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Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology

Title

Miller: *Ukomno'm: The Yuki Indians of Northern California*

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7tn472c3>

Journal

Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 1(2)

ISSN

0191-3557

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Publication Date

1979-07-01

Peer reviewed

importance of hunting-gathering and horticulture, as well as in other elements. Data from selected sites in various parts of Utah are summarized, providing concrete illustration of the extent of variation within the Fremont culture.

In historic times, Utah was inhabited by the Gosiute, Ute, and Southern Paiute, who are believed on both archaeological and linguistic grounds to have replaced the Anasazi and Fremont peoples some time around A.D. 1300. The historic peoples were hunter-gatherers, who followed a lifeway not markedly different from that of the early occupants of Danger Cave, some 9000 years ago. Thus, as Jennings notes, the story of Utah prehistory ends as it began, with the foragers of the desert.

This synthesis, though completed in 1973, was not released until 1978. New evidence of course accumulated in the interim, but some of the most important of the new data and interpretations were added at a late stage of the production process, and the account is respectably current despite the lag between original completion and publication.

Jennings' book is notable in several respects: it is the first major synthesis of Utah prehistory, fittingly done by the man who has contributed more to the field than any other; it is dominated throughout by an ecological perspective which emphasizes adaptation to environment as reflected primarily in the food economy; it is concrete, stressing archaeological evidence rather than theoretical superstructure; and it is interpretive, while remaining tentative and undogmatic in its conclusions. These attributes make it a valuable book for layman and professional alike. The former will find it an interesting, factual, and well-presented account of Utah's prehistoric past; the latter will find in it a set of interpretations with which to quibble, leads for further investigation, and a broad perspective within which to appreciate the culture history of an important part of western North America.

The book is well-edited and handsomely produced after the usual manner of the University of Utah Press.



Ukomno'm: The Yuki Indians of Northern California. Virginia P. Miller. Socorro, New Mexico: Ballena Press *Anthropological Papers* No. 14, 1979, 108 pp., 1 map, 8 figs., bibliography, \$6.95.

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The Yuki were a unique and little-known people who inhabited the isolated, fertile, and beautiful Round Valley in the North Coast Range. They are unique because of a physical stature clearly distinct from other California Indians, unique because of a language apparently unrelated to neighboring language groups or any other North American languages, and unique because of a propensity for warfare. As a consequence, their reputation was established among other Californian Indians for ferociousness. Their uniqueness is all the more fascinating for the lack of information about them. They are so poorly documented because, although Powers in 1877 and Kroeber in 1925 dealt briefly with them, no systematic or thorough study was undertaken until Foster's and Susman's separate efforts in the late thirties. These studies resulted in Foster's (1944) ethnography and reconstruction of pre-contact culture, *A Summary of Yuki Culture*, and Susman's (1976) recent publication on their acculturation, *The Round Valley Indians of California*. While better late than never, the thirties was a bit late even for salvage ethnography to form more than a fragmentary record of history, and Virginia Miller has stepped into this breach with ethno-historical method.

After a brief review of issues and problems pertaining to the Yuki and a summary of their culture, Miller launches into a detailed and well-documented account of the first devastating 9 years of Yuki-White contact in Round Valley from 1854 through 1862. A hostile exchange of bullets and arrows marked the first Yuki-White meeting in May 1854 when the Asbills, adventurers from Missouri, rode into Round Valley interrupting a grasshopper drive. The Asbills returned to Round Valley the next summer for deer hides, and, when they left in September, they took with them 35 young Yuki women whom they lured and cajoled with promises of beans and syrup into the Central Valley where they traded them to the *vacqueros*—squaws for horses!

This was but the beginning. The Valley had been discovered; settlers came to claim the Yuki's fertile land, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs established a reservation, the Nome Cult Farm, which was poorly managed, often with corruption. In 1859, the "Eel River Rangers" under Captain Jarboe were commissioned by the state to "protect" the settlers from "marauding" Indians. They used this authority to systematically hunt and kill the Yuki on a regular basis without stopping to establish guilt. Women and children were as often victims of the rifles as the men. A small detachment of the Regular Army was stationed in the Valley to keep peace and protect both settlers and Indians but it had no real authority to move against the Whites, and so, in spite of good intentions, it was powerless to stop the rapid decimation of the once populous Yuki.

Miller authenticates and adds color to her account with generous use of quotes from a wide range of written sources representing White perceptions of the circumstances; it is a tale all the more damning for its origins. It would be interesting to know the Indian perceptions of this time period. Such memories exist among other Northern California

Indians and may also among the few remaining Yuki. Miller's bias in favor of the Indians often shows. While she properly questions the veracity of some reports of thievery and pillaging by the Yuki, reports of the Whites' depredations are not as rigorously examined. Sheer weight of the evidence, however, clearly bears out her case. It would also be desirable to have an integrated and more encompassing analysis of how these particular circumstances fit into the larger historical scene on both state and national levels. Is there indeed even one instance in U.S. history in which the Indians successfully held on to their land which Whites found desirable?

With her *Ukomno'm* Miller has made a welcome and important contribution to the meager literature on the Yuki and the initial stages of Indian-White contact in Northern California. This publication is the first half of her dissertation with some minor and skillful rewriting; it may be hoped that the remainder, which deals with the reservation period to allotment, will also soon find print. Miller received her degree from the Anthropology Department at the University of California, Davis, in 1973 and is now teaching at Dalhousie University in Halifax, where she is reportedly working on Mic Mac materials; without question this is a loss for ethnohistory in California and a gain for Nova Scotia.

REFERENCES

- Foster, G. M.
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- Susman, A.
1976 The Round Valley Indians of California. Berkeley: University of California Archaeological Research Facility Contribution No. 31.

