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Based on the author's extensive fieldwork, this classic ethnography, now in its fifth edition, focuses on the Yanomamo. These truly remarkable South American people are one of the few primitive sovereign tribal societies left on earth. This new edition includes events and changes that have occurred since 1992, including a recent trip by the author to the Brazilian Yanomamo in 1995.

The Yanomamö Details

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Author : Napoleon A. Chagnon

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From Reader Review The Yanomamö for online ebook

Ian19 says

Chagnon offers a vivid illustration of the Yanomamo way of life that will at times make you wince, make you laugh, and make you feel closer to understanding the human condition. He not only provides detailed descriptions of Yanomamo social structure, belief systems, and behavior, but compelling explanations of why they are what they are.

Karen Witzler says

Read many years ago in an Intro. to Anthropology course at the University of Florida. Came to mind today as I read about the loss of the Linguistics archive at the National Museum in Brazil. A hopeless feeling ...loss.

Amarawahlberg says

meh

K says

I read this during a Cultural Anthropology course entitled Peoples of the World. It was extremely fascinating, I was quite impressed by Chagnon's account of this culture. Chagnon is an interesting anthropologist and I feel you can hear his voice quite prominently during this ethnography. The pictures included paint a vibrant picture of life among the Yanomamo. This ethnography is still a very technical read but it is made quite enjoyable by the subject matter and the author's writing style.

????? says

U početku sam bila uzbuđena što pitam nešto drugačije i to ni manje, ni više nego o plemenu na uš?u Orinoka koje i danas postoji, što je retkost.

Šanon prvo objašnjava kakav je šok doživeo kad je tek započeo terensko istraživanje; zapitao se zašto je uopšte želeo da se bavi antropologijom i kako diplomatski da se izvuče iz situacije koja je bila njegova dobrovoljna odluka. Dočekalo ga je mnoštvo prljavih, okrutnih i divljih ljudi, što je sušta suprotnost od onoga što je očekivao - to nije pleme koje je jedva čekalo da prihvati stranca i uspostavi prijateljske veze sa njim. Međutim, vremenom se Šanon adaptirao i naučio dosta o njihovoj adaptaciji, političkoj organizaciji, kulturi i ishrani.

Nakon pitanja, mogu da kažem samo jedno: volim što sam deo savremenog sveta i što me niko ne gađa mačetama i strelama kad ne radim nešto po njihovom ukusu, što neću morati da ubijam svoju decu ukoliko

nisu muška ili ukoliko smatram da ja to ipak ne mogu da izvedem, pa ostavim dete da umre samo od gladi ili ga bacim i sve snage da udari o drvo (žene su praktikovale abortus na izrazito surove načine, recimo trudnica legne na leđa dok joj druga žena sve vreme skače po stomaku). Hvala na zanimljivim pričama o kulturi i njihovom mišljenju o kosmosu, nastanku sveta i duši. Što se ostalog tiče, daleko bilo i daleko ostalo.

Waylaid says

This is just about the most amazing field study of all time. It contains the only extensive data-based study of humans in our natural environment. Anyone interested in human behaviour should read this.

Cris says

Chagnon is a bit of a dick and the Yanomamo seem like the worst assholes possible but the ethnography was interesting.

Gabby Keim says

This ethnography is a common one for Anthropology teachers to use as examples. Mine used it as an experiment. Between his two classes he changed the way it was read the first class read an article about Chagnon's methodology before reading the book, the second class (which I was a part of) read the book first and then the article. He did this to see if the students overall view of the book would change. Having finished the book, prior to reading the article, he asked my class how we felt about it. We gave it mostly positive reviews due to Chagnon's great organization of evidence. Then he had us read the article and asked us again how we felt. Most of us had changed our minds because of what we learned. Chagnon may be good at presenting his evidence, but it is important to remember that most of it is considered unreliable by the anthropological community due to his methods. He violated the anthropologists code of ethics many times during this study. Plus he's an asshole, so there's that.

Joe Loyd says

This book is used as an anthropology case study text. The author lived with the Yanomamo, ate their food, spoke their language and acted a spokesperson in their behalf. An excellent study in a vanishing culture.

Tom Byron says

Fantastic account of Amazon Natives. First off unjustly Chagnon is known to be disdained amongst academic circles. The reason is at the time he did his studies-the 1960's and early 70's, He seemingly dispelled the idea that anthropologists, hippies and New agers often maintained that uncontacted people

living in the jungle were noble tranquil uncorrupted souls living in harmony with nature. Yanomamo are not so much hunter gatherers as they are a horticultural society. War seems to be the focus of the tribal activity. The male tribesmen have a preoccupation with constantly trying to appear "fierce" to everyone around them. and it goes up the line in that Villages also want to have a "fierce" reputation and so forth. They wish that their neighbors will fear and respect them and don't dare raid them. This has close parallels to modern behavior. Chagnon was simply reporting what he observed in the study. I will point out The author has a very simple easy to read writing style. No long journey preamble like many such books -no he starts right off in the village with how the tribe lives including exactly how bows and arrows are made, the poisons and hallucinogens, how they hunt and the trading of handy crafts .

Eric B says

Interesting read due to the current controversy surrounding Chagnon and his methods. Thought book was ok. I would have gave a higher score for Chagnon's writing skills or depictions of adventurous moments if not for the Yanomamo being an uninteresting subject at times (personal opinion of course).

Positives: The preface and first section have a narrative style that introduces you to the Yanomamo people while casting Chagnon as a real life explorer the likes of which the western world has rarely seen in the last half century. The section about the spiritual beliefs of the Yanomamo is fascinating, as are the stories of the Jaguar. The war story near the end almost reads like fiction.

Negatives: Many sections are a bit dry and oddly organized. Chagnon is brutally honest at times, which is great at times, but he writes in such a way as to be looking down at the people he studies. He uses this to describe his culture shock, but never really lets up with it in the book. He avoided the imbibing of certain foods and drugs and did not give in-depth descriptions of food taste or effects of drugs. In sections where he combats the protein theory he comes off as a bit of an ass (which was mildly entertaining at first but then just felt more like he was using his large platform to humiliate his peers). Yanomamo as a whole are interesting for about 50-100 pages of material for the non anthropologist.

Graham says

I read this whilst at university. Highly recommended.

Thomas Fackler says

The Orinoco Yanomamo from an outsider's perspective. Human beings are fascinating.

Dennis Junk says

One of the best ethnographies you'll read. I've read other editions before, but this one (and the 2nd one too)

have a section about Chagnon taking the hallucinogenic drug ebene with the Yanomamo. After reading the section, which does not disappoint, I just went back and re-read the book in its entirety.

The controversy surrounding Chagnon's work is its own case study--in the power of postmodern ideology to pervert the moral thinking of otherwise good-intentioned people. This is a great read, Chagnon is a great anthropologist, and the rest isn't worth attending to unless you're interested in the sad degradation of cultural anthropology as a field in recent decades.

Benjamin says

Chagnon has a lot of haters, and most of what pisses them off is what makes this so much fun to read. The book reads at times like a 19th Century explorer story, but better I think, because Chagnon is an anthropologist and not some agent of the Empire. Some folks hate that, one writer in Al Jazeera said something about Chagnon being a bearded man's man. Well, yeah, but more Hemingway than James Bond. He is in there alone, just trying to figure it out, but it did remind me at times of books (I have also enjoyed) where some British dude is keeping a diary of how many people in the expedition have died -- Stanley and Livingstone type stuff. Chagnon's book is way more fun, because the Yanomamö get the drop on him so often... playing tricks on him that had me laughing out loud.

Another thing haters say about Chagnon is that he makes the Yanomamö seem like they are in a constant state of warfare and ready to kill each other over nothing. I didn't feel that way. Compared with the USA, where police kill an unarmed person every day and where every day some nutter kills or injures 4 or more people... compared with that the Yanomamö are noble savages. It must be said that the women appear to be slaves and are frequently beaten and raped. The haters say that Chagnon is offering colonials an excuse to "civilize" the Yanomomö by painting them as pretty awful. I am not in a position to judge just how awful the Yanomamö are, but I sympathize with what might be called a misanthropist streak in the anthropologist. I also thought it interesting how the Yanomomö's misogyny seems to fit with the story in *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Women are captured in raids... Chagnon argues time and again that capturing women is one of the main reasons for Yanamomö warfare, and that the most prolific killers have the most children.

You know how in the TV show *Breaking Bad*, they introduce bad guys who are more evil than the evil protagonist so that you end up sympathizing with a cold blooded murderer? I don't think Chagnon was calculating like that when he brings the gold miners and the missionaries into the story, but the same effect happens. It's like, the Yanamomö are these chilled out hammock weavers, snorting hallucinogens in their forest when these westerners come with shotguns and measles and ruin the party. It's like, I'd vote for Kaobawä if he was running against Trump. That the Yanamomö don't live in some anarchist paradise Acardia doesn't mean that we should go in there and "improve" them.

To summarize: a real eyebrow-raising page-turner that had me laughing, disgusted and frequently saying "different!" in an awed whisper. Plan to read more of anthropology's greatest hits.
