

EDITOR'S CORNER

It has long been recognized that an "outsider" can offer new insights into traditionally held beliefs because of his/her fresh perspective. For example, a work such as de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* raised sociological questions and stimulated numerous discussions in the mid-nineteenth century United States which might otherwise not have taken place. In relation to American archaeology, one can point to the useful discussions which Christopher Hawkes' 1954 *American Anthropologist* article, "Archaeological Theory and Method: Some Suggestions From the Old World," provoked or to the stimulating questions Leo Klejn's recent article, "A Panorama of Theoretical Archaeology" (*Current Anthropology*, 1977), raised on modern advances in archaeology theory. I believe that Norman Yoffee's lead article on social evolution falls into the above category.

Looking at evolutionary theory in archaeology from a non-Americanist perspective, Yoffee attacks some of the generally held assumptions of American archaeology in a fashion which is certain to arouse productive controversy. In particular, Yoffee makes a strong case for the utility of what he calls the "growth" model for studying the development of ancient civilizations. His case materials from Mesopotamia should be especially illuminating for the readers of this journal. However, while I find his positive argument attractive, I am not at all convinced by his negative argument against evolutionary thinking in archaeology. For example, I feel his characterization of biological evolution as "discrete and limited to jumps in homeostatic adaptations depending on responses to external conditions" to be a mistakenly narrow view. A reading of any recent text, such as Dobzhansky's *Genetics of the Evolutionary Process* (1970), will show that this interpretation of biological evolution is not the only acceptable or most productive one.

Be that as it may, I do hope that Yoffee's article will engender much comment and stimulate controversy. While striving to produce as high a quality journal as I can, I do not want to create dull reading for the membership of the S.A.A. *American Antiquity* at its best should inform its readers while generating excitement and intellectual interest. The lead articles of my first several issues as well as the articles planned for the April and July issues of the journal should help me reach this goal.

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This issue also contains three other articles that should be of wide interest. The article by David Freidel addresses an important problem, namely the persistence of traditional models and concepts in recent attempts to produce processual explanations, while the article by W. Frederick Limp and Van Reidhead indicates the importance of more refined methods in studying prehistoric riverine exploitation and understanding ancient economies. Knut Fladmark's article adds a new perspective on the long-standing controversy on early migrations into North America. The Reports and Comments sections contain papers of relevance to a wide range of geographical and methodological interests, and the Cultural Resource Management section features an important discussion on the implication of CRM for museums by Andrew Christenson.

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Finally, Ken Patterson, the Managing Editor of *American Antiquity* in Washington, D.C., has prepared a detailed style guide for potential contributors to the journal. This guide should answer most of the questions authors address to the editorial office about how to prepare their

manuscripts for publication. Any unanswered questions should be addressed to the Editor. All prospective authors should consult the new style guide and should follow its guidelines.

Jeremy A. Sabloff

The cover drawing from David A. Freidel's article is by Robin Robertson-Freidel and Maynard Cliff.