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***Florida's People during the Last Ice Age* by Barbara A. Purdy**

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Florida's People during the Last Ice Age*. By Barbara A. Purdy (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008. xx, 136 pp. List of figures, foreword, preface, acknowledgments, introduction, illustrations, maps, B/W photographs, bibliography, index. \$29.95, cloth)

Students approaching the study of Florida's Paleoindians for the first time are well advised to consult Barbara A. Purdy's *Florida's People during the Last Ice Age* for a concise and carefully documented overview of the field. Similarly, researchers focusing on later periods in Florida archaeology will find a useful summary of key past research as well as current evidence concerning the presence of humans in the region during the Late Glacial Period.

Purdy begins her work with an overview of the Paleoindian research conducted during the one hundred years from 1850 to 1950. Her synthesis reveals some of the emerging trends and changing theoretical paradigms in Florida archaeology that contributed to the general development of American archaeology. Consistent with the remaining sections of the book, Purdy illustrates important concepts by detailing in clear, nontechnical language the results of work conducted at key sites—in the case of this historical overview, five sites with significant and lasting importance.

The bulk of the remaining content of the book covers research conducted during the period 1950 to present on people using Clovis projectile points who were engaged in hunting large Ice Age animals some 14,000 YBP (Years Before Present). Florida's unique karst environment contributed to the fact that a firm understanding of this period awaited the development of scuba diving technology and methods—a significant proportion of the information concerning this period comes from springs and sinkholes. Readers residing in Florida will likely enjoy her treatment of such sites as Wakulla Springs and Silver Springs as she summarizes the evidence of work in these and other sites. In the process, she reveals distant human experiences in what would appear as an alien landscape dominated by large mammals and a greatly lowered sea level but today functions as tourist destinations or state parks.

Chapter 3 addresses the question of evidence for the presence of humans in Florida prior to the classically defined Paleoindians (i.e., before 14,000 YBP). Although this has long been an unsettled issue, Purdy concludes that her research at the Container Corporation of America site in Marion County suggests that it is “the only site in Florida so far where in situ materials have been reported to date to a Pre-Paleoindian time period, although at some of the sites on the Aucilla and Wacissa

rivers, a few deeply recovered organic specimens have yielded dates ranging from approximately 18,000 to 30,000 years old” (115).

In the last two chapters of the book, Purdy addresses the challenges confronting archaeologists studying the Paleoindians and briefly recommends future research directions. Particularly intriguing is her question, “Is it a coincidence that beveled ivory points from Florida are identical to those of the Upper Paleolithic 30,000 years ago in the Old World?” (121). The book’s bibliography is an excellent inventory of the key research in the field and serves as a guide to anyone who requires a greater depth of understanding of this formative period in the peopling of Florida.

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*Crackers in the Glade: Life and Times in the Old Everglades.* By Rob Storter and Betty Savidge Briggs (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007. Paperback edition. xxiv, 127 pp. Foreword, introduction, maps, photographs, illustrations, notes. \$22.95, paper)

In anthropology, there are several different terms for the kind of knowledge revealed through *Crackers in the Glade*. Various referred to as “folkways,” “traditional knowledge,” or “traditional ecological knowledge,” this type of understanding is often contrasted with more scientific and formal knowledge. Yet we often have neither formal nor traditional knowledge with which to understand the ecology or lifeways that surround us. In this edited volume of memoirs by her grandfather Rob Storter, Betty Savidge Briggs gives us both visual and written documentation of life and times in the old Everglades.

Throughout this wonderfully edited volume, Storter provides not only his knowledge and vision of a vast and often unforgiving environment, but insight into a wilderness culture that few will experience again. His memories and the accompanying drawings provide a glimpse not only of a bountiful land, but also of the culture of an enduring frontier life that still resonates with some residents of a few small fishing villages near the Florida Everglades. Recognizing the fragile nature of his environment and its quickly vanishing way of life, Storter chronicles both with fascinating detail in his journals.

This portrait of a pioneering life in Southwest Florida is a testament to the resilience of the early settlers of this land. The harsh environment forged a tough and hardy group of people who depended upon each other and a faith that played an important role in many ways. He traveled many miles to attend a semi-annual Pentecostal retreat where he met his first wife in 1916, only to see her pass away the following July while at the same retreat. Amazingly, he met his second wife at the