

one sighting card were provided. Voluntary census takers also want to know where the data they have collected end up. A free-text search for "Marine Mammals" or "Svalbard" on the Norwegian Polar Institute website gives no hits. This doesn't detract from the book in any way, but people would be more eager to send in observations if they could trace their contributions in the ongoing data compilation.

The book is good and makes you hungry for more. It is also refreshing that the book keeps to the point, but what is the purpose of the map on page 1? Why not a map showing the ranges of the animals the book is about? Moreover, hunting of marine mammals has dominated Svalbard's history from the early whaling days to the polar bear hunting of modern times. Hunting in Svalbard and its devastating effect on these mammals would have been a more interesting topic than general comments about bowhead whales, Steller's sea cow and sea otters. The sections on seals and whales should both begin with a few general words concerning the relationships between the species and their evolution. The text is packed with interesting information, but a discussion of the future is called for: not just the future of the whales but of all Svalbard's marine mammals. If the ice at the North Pole melts away, will there still be polar bears in Svalbard? How many polar bears have been killed since they became protected? Tourists ask a lot of questions; the authors would surely be able to provide answers.

Hopefully the next edition can provide indications of size for the whales on the identification sheet. Are they all rendered at the same scale? Greater consistency in presenting the whales' weight and size in text would make reading easier. For instance, it would be interesting to know where the figure 200 tonnes for the blue whale comes from, and what the average weight is. Could the authors provide a few more references? As the number of tourists grows, it would be worthwhile listing the names of the whales in even more languages.

The book is so good no nature-loving tourist going to Svalbard should be without it. For people like myself, who guide tourists in experiencing Svalbard's fauna, the book is a gold mine, with its logical structure and clear text. It is affordable, easy to take along, and answers the questions. And when the sighting reports start coming in, it will hopefully lead to better knowledge about the marine mammals of Svalbard.

Review of *Negotiating the Arctic: The Construction of an International Region*, by E. C. H. Keskitalo (2004). New York and London: Routledge. 282 pp. ISBN 0-415-94712-X.

Oran R. Young

*Bren School of Environmental Science and Management, University of California (Santa Barbara), 4518 Bren Hall, UCSB, Santa Barbara, CA 93106-5131, USA.*

Since the waning of the cold war during the late 1980s, the Arctic has emerged as a lively arena for initiatives designed to promote international cooperation. These initiatives take a variety of forms. Some, like the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) and its successor the Arctic Council (AC), involve intergovernmental agreements. Others, such as the Northern Forum (NF), are collaborative efforts on the part of subnational units of government (e.g. counties, provinces, states). Still others, like the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), the University of the Arctic (UArctic), and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), feature efforts on the part of non-governmental bodies to influence the course of transnational relations.

How can we explain this development? And what are the prospects for a broadening and deepening of Arctic cooperation during the foreseeable future? This intriguing, albeit sometimes difficult and frustrating, book seeks to answer these questions by focusing on the idea of region-building, deploying the methods of social constructivism, and making liberal use of discourse analysis. The result is an analysis that has the salutary effect of making us stop to think about the underpinnings of cooperation in the Arctic, even though it may have little impact on the actual course of events in this dynamic region.

Is there an Arctic discourse? What methods are appropriate for answering this question? Keskitalo's central argument is that such a discourse has emerged during the last 20-30 years and that it reflects in large measure the views and perspectives of Canada and, to a lesser degree, those of the ICC (treated as a partner of Canada with regard to circumpolar issues). The evidence underlying this

proposition deals, for the most part, with the determination of appropriate boundaries for the Arctic as a region and the framing of the Arctic policy agenda in terms of issues involving environmental protection, indigenous claims, and frontier development.

Although the story Keskitalo unfolds regarding the emergence of an Arctic discourse is intriguing, I am not convinced that the evidence supporting this line of analysis is compelling. It is true that there is a kind of disconnect between North American and Russian perspectives on the Arctic on the one hand and European perspectives on the other. But the boundaries of this emerging region owe as much to the effects of political manoeuvring and the preferences of those working on issues of pollution and the conservation of flora and fauna as they do to the success of Canada in dictating the boundaries of the region. Far from achieving consensus regarding the framing of issues on the Arctic agenda, those active in arenas like the AC and the NF still tend to talk past each other in extolling the relative merits of environmental protection and sustainable development as conceptual lenses for the analysis of Arctic issues. What is more, participants in these processes are often struck by the difficulty Canada has in arriving at a national consensus regarding Arctic issues, much less inducing others to buy into Canadian ways of thinking in this realm.

Above all, Keskitalo's account of the emerging Arctic discourse offers no mechanism for structuring or disciplining thought regarding appropriate ways to resolve issues of environmental protection and sustainable development under conditions prevailing in the Arctic. As those of us who are active in AC and NF meetings know all too well, efforts to promote transboundary cooperation in the Arctic often reflect a cacophony of voices rather than the application of a coherent discourse to a more or less well-defined collection of issues.

How can we explain the emergence of the Arctic as a distinct region in international society over the last two or three decades? To answer this question Keskitalo develops the argument that Canada (along with the ICC) has acted as the pivotal player in this drama, with the result that the Arctic agenda is really a Canadian agenda for what Canadians (as well as some Europeans) call the "northern dimension".

Without doubt Canada has played a prominent role in the evolution of transboundary cooperation in the Arctic. With Russia preoccupied with inter-

national issues, the United States dragging its feet, and the Nordics possessing limited capacity to call the shots, Canada has taken the lead at a number of key points in the development of international cooperation in the Arctic. As Keskitalo correctly observes, Canadian leadership was particularly important during the mid 1990s in the run-up to and immediate aftermath of the creation of the AC.

Even so, I find the case for Canadian dominance in this process somewhat unconvincing. It is easy to find examples of proactive leadership on the part of other players, as in the role Finland played in the process leading to the establishment of the AEPS in 1991. Whenever the United States (and to a lesser degree Russia) becomes annoyed and resists the placement of important issues (e.g. issues relating to the harvesting of marine mammals) on the Arctic agenda, Canada has little choice but to back down. Canada itself is a multi-cultural society most of whose citizens have little knowledge of or interest in the Arctic, even as they ritually repeat the dogma of "the true North strong and free" enshrined in their national anthem. In short, Canada lacks the power and (often) the will that constitute critical ingredients in successful efforts to impose a discourse on others. Canada has played an active role in settings like the AC. But as soon as its initiatives run into opposition, the limits of Canada's ability to influence the course of Arctic affairs become apparent.

What are the consequences of region-building in the Arctic and the spread of the ideas that go with it? A persistent subtext of Keskitalo's analysis of Canadian influence is the proposition that the emerging Arctic discourse overlooks or even clashes with the geographical, social, and political realities of Fennoscandia and the Nordic world more generally. If I understand her correctly, she regards this as a significant flaw in Arctic region-building. But is this a fair assessment? Finland has played a key role in framing numerous issues of environmental protection in the Arctic. Finland and Norway have emerged as the mainstays of support for the University of the Arctic. Denmark has taken the lead in nurturing and supporting the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, which now plays a critical role in facilitating the participation of indigenous peoples in the AC. Iceland has assumed a highly proactive role as the current chair of the AC.

What is more, there are undeniable similarities between the Nordics and the other Arctic states when it comes to the problems of maintaining vital human settlements in their northern peripheries.

Even relatively centralized countries like Norway and Sweden have struggled with this well-known feature of core–periphery relations.

I do not mean to suggest that Keskitalo is wrong to emphasize the differences between the European Arctic and the Northern American Arctic and the Russian Arctic. But I believe it would be incorrect to infer from an account of these differences that Nordic policymaking regarding Arctic issues has been hijacked by the Canadians. There are perfectly good interest-based explanations for the active participation of countries like Finland and Norway in Arctic region-building. There is also considerable variation among the Nordic countries in this realm. For instance, Sweden, which has a particularly strong interest in Baltic cooperation, has played a more subdued role in the AC than Finland and Norway. In my experience, Scandinavians active in bodies like the AC show no signs of suffering from false consciousness regarding the virtues of region-building in the Arctic.

What can we say about the future of Arctic region-building? Although she does not address the issue directly, Keskitalo's analysis is suggestive with regard to this question. Converging or congruent interests can suffice to trigger specific developments like the creation of the AC and the NF. But regions tend to gel and become lasting political arenas when they give rise to social practices and take on a life of their own that transcends the interplay of well-defined interests among individual members. Whatever its provenance, the growth of an effective Arctic discourse could play a crucial role in these terms.

From this vantage point, the future of region-building in the Arctic is hard to forecast at this stage. Interest-based initiatives have produced a level of international cooperation in the Arctic that goes well beyond what most of us could have anticipated twenty years ago. Yet I would argue that Arctic cooperation remains relatively fragile, precisely because it is based largely on convergent but transient interests in contrast to shared experiences in the past and a shared vision of the future.

Would the continuation of region-building in the Arctic be a good thing? Where you stand concerning this question undoubtedly depends on where you sit. The development of social practices never yields perfectly symmetrical results. Even in cases that produce gains for all parties concerned, some participants are apt to be bigger winners than others. If I read her correctly, Keskitalo is troubled by the thought that Canadian dominance might

marginalize the Nordic countries in Arctic region-building and, in the process, box them into a social practice that fails to serve them well over the long run.

Keskitalo is undoubtedly right to draw our attention to the impacts of ideas on interests in evaluating the consequences of Arctic region-building. But here, too, I am skeptical about the argument as presented. My perception is that most Nordic policymakers are generally positively disposed toward Arctic region-building and that they know exactly what they are doing in this regard. Of course, it is possible that they will experience a rude awakening regarding this issue somewhere down the line. But I doubt it.

For the most part, Keskitalo's scholarship is excellent. She has done a commendable job of tracking down primary sources, and she uses them to good advantage. Nonetheless, minor inaccuracies creep into her text from time to time. The U.S. Arctic Research and Policy Act of 1984 did not mandate the work of the Committee on Arctic Social Sciences, which I co-chaired (p. 41). The 1973 Calder Case involving the land claims of aboriginal peoples in Canada did not deal with the controversy over a proposed pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley corridor (p. 133). Canada did not take the lead in the creation of the NF (p. 160); the governor of Alaska organized a conference held in Anchorage during 1990 that provided the impetus for the establishment of the NF.

In addition, the text of this book is often rather opaque, making the thread of the argument difficult to follow in some places. This book would have benefited greatly from attention on the part of an English-speaking copyeditor.

Still, it would be wrong to make too much of these shortcomings. Although it is apparent from what I have said that I am not persuaded by some of the principal arguments of this book, I am convinced that it is a useful addition to the literature on international cooperation in the Arctic. Most of the existing literature in this realm reflects a somewhat naive enthusiasm for region-building in the Far North. Keskitalo has brought fresh eyes to this topic and developed an argument that requires us to stop and think about the origins and consequences of international cooperation in the Arctic. While others may join me in responding skeptically to specific arguments presented, their understanding of what is at stake in the Arctic will be sharpened substantially as they work their way through the analysis set forth in *Negotiating the Arctic*.