The Lifeways of Hunter-gatherers: the Foraging Spectrum, by Robert L. Kelly, 2013. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; ISBN 978-1-107-02487-8 hardback £60 & US$95; ISBN 978-1-107-60761-3 paperback £21.99 & US$34.99; xix + 362 pp., 58 figs, 29 tables

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This volume was first published by the Smithsonian Institute in 1995 under the title *The Foraging Spectrum*. The volume reviewed here is the second edition — completely revised and reworked with a whole new chapter on technology and major additions to several other chapters, and of course the rejigged title. The aim of the volume, however, remains the same: to demonstrate the diversity and variability of hunter-gatherer lifeways. Moreover, it is a volume written on the anthropology of hunter-gatherers, but with archaeologists in mind. There is much archaeologists can learn, Kelly argues, from studying modern peoples.

The original *Foraging Spectrum* has been top of my reading list ever since I started teaching a course of hunter-gatherers, and for good reason. This book summarizes considerable quantities of data on hunter-gatherers in a clear and accessible format. Data are summarized not only in written form but also in useful tables. Kelly's aims are clear from the outset, and explored through the various themed chapters. He is not interested in trying to essentialize hunter-gatherer behaviour or culture. Instead, he wishes to explore how variable and different hunter-gatherers can be. Kelly employs an easy-to-read writing style, with a notable absence of jargon, meaning this book is good as an introductory text at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Kelly's enthusiasm for the subject is evident too, and his occasional asides about what interests him about hunter-gatherers, and his own ethnographic experiences, add to the general readability.

After two introductory chapters providing a historical background to the study of hunter-gatherers (Chapter one) and a theoretical background (Chapter two), chapters cover subsistence (Chapter three), mobility (Chapter four) and technology (Chapter five). The latter is the new to the volume, a welcome addition since archaeologists (his target audience) obviously spend much of their time looking at material remains. Chapter six considers sharing, exchange and land tenure, while Chapters seven, eight and nine consider group size, men and women, and non-egalitarian foragers respectively. At the end of the volume, Kelly returns to the issue of ethnographic analogy, and what archaeologists can learn about the past from studying living peoples. Kelly follows the argument that 'a fundamental difference in time scales precludes the easy transfer of models from ethnography to archaeology' (p. 273). Nevertheless, he argues, ethnographic analogy remains both important and relevant. Kelly's core argument is that the study of living people enables us to understand the *decisions* that people make and therefore made in the past. This, for me, was the crux of Kelly's approach, and the real contribution of this volume. Why do foragers collect certain foods and not others when all have some calorific value? What dictates the right time to move camp: the availability of food, water or other factors? At what point does investing time and energy into making more complicated technologies make foraging more efficient? These are the questions that Kelly answers by the considered use of predictive modelling as applied to modern groups. He is thus able to demonstrate some important general observations which he suggests are as relevant for understanding past peoples as much as living ones. He is able to show why foragers collect certain foods and not others, how to manage group size so that no-one goes hungry, and when and why people move around. In a sense, then, this book could actually be entitled 'the business of living well'.

The questions which drive an understanding of 'the business of living well' is actually better described as the 'Human Behavioural Ecological' perspective (HBE). The

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environmental and resource use focus of the volume is indicative of the types of question dominant in the HBE approach, i.e. how do people make a living in a diverse range of habitats. These are important questions and Kelly delivers detailed and coherent accounts of subsistence, mobility, social and technological variability. For students and scholars operating under an interpretive framework, this will be less familiar material. It is important approach, though, and does justify a close reading. However, within the HBE approach, many things come down to efficiency, and I do not find these explanations convincing in every situation. Certainly, it makes sense that people generally want to spend less time rather than more acquiring food. Certainly there are complex choices and decisions to be made when there are multiple variables in the mix, and HBE provides a good way of approaching these problems. Thus, thinking about the acquisition of food benefits from the HBE approach. Technology (or material culture), however, is not just about finding the most efficient way to achieve a goal: sometimes (usually?) material culture can be invested with all sorts of other, equally important, meanings. Within the HBE approach, there is no room for the idea that 'material culture is meaningfully constituted', one of the tenets of the interpretive archaeology (see Cummings 2013, chap. 7 specifically in relation to this and hunter-gatherer anthropology). Likewise, when Kelly comes to the chapter on non-egalitarian hunter-gatherers, I did not find his explanations for why these societies have evolved convincing. Yes, resources and the business of living well are always going to be important, but there are other social, religious and political reasons for changes in the makeup of society. Kelly's book, therefore, does not focus on the elements of hunter-gatherer life which I personally find most interesting: cosmology, belief systems, the ordering the universe including animals and plants and so on. There is a notable absence of references to recent work which takes on board these different themes and perspectives: Ingold's extensive corpus of work, Hayden's interesting work on reasons why societies (and individuals) became ranked, the growing literature on animistic belief systems. For some audiences this will not matter: others, I think, will miss these.

On face value, it may seem obvious why Kelly has steered clear of the types of questions being asked by the interpretive school. However, I do not think there is a complete incompatibility between the aims of HBE and interpretive archaeology. Indeed, there is much that one can learn from the other. For those of us brought up on a diet of interpretation, Kelly's book offers a digestible introduction to HBE and all that that paradigm offers. It would be interesting to see what the HBE approach could contribute to interpretive debates.

I want to stress that Kelly's book is superb at thinking through the ways in which people, past and present, go about 'the business of living well'. It has relevance for thinking not just about societies who make a living hunting and gathering but for other groups as well. It also provides an excellent introduction to the key tenets, and application of those tenets, of Human Behavioural Ecology. For me, the next step is to integrate the insights garnered here with the kinds of questions being asked by the interpretive school. Only then will we as archaeologists be able to begin to consider fully what life may have been like for people living in the past.

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