



Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones:

The Mystery of North America's First People.

by David L. Harrison illus. by Richard

Hilliard. 48p. maps. photos. bibliog. glossary.

index. CIP.

Boyd's Mills Press, 2010.

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Reviews

The initial colonization of the Americas was not a single, simple event but a complex process.

Translating the many nuances of that process to a young audience is a difficult if not daunting task.

David Harrison has managed to effectively, succinctly, and understandably decipher the myriad issues involved in understanding the peopling process for a young audience in a way no other author has. While I, or any of my colleagues, might quibble with one or another point he makes, our disagreements do not devalue the fundamental utility of this book

J. M. Adovasio, Ph.D., D.Sc.

Provost;

Senior Counselor to the President;

Dean, The Zurn School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics;

Director, Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute

(David Harrison's) diverse scientific knowledge and presentation of the interdisciplinary nature of archaeology, his grasp of current research and debate pertaining to the early colonization of the New

World, and his ability to present a stimulating nonfictional story to a young audience are on display in this book. It is also noted that the book's subtitle, "The Mystery of North America's First People," only partially describes the content and intent of this book. I think the book's most important, overarching theme is one describing the process of archaeological science in the search for evidence of early First Americans. It is about the history of archaeological research and debate focused on a particular topic, and how science is a continual open-ended, ever-expanding quest for knowledge.

Neal H. Lopinot, Ph.D.

Director and Associate Research Professor

Secretary, Missouri Archaeological Society

In the world of archaeological literature for young adults, there is a robust population of simplistic and/or sensationalist books. This is not one of them. It is a well written, thoughtful and data rich discussion of how archaeologists view the peopling of the New World. Note the nuance here, this book is not about that archaeology *per se*; it is about how we, the archaeologists, view this question. More than anything else this sets the book apart from many other volumes that will be shelved next to it in school and public libraries.

Richard Boisvert, State Archaeologist, NH Division of Historical Resources

How and when the Western Hemisphere, particularly North and South America, came to be populated continues to be both mysterious and controversial for scientists. Archaeologists plug away with the tools at their disposal but have "more questions than answers." Harrison does a good job setting the issue in context. He describes the earliest efforts to identify the original inhabitants of the continents, exploring the Clovis culture, believed by many to be the first humans to reach North America. After clearly explaining how scholars decided that they were first, he then lists the

arguments against this hypothesis. In the course of looking at both sides, he introduces young readers to "the strict rules of archaeology." The author demonstrates the precise work of those attempting to understand the hidden aspects of human history and how many of these old questions are seen in the light of new technologies and discoveries. The narrative is aided by both photographs and original illustrations that imagine scenes from both the distant past and the field experiences. (glossary, bibliography, index) (Nonfiction. 9-12)

Kirkus Reviews

HARRISON, David L. *Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones: The Mystery of North America's First People.*

Gr 5-7—Harrison's clear text investigates a long-standing question: "Who came first?" in the prehistory of the Americas. Did people cross on the Beringia land bridge on foot? Did they paddle or sail their way along the Siberia/Beringia coastline to Alaska and points south? And when did they arrive? Harrison begins with the Clovis people, whose beautifully fluted flint points set an artistic standard in the prehistoric Americas (and who were the first to be brought to the attention of the modern world), and goes on to record the efforts and finds of scientists searching for the cultures that preceded them. Photographs of digs, artifacts, and scientists at work and maps and realistic illustrations offer visual enrichment to the text, and a glossary will assist novices to the subject. Harrison concludes with up-to-date archaeological information and photos of recent digs, but admits that the precise answer to "first?" is yet to be found. Similar in reading level to Patricia Lauber's handsome *Who Came First?: New Clues to Prehistoric Americans* (National Geographic, 2003), this intriguing addition is a solid find.—*Patricia Manning, formerly at Eastchester Public Library, NY*

Roy Futterman, Advertising Director

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"Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones: the Mystery of North America's First People" is a fine middle school ages 9-11 teaching book about the search for early North American human settlers and ancestors and their origins. Illustrated with fine paintings of researched scenes and also archaeological photographs from a variety of research sources, "Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones" creates the scene for the mystery of North America's very first people. Who were they, and where did they come from? Why is it so difficult to find traces of them? What questions must be asked about the evidence that is uncovered? Children have a first rate opportunity to learn the basics of scientific scrutiny of a theory about human history and prehistory. Excellent references, photo sources and a glossary are provided to assist in understanding relevant terms. Maps and photos help reinforce the questions being asked and indeed, one of the final conclusions is that there are perhaps more questions than answers in the field of North American human prehistory at this time.

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James A. Cox, Editor-in-Chief

Midwest Book Review

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***"Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones: The Mystery of North America's First People"* by David L. Harrison, illustrated by Richard Hilliard, archaeological photographs various sources, Boyds Mills Press, 2010, 48 pages, \$18.95 hardcover Read aloud: age 9 and older. Read yourself: age 11 – 12 and older.** Explore the various theories about North America's first people in this fascinating selection that chronicles how scientists investigate and compare stone tool technology and specimens, and their speculations that early Americans arrived by boat either along the northwest coast of North America, crossing the frigid North Atlantic waters, or both. Expertly written, fast-paced, and boasting beautiful illustrations and archaeological photographs, this selection is certain to ignite the imagination of budding archaeologists, scientists and others who are interested in discovering more about migration and the arrival of the first North Americans long, long ago.

Nationally syndicated, Kendal Rautzhan writes and lectures on children's literature. She can be reached at her website: greatestbooksforkids.com.

Mammoth Bones and Broken Stones

Many texts on history and anthropology discuss theories on how the first Americans arrived on the North American continent but provide little evidence to support those theories. This attractive book addresses the land bridge theory, presenting evidence for early migrations. The text describes the many connections that have been missing in our understanding of early peoples and their progress, linking anthropology and scientific methodology.

The book begins with a question, "What are we looking for?" and takes readers on a journey through the ideas, theories, and evidence uncovered by scientists in the real world. It contains many

illustrations by well-known author Richard Hilliard, along with photographs that provide evidence to support the ideas contained in the text. It provides explanations and adds the documentation that is often missing in average textbooks.

The glossary, photos, and references provide validation for the ideas. Overall, the book leaves room for new thoughts and suppositions. This is a great resource to support the history of North America and a great way to share the scientific evidence that is necessary to build ideas from fiction into fact. This is a new look at an old idea. And it comes with the claims and evidence needed by young scientists in the classroom.

*Reviewed by **Janet Acerra***

3rd Grade Teacher

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<http://www.nsta.org/recommends/ViewProduct.aspx?ProductID=20279>