

Canadian records. It might have been preferable to detail a broader spectrum of Tsimshian chiefly practices and accomplishments. The author's examination of the sale of Ligeex's monopoly (and subsequent potlatch) in 1866 may give rise to some discussion, as there appears to be no mention of either in the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) records or Duncan's writings of the 1860s. Duncan did attempt to sell

his store to the HBC in 1866, although the offer was declined because of the many restrictions he placed on the subsequent operation of the venture. However, the Ligeexes are manifestly vital actors within both Tsimshian *adawx* and Euro-Canadian scholarship.

This is a significant book and an important contribution to the field, and it will be valued for its innovative analysis of Tsimshian culture "through the ages."

The Heiltsuks: Dialogues of Culture and History on the Northwest Coast

Michael E. Harkin

Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press in cooperation with the American Indian Studies Research Institute, Indiana University, 1997. 195 pp. Maps. US\$40 cloth.

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The dust jacket on this volume informs readers that "what Marshall Sahlins has done for the Hawaiians, Michael Harkin has done for the Heiltsuks," and indeed the book inside the cover is very much in the tradition of theoretically minded anthropology. It is thoroughly researched and careful of the details of the presentation of Native cultures, but its real topic is disciplinary theory. In this case the theory that Harkin explores very effectively melds and extends several strands of postmodern theory to argue that cultures, specifically the cultures of the nineteenth-century and contemporary Heiltsuks, should be seen as a series of dialogic discourses about power, playing out the dialectic between uncontrolled exogenic forces and the intrinsic ordering principles

of society. This argument is presented through a chapter reconstructing the culture of the Heiltsuks in the nineteenth century and one summarizing the current contexts of the Heiltsuks, followed by three chapters on theory ("Narrative, Time and the Lifeworld," "Contact Narratives," "Dialectic and Dialogue") and three chapters applying that theory to specific Heiltsuk cultural discourses: bodies, souls and goods. A short final section highlights conclusions about "Worlds in Collision." The various chapters are quite self-contained, and in fact three of them were previously published as articles. The remarkable total absence of photographs of Heiltsuk people, places, or artefacts in the volume is not surprising if it is understood that its main thrust is theoretical.

Given Harkin's focus on the central significance of dialogue and discourse, it is peculiar that he gives scant consideration to the significance of the millennia of intellectual and material exchanges that shaped all of the groups on the Northwest Coast, including the Heiltsuk, long before the arrival of Europeans. In fact, Harkin seems to fall into a generalized Heiltsuk-centricity. He argues that the Heiltsuk were the most feared group on the BC Coast (x), unparalleled in ferocity (2), and that they experienced perhaps the most rapid cultural transformation of any tribal group in the history of Western colonialism (ix, 2). He states that the Heiltsuk were the dynamic centre of diffusion of masks, dances, myth, and other elements of culture (1); speculates that they may have invented the Winter Ceremonials (159, n. 2); and argues that when they received missionaries they became the most progressive nation on the Coast, embracing the evangelical message and transforming themselves into paragons of the Victorian virtues of hard work, prosperity, and progress (x).

It seems more plausible that Harkin is dead on about the dialogic nature of cultural change and that this was the case long before the Europeans arrived on the scene – there was certainly a constant ebb and flow of ideas, and the fascination of the Heiltsuks may lie not in their *sui generis* inventiveness but in their location on the cutting edge of cultural exchange between the matrilineal nations to the north and their southern neighbours, whose systems were based on flexible bilateral patterns of kinship. For example, Harkin enthuses that the Heiltsuk may have been the inventors of the Winter Ceremonial: "Only in the Heiltsuk case do we find a strong and clear example of a dialectical op-

position between two dance series, in which the forces of chaos are subdued and appropriated by forces of structure" (159, n. 2). He is incorrect. Halpin's 1973 study of Tsimshian crests made a similar argument, showing the tension between the series of Naxnox masks and Halait performances expressing the power of chaos, which is opposed to the chiefly system that tames and controls it. While elements of the Tsimshian Halait system may well have been borrowed from the Tlingit and Haida, or for that matter from the Bella Bella, the complex as a whole is clearly ancient among the Tsimshians. The Tsimshian Halait performances are obviously analogous to parts of the Heiltsuk dance cycle, and it is likely that these were borrowed back and forth several times, with the most recent exchange just before the time of European contact bringing the Tsimshian the "secret society" dances developed by the Heiltsuks; but it is crucial to understand that these imported Heiltsuk performances may equally well have been made from the stuff of earlier borrowings from the Tsimshian Halait. The dialogue is very old.

Despite its theoretical orientation and Heiltsuk-centricity, this volume will be a valuable to BC specialists: there are few other sources as detailed on Heiltsuk culture and ethnohistory, and the theoretical arguments are worth the trouble to follow through. Readers in British Columbia will note several anachronisms in the volume: though the publication date is 1997, three of the seven chapters were originally published as journal articles between 1988 and 1994, and the volume as a whole was apparently not thoroughly updated prior to printing. Specifically, the discussion of BC politics indicates that the long-defunct Soceads are in government, there is no

mention of the BC Treaty Process, and the Supreme Court decision in the Gladstone case affirming the rights of the Heiltsuks to sell herring roe is mentioned only in a note. While the chapter on the nineteenth century is specific and detailed, the material on the present context is marked by a remarkable lack of specific actors: a chapter dealing with the Heiltsuk people in the present day with not so much as a mention of such people as Chief Ed Newman will seem very peculiar to readers who are familiar with the BC scene. Another jarring note is the argument on page 26 that the shortage of newer housing on reserve is a factor contributing to the

migration of young people to the suburbs of Vancouver, where solidly middle-class housing is available. But there is no documentation provided to show that the migration of Heiltsuks to the Lower Mainland is primarily to middle-class suburbs, and this seems to be a rather surprising claim.

Despite minor flaws this is an excellent addition to the literature. The chapter on contact narratives is interesting and well developed, as are the detailed substantive chapters on the dialectics between Heiltsuk and European understandings of the body, souls, and material goods. *The Heiltsuks* will take an important place on our bookshelves – and not only in the theory section.

Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia

Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, and J. Donald Wilson, Editors

Calgary: Detselig, 1995. 426 pp. Illus. \$28.95 paper.

BY DIANNE M. HALLMAN, *University of Saskatchewan*

This text is valuable because it brings together the fruits of extensive research on education in British Columbia in a convenient collection. It joins the work of new scholars to the field with that of established academics in three broad areas: "childhood and pupilhood," "becoming and being a teacher," and "organizing and reorganizing schools."

Jean Barman's introduction provides a thumbnail sketch of formal educational structures as they emerged in the mid- to late-nineteenth century as the British colony attained provincial status. Focusing on the settlers to this area, she argues that by the mid-1860s an educational consensus

in favour of free non-denominational schooling had developed, which formed the basis of an education system that was not fundamentally altered for over a century.

The first group of essays documents some aspects of the experience of pupils and children within this stable system. The editors are to be commended for this focus; educational historians have typically given scant attention to the children for whom educational structures are set up. While the essays in this section do not provide an all-encompassing history of schoolchildren, the discrete research projects give insights into important aspects of this history. Timothy