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Van Camp: *Kumeyaay Pottery—Paddle and Anvil Techniques of Southern California.*

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Association presented *America B.C.*, Fell's first archaeology (?) book, to the White House as one of the best 250 books published between 1973 and 1977.

Can you believe that? The White House! Anybody who thinks that archaeologists should adopt a policy of "benign neglect" toward crackpot archaeology must be joking. Books like these must serve as barometers to measure the extent which we have failed to communicate with the public. Had we better explained the archaeology of the American west, fewer people would have fallen prey to operators like Barry Fell.

My advice is, by all means, to read *Saga America*. But try to borrow a copy; don't buy one.

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Kumeyaay Pottery—Paddle and Anvil Techniques of Southern California. Gena R. Van Camp. Socorro, New Mexico: Ballena Press *Anthropological Papers* No. 15, 1979, 104 pp., 15 illustrations, 3 maps, \$6.95 (paper).

Reviewed by D. L. TRUE

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The success of a paper depends on many factors, but the most important may be whether or not it accomplishes its stated goals. Van Camp states that the objectives of her paper are

... to examine the external characteristics of Southern California prehistoric and protohistoric pottery, to show how it was made, to outline its distribution as discovered by archaeology, to compare it to neighboring groups, and to chart the social forces which might have shaped its distribution and development [page 11].

While it is reasonable to assume that Van Camp invested a considerable amount of time examining the San Diego Museum of Man ceramic collections, in my opinion the paper fails to achieve any of the other stated objectives.

Reasons for the failure of this most promising study are manifold, but certainly include aspects of the following:

1. Poor organization of the material permits the Kumeyaay Pottery discussion (which should be the central theme) to get lost in a sea of generally unrelated comments;

2. The discussion of the technical aspects of ceramic technology is an awkwardly presented paraphrasing of Rogers (1936) and Shepard (1956), and adds little to our understanding of the subject matter. Rogers' monograph and Shepard's detailed and very adequate study of ceramic technology and classification are both readily available;



3. Discussion of the archaeology is confusing and the data presented from the three described regions (coastal, mountain, and desert) are inadequate. The notion that there might be cultural or adaptational differences in the three cited environmental regions is not entirely new. The idea that these differences might be reflected in some way by the ceramics is interesting, however, and it is too bad that it was not systematically considered. The proposed comparison collapses mainly because the data base, as presented, is inadequate and poorly organized.

The Spindrift site, cited here as the best described coastal site in San Diego County, is represented by a pathetic aggregate of artifacts with minimal provenience information. Ceramics are represented by 145 potsherds which are undescribed (126 brown and 19 buff) and one bow pipe.

Failure to present useful information on the Spindrift site can be rationalized (at least in part) on the basis of the poor sample which was collected many years earlier under generally uncontrolled circumstances. Such is not the case for the mountain site representing the material from the upland interior region. Site SDMM-W-384 was excavated by E. L. Davis and Van Camp and adequate records should be available. The essence of the Davis-Van Camp investigation of W-384 is presented here in two short descriptive paragraphs and one table. Table 4 is a *list* of artifacts recovered. There are no artifact descriptions, no illustrations of the artifacts, no typological considerations, and no artifact provenience data. A total of 1243 potsherds are listed, but there is no breakdown or description (buff versus brownware, plain versus decorated, etc).

Amongst the other elements *listed* are 33 undescribed projectile points, 245 undifferentiated bone fragments, 11 pine nut hulls, an unstated amount of metal, sheet mica, and 18 tourmaline crystals. On the basis of the sheet mica and tourmaline, the author proposes

contact with the Luiseño because these materials are found near Pala in Luiseño territory. It is the case, however, that Pegmatite formations (the source of the indicated material) are found as well at several locales *within* Diegueño territory at Ramona, Mesa Grande, Jacumba, and last but not least, at Banner *which is just over the hill from site W-384*.

The representative site for the desert zone is C-144 in the Museum of Man series. It is an ethnographically identified site reportedly excavated by Rogers in 1929, and again in the early 1960's by Clark Brott. This very important site is disposed of here with one descriptive paragraph (and part of another). Table 6 *lists* the cultural inventory from C-144, and while it is longer than the listings from Spindrift and W-384, it is no more useful. There are no artifact descriptions, no provenience data, and no breakdown of the reported pottery.

Instead of developing data which could be used for comparative purposes (*publication of the available data from C-144 would be justification for this monograph in its own right*), the writer leaves us with a meaningless list of artifacts and wanders off down San Felipe Wash dribbling unfocused, generalized comments on site locations, the Salton Sea, artifacts, contemporary agriculture, modern population, hot springs, trails, pictographs, and curing practices.

The primary contribution of the paper, it seems, is a new proposal for designating Southern California pottery. According to the proposal, all pre-existing terminology and concepts should be discarded and replaced with two large general categories: *Southern California Brown* and *Southern California Buff*. The writer, we are informed, is not interested in types (in the traditional sense), and prefers to see the local pottery in terms of what she designates *styles*. Under the two general headings she proposes that regional styles can be identified, and suggests the fol-

lowing sub categories: *Kumeyaay Brown Plain*, *Kumeyaay Brown Incised*, *Kumeyaay Brown Painted*, *Northern Diegueño Brown Plain*, *Northern Diegueño Brown Incised*, etc., with similar categories for the *Cahuilla* and *Luiseno*. The designations, as proposed, are based on "presumed ethnic affiliation" and presumed but not always recognizable intentional surface treatment on the vessels or sherds.

The proposal is of course useless, since no real criteria are presented which serve to differentiate the so-called styles. There is no way, for example, to differentiate *Northern Diegueño Brown Plain* from *Luiseno Brown Plain*, from *Cahuilla Brown Plain*, from *Kumeyaay Brown Plain*.

The bibliography is impressive with over 200 entries, but unfortunately only about 100 of these are actually cited in the text. There are in addition at least 20 other obvious bibliographic errors, which under other circumstances would detract from the usefulness of the paper. There are 15 illustrations. The quality of the photographs and line drawings range from good to excellent, but they serve no real purposes since none of them is keyed to the text and no useful descriptive information is provided.

The printing here is excellent (consistent with the high quality of the series in general), and typos are literally non-existent. The paper used is excellent and the format is attractive. The somewhat optimistic foreword is well written, but the text itself unfortunately leaves a great deal to be desired.

Painting with a large brush, from which most of the bristles are missing, produces an odd lot of streaks, scratches and smears.

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Things are looking up, bibliographically speaking, in the Southwest. On the somewhat distant heels of David Laird's Hopi volume but barely in advance of Stanley Paher's long-awaited Nevada bibliography comes this excellent, important, addition to our reference shelves. The compiler covers private papers—unofficial records in manuscript collections—as well as the more obvious public documents for the pre-Anglo period in the four states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. The result is a veritable bonanza of useful information.

In form, the book is really a bibliographical essay rather than the typical barebones catalogue or research tool (usually as unreadable as the phone book) with which we are accustomed. As a result of Beers' wonderfully rambling, almost gossipy, narrative, we lose something in convenience when using the work strictly as a finding aid. But we more than gain it back in the richness of his descriptions of the sources in this field. And, for a bibliography, his narrative style makes for pretty interesting reading, though the vicissitudes of archives at the vandalizing hands of bureaucrats and Army of Occupation soldiers will make you