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**The Trail of the Hare: Environment and Stress in a Sub-Arctic Community. Second edition. By Joel S. Savishinsky. Langhorne, PA: Gordon and Breach, 1994, 294 pp. map, illustrations, tables, bibliography, index.**

**Reviewed by Thomas F. Thornton, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau AK**

First published in 1974, this second edition of Savishinsky's monograph of the Hare Indians of the Colville Lake area of the Canadian Northwest Territories provides an expanded, updated portrait of stress and stress management among the Athabascans (Dene) of this harsh region. As a basic ethnography on the Hare, this work is quite detailed and comprehensive, with chapters on "Ecology and Community," "Kinship and History," "Stress and Mobility," "The Missionary and the Fur Trader," and finally "The Hare and the Dog," a probing look at the complex involvement of dogs in Hare economic, social, and emotional life. Savishinsky attempts to derive a generalized model for evaluating the environmental, social, and psychological stresses that confront Hare villagers.

To mitigate the varied sources of stress that affect them--including scarcity of resources, extreme weather, reciprocal obligations, periodic bush isolation and village "crowding," poor health, drinking, etc.-- the Hare employ a repertoire of coping mechanisms or "response features" including: mobility, respect for individual autonomy, generosity and sharing, and emotional restraint and displacement (often onto dogs). These traits are legendary among Interior Athabaskan groups and in the case of the Hare have persisted despite the acculturative forces of missions, towns, schools, wage labor, and other incursions. In the late 1960s, and even today, many Hare still follow an annual cycle of dispersal (for hunting and trapping) and "ingathering" (for fishing, wage jobs, and holidays). Stress is viewed not only as a negative force but also as a positive source of motivation to adapt and develop more varied approaches to the ambiguities of their existence.

The value of Savishinsky's multidimensional approach is that stress and responses to stress are not reduced to one sphere or currency. Thus, whereas an optimal foraging theorist might evaluate a hunter's decision to strike out into the bush on his own (or in a particular group) as an economic decision based on maximizing utility/fitness, Savishinsky finds that many decisions concerning residence and mobility are motivated as much by social factors--particularly interpersonal stresses--as economic ones. Thus, "the size of groups at different times of the year has its psychological as well as its ecological significance" (p.146). Similarly, mobility is not simply a response to stress but a positive state of being, and the trail a "metaphor for life" (p.145).

Yet, while the focus on stress provides a unifying theme to the narrative, as a theoretical construct it ultimately sags under its own weight. Savishinsky is guilty of what Giovanni Sartori calls "conceptual stretching," extending the label of "stress" to so many

phenomena that it loses its salience and explanatory value. Even anthropology itself is defined as "stress-seeking" behavior (p. 252). Not surprisingly, Savishinsky concludes in Chapter 7 that nearly every stress--be it isolation, drinking, or gossip--is also a coping strategy. He rationalizes this redundancy by arguing that stress and stress reduction together comprise a dynamic and dialectic process which works on a number of levels, and by invoking Martin Buber, who schools us on "the paradox that every Thou in our world must become an It" (p. 219). I don't question the paradoxical nature of stress but wonder what happened to Savishinsky's attempt to develop an operational model for evaluating and predicting the particular manifestations of and responses to stress in this northern hunter-gatherer community. In the end, this objective seems to get lost in the existential shuffle, "the exalted melancholy of our fate" (Buber again), wherein all is stress and coping.

On balance, however, this theoretical problem along with other minor issues, such as the unreflective retention of some problematic functionalist terms (e.g., homeostasis, equilibrium, and disequilibrium), should not dissuade readers from engaging this otherwise rich and incisive ethnography. In updating the work for this edition, Savishinsky offers substantive revisions, including analysis of contemporary "stresses" faced by the Hare and neighboring indigenous communities in maintaining their land base, balancing traditional hunting and modern wage economies, and achieving greater political sovereignty. These new stresses include everything from animal rights activists to oil and gas development. Although much of the contemporary data is based on secondary literature, the author's review of this literature is solid and thoughtfully integrative.

The work is suitable for both undergraduate and graduate students in anthropology and others interested in northern hunting societies, human ecology, or stress.

**Iyam, David Uru, 1995, *The Broken Hoe: Cultural Reconfiguration in Biase Southeast Nigeria*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 238 pages, 7 Figs, 12 Tables, 28 plates.**

**Reviewed by Eric J. Arnould, Associate Professor of Marketing, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida**

*The Broken Hoe* is an ethnographic text that readers will find interesting from a variety of viewpoints. The book is framed as a contribution to the anthropology of development but features a number of other intriguing dimensions. Among others, the book joins the small, but growing number of ethnographic studies produced by members of the culture described in the text, in this case, the Biase of Southeastern Nigeria.

*The Broken Hoe* consists of nine chapters, "Issues in Rural Development," "The Biase of Southeastern Nigeria," "Use of Environmental Resources," "Managing the Environment," "The Economy," "Biase Social Organization and the Reconstruction of Gender Roles," "Rural Politics in a State Polity," "Ideology," and "Implications for Anthropology." Those chapters devoted to environmental and development issues usefully lay out distinctive features and difficulties associated with development in the swampy high-rainfall environment of the Cross River area. The author joins his voice to those increasing numbers of anthropologists and development specialists who call for development from below. His distinctive contribution in this regard is to move beyond the pious, and essentially romantic arguments of those who unduly lionize small-scale rural cultures by pointing to