

#### IV. Books Received for Review

To request a book for review purposes, please write to the Editor. Requests are filled on a first come first serve basis.

Becker, Marshall J. and Philip P. Betancourt

1997 *Richard Berry Seager: Pioneer Archaeologist and Proper Gentleman*,  
University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology,  
Philadelphia.

Fagan, Brian

1998 *From Black land to Fifth Sun*, Addison Wesley, Reading

Jennings, Jesse D.

1998 *Glen Canyon: An Archaeological Summary*, The University  
of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Kehoe, Alice B.

1997 *The Land of Prehistory*, Routledge, New York.

Keller, Robert H. and Michael F. Turek

1998 *American Indians and National Parks*, University of Arizona Press,  
Tucson.

#### V. Book/Journal Article Reviews

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/bha.08207>

Review of *Cowboys and Cave Dwellers: Basketmaker Archaeology in Utah 's Grand GULCH* (Blackburn and Williamson, 1995) and *Anasazi Basketmaker: Papers From The 1990 Wetherill - Grand Gulch Symposium* (Bureau of Land Management 1993).

by

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Fred Blackburn and Roy Williamson provide a rather enjoyahle, if narrowly focused, history of Basketmaker archaeology in *Cowboys and Cave Dwellers. Basketmaker Archaeology in Utah 's Grand Gulch* (1995). In this, the School of American Research Press has produced an aesthetically pleasing, popular treatment of early North American archaeology, of the same genre as Melinda Elliott's (1995) *Great Excavations*. Archaeologists who find the journalistic prose, paucity of data, and lack of citations in such popular accounts unsettling should turn to *Anasazi Basketmaker: Papers From the 1990 Wetherill - Grand Gulch Symposium* (Bureau of Land Management 1993). This predecessor yet companion volume contains the detail, background, and contextual information necessary to critically evaluate the significant scholarly contributions of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project (1986 - 1990). Given that most readers of the *Bulletin* would like to see more than the popular account can offer, I have taken the liberty of reviewing both volumes.

Blackburn and Williamson (1995:17) argue that they make a number of contributions in *Cowboys and Cave Dwellers*. First, they chronicle the surprising number of late 19th century expeditions into Grand Gulch and surrounding environs of southeastern Utah. Second, they provide an account of the recent contributions by the "dedicated amateur

scholars” of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project. Third, they provide a summary overview of the results of a century of Basketmaker research. Finally, they provide a disconcerting if considered account of the continuing threat posed to archaeological sites by vandals. The authors succeeded admirably on the first, second, and fourth points; they are somewhat less successful on the third.

The first chapter of *Cowboys and Cave Dwellers* summarizes the origins of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project, the environmental setting of Grand Gulch, and the culture history of southeastern Utah. Chapter 2 summarizes the archaeological efforts of a surprising number (21) of expeditions to Grand Gulch in the last decade of the 19th century, and leads logically into a more detailed discussion (Chapter 3) of the brothers Wetherill and their work in the Gulch. Chapter 4 considers the business of “reverse archaeology,” the unexpectedly awkward phrase coined by Blackburn to describe attempts to reconstruct artifacts’ excavation contexts when very little provenience information had been recorded previously. This chapter is one of the best in the volume, and conveys well the discovery nature of museum and archives research.

Chapter 5 considers the “Art and Artifacts of Grand Gulch” and therefore showcases the work of Bruce Hucko, the project photographer. Included here are absolutely stunning color photographs that not only transmit the aesthetics and complexity of Basketmaker material culture, but also indicate the remarkable preservation to be found in the dry caves and rockshelters of the arid Southwest. Chapter 6 recounts the difficult task of re-identifying Cave 7, the site at which Richard Wetherill made the simple yet revolutionary observation that Basketmaker materials underlay, and therefore preceded in time, Pueblo occupations of the cave. In Chapter 7, Blackburn and Williamson provide an abbreviated account of Basketmaker research after Wetherill’s demise, and in Chapter 8 we are presented with a disconcerting account of criminal activity on sites in the Gulch.

Two themes characterize this text. The first and most obvious is that of Richard Wetherill as the unsung hero of Basketmaker research. The authors make a convincing case that Wetherill has not been properly credited, and indeed has been unduly and improperly criticized, for his contributions to early Southwestern archaeology. The second theme, corollary to the first, is that amateur archaeologists may make significant contributions to the development of professional archaeological method and theory if given the opportunity. Both of these points are also recurrent in *Anasazi Basketmaker. Papers From the 1990 Wetherill- Grand Gulch Symposium*, and it is to this volume that I now turn.

Let me state at the outset that members of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project have demonstrated, in no uncertain terms, that the multitudinous artifact collections housed in museums across the country can be used for productive research today. Some professional archaeologists have argued, often uncritically, that the often supposedly uncontrolled circumstances under which archaeological collections were made in the late 19th and early 20th centuries precludes their productive analytic use in any study save the most contextually withdrawn technological and typological analyses. By doing “reverse archaeology” and re-establishing the archaeological context for a plethora of museum-housed artifacts, WGGRP project members have successfully demonstrated that museum collections can be used to study the history of American archaeology as well as address more sophisticated anthropological questions than detractors had previously believed. Given my current investment in a project to completely inventory, catalog, and computerize the Paul S. Martin Collection at the Field Museum of Natural History, their achievement is, to say the least, reassuring.

A politically charged Foreword to *Anasazi Basketmaker* is provided by Marietta Davenport, a professional archaeologist and great-granddaughter to Richard Wetherill, who argues that the “archaeological world could learn something by admitting that new techniques and methods can be developed outside the hallowed halls of universities and Federal agencies.” One of the analytical strengths of archaeology lies in its multidisciplinary nature, and archaeologists have learned much from colleagues and peers both inside and outside formal institutional structures. Davenport’s tone, as well as that of other contributions in the volume, belies a defensiveness on the part of the authors that, warranted or not, becomes distracting.

In Chapter 1, William D. Lipe, denizen of the hallowed halls, provides an overview of the current academic understanding of Basketmaker II period archaeology. Julia Johnson then provides a valuable history of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project (Chapter 2), emphasizing the many unexpected twists and turns that beset what was intended to be a one-year long photographic project. In so doing, she describes the unfortunate treatment some project members received at the hands of museum curators who, rightly or wrongly, were reluctant to make research collections available to individuals who lack advanced degrees in archaeology.

Chapters 3 and 4 address the use of historic inscriptions to reconstruct the progress of early expeditions into Grand Gulch and surrounding canyons. James H. Knipmeyer describes many of the signatures found (Chapter 3); Fred Blackburn and Victoria Atkins offer a detailed account of how historic signatures were used to reconstruct expedition chronologies (Chapter 4).

In Chapter 5, Ann Phillips provides a largely redundant summary of the archaeological expeditions into southeastern Utah and southwestern Colorado between 1888 and 1898. She offers an interesting account of the reconstructed dispersal of artifact collections after their removal from Grand Gulch. The last paragraph on page 117 makes brief mention of the loss of "identity" suffered by artifacts in the B.T.B. Hyde collection when it was sold and transferred from one museum to another in 1916. Original field specimen and catalog numbers were deliberately removed at the receiving institution; thus the project could not successfully conduct "reverse archaeology" and re-establish the artifacts' excavation location in Grand Gulch. It is now well understood that specimen numbers, once assigned and recorded, should never be intentionally removed from artifacts. If cataloging systems must be changed, extensive efforts should be made to establish and maintain concordance between the old and new systems. It is therefore ironic that the context of these collections could not be reconstructed because of actions taken by institutions entrusted with their care, not because of shortcomings in the methods of the excavating archaeologists.

In Chapter 6, Ann Hayes offers a summary of expeditions responsible for creation and current status of the C.H. Green Collection at the Field Museum of Natural History. Included here is a particularly disturbing account of an 1893 trade of artifacts with a Mr. T.R. Roddy, a known Chicago artifact dealer.

Photographers will enjoy and benefit from Bruce Hucko's discussion of his artifact photography (Chapter 7). Winston Hurst and Christy Turner offer the most rigorous analysis presented in the volume (Chapter 8) in a study of the paleopathology of skeletons recovered in Wetherill's Cave 7. Their analysis "alert[s] us to the reality that prehistoric southwestern populations shared a universal human talent for cruelty and violence" (p. 148). They conclude with a good question: Why have professional archaeologists so far failed to recognize the unique nature of the archaeology of Cave 7, which Blackburn maintains stands as one of the most important sites in North American archaeology. One hopes that their contribution will arouse some interest in this extraordinary site.

Most of the remaining chapters in the volume seem strangely out of place. While the first eight contributions have to do with the work of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project, the remaining chapters result from contributions to the 1990 Wetherill - Grand Gulch Symposium and Basketmaker archaeology in general, not the project *senso stricto*. In the context of this review, these chapters are therefore less relevant, and will receive minimal attention here. Sally Cole considers Basketmaker rock art at the Green Mask Site (Chapter 9). Joel Janetski considers the transition from Archaic to Formative period occupations north of the Anasazi (Chapter 10). Frances E. Smiley considers early farmers in Marsh Pass (Chapter 11). Atkins, Blackburn, and Dale Davidson offer a brief note on the archaeology of Tipi Ruin (Chapter 12). James Parker (Chapter 13), Davidson (Chapter 14), Ray Williamson and Carol Carnett (Chapter 15) consider different aspects archaeological resource management and preservation. Eight variably useful appendices cover topics ranging from the "Abstract of Professor F. W. Putnam ['s] Lecture" to the "Contractual Agreement of Project Members."

The Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project made two major contributions to North American archaeology and the history thereof. First, the project team has made it abundantly clear that "important new evidence of the Basketmaker

culture [has been] gained from careful and persistent investigation of scattered archives, museum records, diaries, photos, graffiti, old artifact labels, etc.” (Lipe, p.10). Given the many significant, and often unanalyzed, archaeological collections housed in museums across the country, archaeologists should consider this project’s success a stimulus for extending research of its kind beyond the Basketmaker sphere.

Second, the WGGRP has demonstrated that scholarship is not necessarily determined by how many capitalized initials are present behind one’s name. Advanced degrees do not guarantee good scholarship any more than amateur status guarantees poor scholarship. For better or worse, formal training will remain the standard by which otherwise anonymous researchers are evaluated. Nevertheless, the WGGRP has made a strong case that officials in control of such collections should not dismiss out-of-hand research proposals submitted by amateur archaeologists.

These two points, as well as that of Richard Wetherill as unsung hero, are driven home in *Cowboys and Cave Dwellers* and *Basketmaker Archaeology* alike, even after a cursory reading. The books are intended for different audiences and therefore differ greatly in scope, presentation, tone, and detail. The former has a journalist’s influence and the benefit of thorough editing. The latter includes archaeological data and several significant papers, but suffers from redundancy, grammatical and factual errors, and a tone that alternates between self-congratulation and extreme criticism for curators and administrators who were not initially receptive to the project’s overtures. Whether justified or not, the criticism need be stated only once. Indeed, the phrase that comes to mind is “don’t bite the hand that feeds you,” no matter how much you may dislike hand or the power structures it represents. Members of the Wetherill - Grand Gulch Research Project should nevertheless be proud of their accomplishments, and historians of archaeology, whether “amateur” or “professional,” should be aware of their efforts and these texts.

*Pot Luck: Adventures in Archaeology*, by Florence C. Lister. Foreword by R. Gwinn Vivian. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, xiii, 183 pages, illustrations, references, index. 1997. ISBN 0-8263-1760-X, Paper, \$19.95.

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Over a period of nearly five decades, Florence Cline Lister and her husband, the late Robert Hill Lister, were a team whose light shown brightly over the ramparts of Southwest archaeology. Almost always referred to by others as “Bob and Florence,” “Florence and Bob,” or, simply, as “the Listers,” their efforts toward unraveling mysteries of the region’s prehistoric and colonial period past, in writing such historic accounts as that of the Mexican state of Chihuahua, or in chronicling the lives of such Southwestern archaeologists as Earl Morris were nearly always a joint enterprise. As with Hattie and Cornelius “Burt” Cosgrove before them, and, further afield, Will and Ariel Durant, their names, like their shared interests, became melded into one.

In May, 1990, as he was hiking back with a small group whom he had led to the Anasazi ruin of Moon House in southeastern Utah, Bob Lister, without any forewarning whatsoever, dropped dead. “This surely,” writes Florence, “would have been that archaeologist’s exit of choice.”

So would it have been Bob’s choice that Florence continue to do what she has always done so ably: to continue to write and to share with others her passion for ceramic studies and of Southwest archaeology. The most recent example is Florence’s lovely, entertaining, and insightful reminiscence, *Pot Luck*. This is the story of her decades’ long devotion to pottery studies, most especially to the understanding of a glazed earthenware called *maiolica* whose sherds have become the hallmark of Hispanic archaeological sites in the Southwest and elsewhere in the New World. In 1968 it became her desire and that of Bob to extend the pioneering studies in this field begun by Florida’s John Goggin. The commitment carried the two of them to adventures in the Caribbean (they were mugged in Jamaica),