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of contemporary Native basketmaking of northern Nevada come alive. The nineteen interviews are engaging and the photographs are a helpful accompaniment to the text.

The primary weakness is the lack of historical grounding outside of the foreword by Fowler. When historical information is presented by Fulkerson, a glance at the endnotes often reveals the source to be a lecture or museum interpretive panel, rather than a publication, even when published sources are available. Readers wanting more in-depth information about both prehistorical and ethnographic Great Basin basketry should consult the *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 11 (Great Basin), 1986, "Prehistoric Basketry," by J.M. Adovasio and "Ethnographic Basketry," by Catherine S. Fowler and Lawrence E. Dawson. A technical weakness of *Weavers of Tradition and Beauty* is its poor editing. The book is a little too conversational in inappropriate places, such as the areas that are not interviews with artists. The editors seem to have confused an informal, conversational style that would enhance reader accessibility with poor word and syntactical usage (in places). This makes the content harder, not easier, to understand. Another technical irritation is that several of the color photographs are out of focus.

Despite these objections, *Weavers of Tradition and Beauty* does fulfill an important function in presenting oral history, gathering technical information and documenting this important tradition within its cultural context, thus helping to ensure the continuation of Great Basin basketmaking for future generations. The commitment and passion of the authors and photographer for the subject are commendable and their willingness to seek out Native weavers to interview and then submit the book to them for review prior to publication is a significant hallmark of respect.

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**Western Abenaki Dictionary.** By Dr. Gordon M. Day. Hull, Quebec: Canadian Museum of Civilization. Distributed in U.S. by University of Washington Press, 1994–1995. Volume 1, 612 pages; Volume 2, 460 pages. \$34.95 paper, per volume.

This dictionary represents the fruit of the late Gordon Day's long association with the Western Abenaki people and their language. Western Abenaki is an eastern Algonquian language spoken at

Odanak, Québec and the Missisquoi region of the Champlain valley. Most estimates now list the language as having fewer than five speakers. For centuries scholars have been gathering word lists of American Indian languages to document the languages and to provide tools for comparative historical, anthropological, and linguistic research. This work reflects that tradition in both its motivation and content. It represents the dedicated salvage work of Gordon Day and the Abenaki speakers he worked with, and consists of approximately 13,000 alphabetically listed Abenaki words, each with a designation of its part of speech, some important grammatical forms, and a simple English gloss. A second volume presents the same vocabulary organized around keywords based on the English glosses. Identical notes (except for formatting errors in Volume I) in each volume treat briefly the history of settlement at Odanak village, dialect variation, loan words, pronunciation, orthography, and very brief guides to dictionary entries and pertinent Abenaki grammar. The explanatory notes are too sparse to be of use to any but specialists in Eastern Algonquian languages. For example, the terms *dependent*, *indicative*, *conjunct*, *obviative*, *situative*, and *subordinate* are used without comment. Each volume also contains an identical list of approximately 800 roots listed alphabetically, unfortunately, without any examples of their usage.

The two paperback volumes are well bound and attractive. In the Abenaki-to-English volume, entries are listed on each page in a generously spaced single-column format, using a fixed-width Courier font, with each headword set off in boldface, making it easy to find one's place in the listing, which is particularly welcome as there are no guide words or other aids typically found in dictionaries. Several hours' perusal suggests that the dictionary provides a rich, representative vocabulary of the language. It is particularly strong in the areas of geographical terminology and place-names, the latter usually with a translation of the name. For example, in the entry for "Chicoutimi, Québec," the name *Sagwidemik* is glossed as "where it is deep by reason of the tide." The sources of loanwords are identified whenever possible, and though sparse, there is more explanatory lexicographic, ethnographic, and historical material than one typically finds in Algonquian dictionaries. Literal meanings of descriptive names are provided as well. For example, for "flicker," *gwelegwena*, a note explains that the name is related to the fact that the bird's wings appear to turn over in flight. Day's obvious engagement with the vocabu-

lary invites browsing, and the reader is rewarded with some small gem on nearly every page. Cross-references are common as well. It is a work of high quality and an obvious labor of love.

A problem with traditional Algonquian lexicography is that the structure of Algonquian words does not lend itself very well to the typical approach used in Indo-European dictionaries, that of simply listing words on the basis of their alphabetic spelling. This is because Algonquian words are often complex, showing a tripartite structure consisting of an initial, descriptive element, a nounlike medial element, and a final element which specifies the part of the speech of the word, as well as other grammatical and lexical information. An alphabetic listing of Algonquian words based on their spellings only groups those words together that share initial elements, but fails to provide any grouping based on shared medial and final elements. For example, the verbs *bedeg-wôgama*, "be a round lake," *gwenôgama*, "be a long lake," *kaskôgama*, "be a wide lake," and *molôjagamaa* "be a deep soft-earth lake" all differ in their descriptive initial element, but all share a medial element *-gam-*, which means roughly "lake, body of water," and a final element *-a*, which assigns the words to the class of intransitive verbs having inanimate subjects. English dictionaries deal with much less significant patterning in English of this sort by providing entries for analyzable prefixes and suffixes. It is a much more central issue in Algonquian lexicography.

One relatively simple way of getting Algonquian words with related components to group together is to do so according to English keywords determined on the basis of the English glosses of the Algonquian vocabulary, and this is what is done in the Abenaki dictionary. Thus, under "lake" in the English-to-Abenaki section, we find approximately fifty words listed, including all of those cited above. Such a listing is most roughly accomplished by making a pass through the list of Algonquian words and assigning English keywords with some sensitivity to Algonquian lexical properties. This does not seem to be the tack that Day took, however. Rather, the English listing appears to be based on a crude automated parse of the English glosses, which fails to group many related words together. For example, under the English entry "berry" there are listed many words that end in *-men*, the Abenaki final element meaning "berry," such as *bakeswimen* "partridge berry" and *mozmen* "moose berry." Surprisingly, though, the words for blackberry, chokecherry, gooseberry, and strawberry, all of which end with the same ele-

ment *-men* in Abenaki, fail to appear under "berry" The reason for this is undoubtedly that their English glosses do not contain the free word "berry," and the computer program that did the "berry" picking was unable to look inside of "blackberry" and "strawberry" to determine that they are, in fact, "berry" words. This is probably also the reason that *maanikowôgan* "berry picking" appears under "berry," but *maaniko*, the verb on which it is based, does not, since it is glossed "pick berries." The English listing is thus flawed, and potentially misleading.

The organization of the English also reflects problems caused by the rampant homonymy of English, so that, for example, under "bark" one finds listed the Abenaki words for both the bark of dogs and the bark of trees. Another problem with the method used in the Abenaki dictionary is that there is no direct way to obtain a list of all of the vocabulary pertaining to particular topics, such as birds, animals, hunting, cooking, or place-names. This would be especially helpful in the development of materials for language teaching programs.

Another problem has to do with the translation of Algonquian grammatical categories into English, particularly the two gender classes of animate and inanimate. Algonquian animate nouns include words for humans of both sexes, spirits, animals, trees, and tobacco and related paraphernalia, among others. Words belonging to these classes are variously represented in English by the pronouns *he*, *she*, and even *it*, presenting problems for elegant translation. Day sometimes translates intransitive verbs with animate subjects using the gender-specific pronoun *he*, as in *zôkhosa*, glossed as "he approaches walking," and *waiodosa*, "he is walking by," sometimes with no pronoun, as in *mannosa* "walk slowly, go slowly," and *wiwnosa*, "walk around, go around," and sometimes using the pronoun combination *he/she* as in *adeboka*, "he/she cooks." The pronoun *she* is used exclusively in a few glosses of transitive forms as well, for example, *onanamenô*, "she rocks him" (in a cradle or swing), presumably because this activity is customarily performed by women. There are thus problems of consistency and gender representation. The objects of transitive verbs are usually translated as "someone" for animates and "something" for inanimates, which may also confuse, since "someone" is used in English only in reference to humans, whereas in Abenaki such verbs are used with any animate object, including animals, trees, drums, and tobacco. Day's glossing conventions reflect particular approaches to notoriously thorny problems in Algonquian lexicography, but which

require extensive introductory notes to be interpretable by non-specialists. Such notes are lacking, however.

This work shares another common problem with many alleged "dictionaries" of American Indian languages, namely that the English glosses are frequently so telegraphic as to baffle. Sometimes the confusion is due to vagueness, as in *bedegabeda* "the heat returns" (is this in reference to the weather, to a radiator, a fire, a marriage?), *altegwak* "how the river is" (in what sense?), *mekwiwi* "when it is red, in a red manner" (perhaps used in reference to the sun and its activities, but we are left to wonder), and *amiskwôlowôko*, IN "beaver tail hill" (a hill made out of beaver tails?). In other cases, the gloss does not seem to match the mechanics suggested by the part of speech designation, as in *bedegaka* AI "throw it back" (how does a verb classified as lacking an object have this meaning?), and *awalôn* II "fine rain, drizzle" (since this is a verb, wouldn't it refer to the event rather than the product, as suggested by the gloss?). Many of these glossing problems would be less significant if example sentences were provided, but this is, unfortunately, not the tradition of Algonquian lexicography, and not the practice followed here.

Despite its shortcomings, many of which it inherits from Americanist lexicographic tradition, this dictionary will be of immense value to anyone interested in the Abenaki language and culture. It is a treasure. From a documentary point of view, it should be taken as a first step, and the database should be used to compile a richer version, containing example sentences culled from the vast collection of Abenaki texts that Gordon Day also transcribed, and better glosses should be provided as well as a much more comprehensive and accurate grouping of the vocabulary according to Abenaki lexical and cultural categories. It also seems long past the time to begin publishing materials such as these in electronic form. Even tab-delimited fields of text, which could be imported into a database or word processor for more powerful searching, would be immensely useful.

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