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The author hypothesizes that prehistoric hunter-gatherer groups participated in settlement and subsistence strategies that revolved around the rich estuarine resources of the Chesapeake Bay. As such, he presents a cultural-ecological model that examines the relationship between the changing prehistoric environment and the lifeways of the people that inhabited the region. This is accomplished by a statistical examination of spatially and temporally distributed projectile points, with the notion that changing settlement patterns can provide insight into cultural chronologies.

A presentation of temporally separated points recovered in Southern Maryland (here defined as Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's Counties) reveals that a gradual shift in population focus from the Potomac to the Patuxent River took place beginning in the Late Archaic (Figure 7; p. 128). By the Middle Woodland, the main settlement area appears to be in the lower Patuxent and tidal Chesapeake, but the author concedes this could be due to better site preservation, resulting from slower sea level rise and reduced levels of shoreline erosion.