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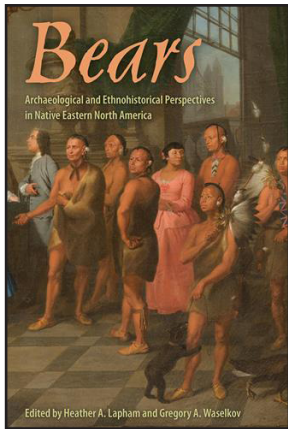
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Bears: Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Perspectives in Native North America

Heather A. Lapham and Gregory A. Waselkov, eds. 2020. [University of Florida Press](#), Gainesville. xii+395pp., 73 figures, 31 tables. \$95 (Cloth).

Reviewed by Steven R. Kuehn, Illinois State Archaeological Survey, Prairie Research Institute, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Bears represents a welcome and much-needed update to A. Irving Hallowell's (1926) classic study of bear ceremonialism. Indeed, editors Heather Lapham and Gregory

Waselkov—and the many contributing authors—go well beyond the scope of Hallowell's early work in examining the complex archaeological, historic, and ethnohistoric significance of these remarkable animals. Lapham introduces the volume with a concise summary of the subsequent chapters and the overall goals of the book. Waselkov (Chapter 1) starts the volume out strongly with a discussion of ethnohistorical and ethnographic data on bear-human relationships. The focus is primarily on Native American source information from the Southeast, as he notes (p. 16). Site assemblages and data from the Southeastern United States dominate the volume, although several chapters cover select data from the Upper Midwest, Great Lakes, and Northeastern North America. Waselkov and Lynn Funkhouser (Chapter 12) bookend the volume with an extensive summary and commentary on the data presented within the volume. Their cautionary notes and recommendations for future analyses of bear remains will undoubtedly result in the acquisition of stronger interpretive data.

Chapter 3 through 6 examine bear ceremonialism and archaeological remains in the Upper Midwest and Eastern Great Lakes. I was particularly impressed with David Mather's (Chapter 3) coverage of the Minnesota data, and would have liked to have seen more of that for other states in the Western Great Lakes and Ohio River Valley. Mather's inclusion of historic accounts of the role of Native American women in bear feasts and related activities was also a welcome addition. Christian Gates-St Pierre and his coauthors (Chapter 6) similarly present an exceptional overview of Iroquoian bear remains.

Terrance Martin (Chapter 5) provides a thorough analysis of bear mandible artifacts and Ralph Koziarski (Chapter 4) does an admirable job discussing Meskwaki use of bears despite a relatively limited sample from the Bell site. I found Hannah O'Regan's discussion of bears in postmedieval Britain (Chapter 11) quite interesting. Multiple chapters in this book discuss archaeological and historical evidence of the fur and oil trade in North America, but it is uncommon to see these concepts examined from the other side. It is nice to see a fresh perspective.

Chapters 7 through 10 provide extensive coverage of the Southeast, with a strong combination of site-level and regional data from the southern Appalachians and Piedmont (Lapham, Chapter 7), interior Lower Southeast (Barnet Pavao-Zuckerman, Chapter 9), interior Upper Southeast (Heidi Altman, Tanya Peres, and J. Matthew Compton, Chap-

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ter 8), and Lower Mississippi Valley (Ashley Peles and Megan Kassabaum, Chapter 10). The authors do an admirable job not only presenting important data from these areas but also provide the context necessary to more properly interpret the meaning behind these finds. At the same time, an appropriate amount of caution is advised as we attempt to navigate and interpret the zooarchaeological record. I think Lapham's comment, "...but it reveals the depth to which past actions had meanings beyond what we can easily deduce from the archaeological record" (p. 186) is particularly apt; a copy of this statement should be placed on the desk of every archaeologist.

As noted above, coverage of bear data outside of the Southeast is limited in this volume. Substantial black bear remains from Indiana (e.g., Prather, Taylor Village, Strawtown) were not mentioned, and only sparse coverage of bear remains (outside of Martin's examination of bear mandible artifacts in Chapter 5) was included for Illinois, Michigan, or Wisconsin. Peles and Kassabaum (Chapter 10) briefly include some American Bottom and Central Mississippi Valley data in their excellent survey of the Woodland and Mississippian Lower Mississippi Valley bear data, but unfortunately the Illinois data are twenty years out of date (e.g., Kuehn 2016). Perhaps most surprising was the near-universal omission of bear effigy mounds in the Upper Midwest, from the Late Woodland Effigy Mound Culture. Mather (Chapter 2) mentions those earthworks found in Minnesota, and Thomas Berres (Chapter 3) mentions them in passing. Given the extensive coverage of so many other aspects of bear archaeology, the lack of any notable discussion of these remarkable earthworks was surprising.

Overall, *Bears* provides detailed, informative coverage of the varied role of bears in Native Eastern North America. While the Southeast receives much of the attention, there is good coverage of site-level and regional data across eastern North America. The figures and maps are well done and nicely complement the text; the tables similarly are clear and informative. This volume is a welcome addition to any zooarchaeologist's library but has much to offer beyond that. The focus may be on bears, but the research presented demonstrates the significant results that can be obtained through detailed study of archaeological resources that expand our understanding of human-animal interactions.

References

- Hallowell, A. Irving (1926) Bear Ceremonialism in the Northern Hemisphere. *American Anthropologist* 28(1):1–175.
- Kuehn, Steven R. (2016) Beyond Diet: Faunal Remains and Ritual during the Late Woodland through Mississippian Periods in the American Bottom Region. In *Cahokia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Thomas E. Emerson*, edited by John A. Walthall and David J. Nolan. *Illinois Archaeology* 28:533–566.