vided an efficient means of observing weather systems as they left continental North America. Barr cites Koch's excellent description of a winter depression as an example of the effectiveness of the strategy. In addition to experimenting with such things as the elasticity and plasticity of sea ice and observing the impact of German culture, transmitted through the Moravians, on the residents of the Labrador, Koch also hypothesized that the higher parts of the northern mountains of the coast had not been glaciated — anticipating graduate theses and scientific papers on this topic by a half a century.

I mention these particular, very selective, examples of one nation's contribution to the IPY in an effort to convey the value of all the expedition records over and above their meticulous and unique geophysical work, which was their primary purpose. Each expedition went to enormous lengths to set up its instruments and maintain them and keep to the pre-set schedule of observations. "Term days," on which all IPY expeditions were required to do intensive measurements of magnetism, etc., were days of frantic, often arduous activity throughout the year at all bases around the world. Yet today, the greatest value of their work may well lie in their accounts of how and how not to run polar expeditions or in their non-geophysical observations of their regions!

A good example of this is the snapshot in time they provide of the culture and conditions of high latitude native peoples. The Inuit, of both Greenland and Baffin, the Yakuts and Evenki of the Lena delta, the Basques of Novaya Zemlya, the Yaghan of Tierra del Fuego all appear in expedition accounts. There are, from various corners of the earth, reports of measles, alcoholism, smallpox, relocation of native groups, etc. Native peoples from both hemispheres had been taken to the capitals of Europe and returned home with considerable loss of life. The adaptations of these diverse peoples to their inhospitable homelands varied greatly. Using means of travel as an example of this, kayaks, kayuks, umiaks, vetki (all boats) are mentioned, as are dogs (pack and sled), reindeer (for riding, packing, and drawing sleds), skis, and snowshoes. On one of the Russian expeditions, a man was observed riding one of three reindeer pulling his sled, to which two dogs were also hitched. On the sled was his vetka for water crossings. He was the Lena's equivalent of the modern-day person with a mobile home, towing a small car with a motorcycle and boat on the top.

Like the native peoples, the various nations involved in the IPY also adapted to polar life in different ways. Several used saunas as a matter of course, with reportedly beneficial results. Some used Russian-type brick stoves, some used skis routinely, one group used skates for travelling. As has been mentioned, several groups took livestock, with varying degrees of success. The clothing used varied, as did the houses and diets. Even the ships used varied, with different combinations of steam and sail and varying degrees of ice strengthening. What a remarkable wealth of information on polar technology based on trial and error by so many groups in such varied polar situations! A few decades later, it was Amundsen rather than Scott who was tuned in to this experience, which did not flow into the mainstream of the English language literature (see, for example, R. Huntford, 1983, Scott and Amundsen, the race to the South Pole, Pan Books, 565 p.).

The scope for meaningful comparisons among IPY groups and among their regions extends well beyond the "scientific" framework within which they worked. Barr's presentation allows the reader to pick up his own threads of interest and follow them around the globe.

Although the book is focused on a polar year, it provides a very interesting window onto late nineteenth-century society in general, especially in Europe. This was a time when Austro-Hungary was a major power and when Finland was a Russian Duchy (and when Finnish scientists had Swedish names and wrote their reports in French). It was a time when "German" science was booming. There is an interesting vignette of the leader of the Austro-Hungarian Expedition to Jan Mayen travelling by land from the Adriatic port, whence his expedition ship sailed, to Bergen, where it picked him up for the voyage to Jan Mayen. On route he was able to consult with German, British, Dutch, and Norwegian scientists and polar experts. He was able to meet first-hand several of those involved in other IPY expeditions. This sort of contact must have enormously strengthened the scientific programs of the IPY and produced a very healthy exchange of experience among polar workers.

This was also, of course, a time when what is now the northern coast of the USSR was open to all comers. Like the Canadian Arctic today, it was a magnet for "explorers" of various stripes. Indeed, Russian interest in the IPY was in part due to their desire to reinforce sovereignty over their northern region. For a while, it looked as though the expedition to Novaya Zemlya was going to be organized by Austrians rather than Russians.

The Russian expedition to the Lena delta makes particularly interesting reading for this and other reasons. The group took more than eight months to travel to the delta by land. In doing this they travelled by train, by post sled, on horseback, by stage coach, by barge, by steamer and by other vessels. On arriving in their expedition area, they were met by two U.S. naval officers searching for further evidence of the crew of the Jeannette, which had been lost a year or so earlier! They also met a group of Cossacks chasing escaped political prisoners who were hoping to make contact with U.S. whalers in the delta. In addition to the usual IPY geophysical program (for which they had to haul stone bases into the delta for instrument pillars), this expedition's reports are notable for their observations of life in this huge delta, of the delta itself (notes on pingos and other ground ice, etc.) and on mammoths. While trade in mammoth ivory was apparently brisk and skeletal remains quite common, hide and flesh of mammoths were rare. Barr includes an extensive description of a mammoth dig.

Although there have been great advances in the synchronous collection of global knowledge, although the idea of scientific "years" has been reasonably well exploited since the First IPY, and although the Antarctic Treaty has stimulated a remarkable amount of polar research activity, it is a sad reflection on polar politics and polar science that the First IPY is still, more than a century later, something of a model for us all. The circumpolar approach to polar problems is still an ideal toward which we strive. At the moment some of the greatest efforts to move toward this approach are being made by the circumpolar native peoples themselves. Even within Canada, northern work is plagued by compartmentalization among disciplines and among groups, which has resulted in a social and physical science landscape cluttered with reinvented wheels and off-visited dead ends. There is little sense of a long-term polar focus within disciplines, let alone among them. Lt. Weyprecht, of the Austro-Hungarian Navy, who conceived of the IPY but who died of tuberculosis contracted on a previous expedition before participating in it, would weep if he were alive today.

William Barr, a physical geographer with a great facility for language, an intimate knowledge of the polar exploration literature, and an international network of friends and acquaintances with complementary interests, has performed a great service by bringing this overview of the First IPY to our attention.

Peter Adams
Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
KIP 3G4

and
Trent University
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada
K9J 7B8


In 1974, C. Stuart Houston published To the Arctic by Canoe 1819-
Franklin’s journal remains in manuscript form in the Scott Polar Research Institute; it has never been published, much less reprinted. Houston means, of course, Franklin’s “narrative.” Although nothing more than a slip of the pen in this particular instance, the failure to distinguish between Franklin’s “journal” and his “narrative” has, at other times, led to unfortunate circumstances. Franklin kept a daily journal from the time they left England, as did the officers under his command. But upon returning to England, only Franklin prepared a shorter narrative version tailored for public consumption. Upon numerous occasions, Houston remarks that Franklin is more timid in his description of events that might offend his audience than is Richardson, as when the practice of eating warble fly larvae is mentioned or when the abdominal or scrotal incisions to relieve Adam’s oedematous swelling are reported. But had Richardson been writing for a general audience, he too might have been less frank in his descriptions. To compare Franklin’s published narrative to Richardson’s official journal and then to draw conclusions about the authors on this basis is treading on thin ice thicker than Franklin would have cared to cross.

The more serious consequence of not distinguishing between journal and narrative, however, is that the public easily forgets that the journal of the commanding officer remains in manuscript, while the journals of two of the three officers under him have been published and the journal of the third officer — George Back — has, according to the Preface of Arctic Ordeal, been recently transcribed. This irony arises, no doubt, because of the availability of Franklin’s Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea. But that account is no substitute for his official journal; it is less than half the length of the unpublished daily record and is directed at a totally different audience. I should not wish to close this review of Arctic Ordeal on anything but an affirmative note. After all, Houston is now single-handedly responsible for publishing two of the four daily logs kept by officers of the 1819–1822 Franklin expedition. And Houston’s book will undoubtedly gain the wide readership for which it is designed and that it deserves.

Richard C. Davis
Department of English
University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
T2N 1N4


“The period of most direct contact between scientists and public policymakers in the Beaufort Sea, 1977–1981, was also marked by pioneering approaches to arctic field studies and to analyses of the resulting information. Some of these innovative approaches (and results) are documented in the present volume” (p. 16). This quote from the Introduction conveys the essence of the book. Most of the information was collected to assess the consequences of offshore oil exploration along the Alaskan Beaufort Sea coastline. The usefulness of the information for these purposes is clearly demonstrated by its inclusion in the special conditions for arctic leases, as mentioned in the Introduction on research history by Weller and Norton. The information for assessment is valuable for inherent scientific reasons; thus, publication of the book is scientifically significant. Most of the information has appeared previously in government reports, but publication of the book makes significant research results much more available. The following paragraphs describe some of the results.

The general westward drift of the Beaufort Sea gyre’s southern edge is well known. A subsurface easterly counter-current, the Beaufort