Saga America. Barry Fell. New York: Times Books, 1980, 425 pp., \$15.00 (hardback).

Reviewed by DAVID HURST THOMAS

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Barry Fell has really done it this time! When he published *America B.C.* (Fell 1976), I took a pass. Of course, there are profound difficulties with Fell's elephantine thesis that the ancient Celts overran the New World three thousand years ago, but after all, Fell's sites were in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, and Vermont. And he only discussed the eastern tribes, like the Algonquins and the Iroquois. It seemed sufficient at the time to leave the repudiation of such obvious drivel to our colleagues in the eastern United States and the Old World. I will admit, however, to a certain gratification when these colleagues demolished Fell's silly proposals (see Ross and Reynolds 1978 and McKusick 1979 for references).

But Fell's newest effort, *Saga America*, invades our own territory. I was first attracted