

Book Notices

Southwestern Minnesota Archaeology: 12,000 Years in the Prairie Lake Region, by Scott F. Anfinson. Minnesota Prehistoric Archaeology Series, No. 14. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1997. ix, 146 pp. Figures, tables, maps, references, bibliography. \$18.00 paper.

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The pace of archeological investigation during the past four decades has resulted in an explosion of new information on North American prehistory. Unfortunately, much of that research remains locked up in technical reports or scientific papers that are difficult to access and generally unavailable to the interested reader. To remedy that situation, a number of comprehensive regional prehistories have appeared recently. *Southwestern Minnesota Archaeology* is the latest midwestern addition to this literature. Although the intended focus is the 12,000 years of human habitation in southwestern Minnesota, the Prairie Lake Region, as defined by the author, also includes northeastern South Dakota and north central Iowa. Once considered peripheral to both the Great Plains and eastern Woodlands, this dynamic environment established a unique set of possibilities and challenges for its indigenous inhabitants. The author presents a detailed overview of the distinctive human adaptations that resulted.

The synthesis begins with a description of the environmental setting and a short history of archeological research in the study area. Chapters outlining cultural events follow, arranged in a chronological sequence of three major periods spanning the years from 10,000 B.C. (uncalibrated) to A.D. 1650. Knowledge of the Middle and Late Prehistoric periods in particular has been enhanced by archeological discoveries in north central Iowa, and most are described and illustrated in some detail. A number of typographical errors mar the text, and an index would have been helpful; still, the overall quality of the publication remains high. Professional and avocational archeologists alike will welcome both the comprehensive coverage and the clarity of this account.

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