

CCF was itself but an aspect (albeit the most important one) of Underhill's lifelong quest for a radical tradition in Canadian history, and a genuinely liberal party in the present.

That search forms the theme which dominates the book. It is Professor Francis' contention that "a biography of Frank Underhill is at the same time an intellectual study of Canadian liberalism, for his thinking over time embodied the evolution and essence of that liberalism." The accuracy of this claim depends, obviously, on the definition of liberalism being used. Given Underhill's long association with the CCF, "liberalism" as used by the author presumably comprehends the entire Liberal/CCF-NDP spectrum. While most observers would accept that the CCF-NDP may be placed in the liberal tradition, broadly defined, Francis' equation of Underhill's own thought with "Canadian liberalism" is only tenable within such a relatively loose definition of his key term.

This, perhaps, is to quibble too much. The book does disappoint, however, in its failure to pursue the analytical possibilities of this claim. If Underhill's intellectual development did in fact mirror the evolution of Canadian liberalism, then surely the many conclusions arrived at here regarding the nature of his own thought might have been paralleled by some broader and more general observations on the nature of Canadian liberalism and Canadian political culture in this century. These the study fails to provide. For example, although the notes contain several references to Underhill's writings on subjects such as "Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism: What Do They Mean In Canada?", there is a lack of references to the basic writings of others on the same subject.

Within his chosen bounds, though, the author does a fine job of portraying the man who claimed, only partially in jest, "my speciality is general invective." The formative years of his intellectual development, his experiences in the First World War, the Department of History at the University of Toronto, the crisis of academic freedom in the early 1940s caused by Underhill's outspoken statements on Canadian foreign policy, and finally his gradual return to orthodoxy in his views — all are given solid treatment in the book. As a straight intellectual biography, *Frank Underhill* is a definite success, and a worthwhile addition to the still relatively small, but growing literature of Canadian intellectual history.

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Captured Heritage. The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts. DOUGLAS COLE. Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985. 373 p. ISBN 0-88894-460-8 \$24.95.

In 1929, a representative of the French Foreign Office wrote to the Attorney-General of British Columbia requesting a totem pole from the Queen Charlotte Islands. The Quai d'Orsay official was under the impression that the Haida people were extinct and that their ceremonial poles had been abandoned. The request was forwarded to Francis Kermodé, Director of the Provincial Museum, who replied that reports of the Haida's demise were greatly exaggerated. Many Haida artifacts, however, were becoming scarce, the director explained. Even so, Kermodé was willing to accede to the French request and, with the assistance of the Dominion government, a pole was duly despatched to Paris. (Provincial Archives of British Columbia. Records of the Provincial Secretary. GR 1668 vol. 2, f. 2.)

By 1929, a great deal of the physical and cultural patrimony of the Northwest Coast natives had been alienated. As Simon Fraser University historian Douglas Cole writes in this admirable study, by the 1920s “there was more Kwakiutl material in Milwaukee than in Mamallikulla, more Salish pieces in Cambridge than in Comox. The city of Washington contained more Northwest Coast material than the state of Washington and New York City probably housed more British Columbia material than British Columbia herself.” (p. 286) Cole accounts for this phenomenon, and documents the dispersal process in *Captured Heritage*, a book which bears the appropriate sub-title: “The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts.”

Engagingly written and extraordinarily well-researched, Cole’s book chronicles every phase and facet of “the scramble.” He discusses the economic and religious significance of objects which were coveted by European and American collectors; he examines the outside pressures that were brought to bear on native cultures and explains how the Indians themselves played an important role in the dispersal process. The book begins with eighteenth century acquirers — Malaspina, Cook, et al. — who regarded native Indian masks, bowls, blankets, harpoons, and poles as “artificial curiosities,” as little more than souvenirs of exotic travel. By the mid-nineteenth century, “curios” had come to be regarded as “relics,” as mute testimony to a passing culture. Their status increased further in Western eyes over the next few decades and by the 1870s native artifacts were being described as “specimens.” Such artifacts were regarded as evidence of the evolutionary development of mankind; they became highly prized and the objects of serious study; they became, during the late-Victorian and Edwardian years, the focus of an intensive, expensive, international “scramble.”

The late nineteenth century, which saw the scramble at its height, coincided with the growth of major international museums and the advent of empirical anthropological enquiry in western Europe and the United States. During these years, the scramble was motivated and sustained to a considerable degree by the “salvage impulses” of scientific collectors and curators, most of whom sincerely believed that native culture, and the natives themselves, were in imminent danger of extinction. Civilization was on the march, time was of the essence, and if outside collectors did not “rescue” Indian artifacts, the material would disappear forever. But as Professor Cole points out, the acquirers’ quests often undermined the culture they wished to ensure, and their fears were to some degree self-generated and self-fulfilling. Commenting on the Brooklyn Institute’s lament that Northwest Coast artifacts were exceedingly scarce in the early 1900s, the author notes that “much had disappeared from the field not because Indians and their culture were doomed, but because it had already been swept up by other museums.” (p. 288)

Osteological collecting — the gathering of native skulls and skeletons for anthropologists and phrenologists — went hand in hand with the scramble for artifacts. Even Franz Boas (who features prominently in this study and who was among the most respected of the acquirers) engaged in the practice. But despite the scientific arguments used to justify it, osteological collecting often meant the pillage and wanton destruction of native graves. Cole does not mention the fact, but there were laws against such practices in British Columbia. A colonial ordinance to prevent the violation of Indian graves carried a penalty of six months hard labour; a provincial statute (passed in 1884, near the zenith of the scramble) imposed a fine and several months imprisonment for those who desecrated Indian graves. Yet no one, it would appear, was ever charged under these laws. Partly in the interests of science, and partly out of contempt for the deceased natives and

their descendents, authorities in British Columbia (and in Washington and Alaska) turned a blind eye to such activities. Indeed, as Cole reveals in this study, some officials (including Indian agents and missionaries) actually abetted this kind of organized desecration.

Understandably, many clans were upset at the despoliation of their burial sites and after a time they resorted to disguising grave houses which had traditionally been decorated with streamers and blankets. For the most part, though, the Indians did not resent the intrusions by collectors who scoured their coast in search of "specimens" for the museums of Great Britain, Europe, Eastern Canada, and the United States. The natives were active collaborators in the trade. "The Northwest Coast Indians were not naive," the author writes:

They were experienced traders who refused offers as often as they accepted them and who were seldom prepared to part with anything cheaply. They sometimes responded to the demand quickly and adroitly, seeking higher prices in cities when field collectors offered too little and adjusting production to collecting fashion. (p. 310)

The Dominion government was also remarkably accommodating when dealing with "foreign transgressors" who were allegedly bent upon looting the Pacific coast. Department of Indian Affairs Commissioner Israel Wood Powell, for one, provided the American Museum of Natural History in New York with some of its finest pieces. Dr. Charles Newcombe did the same for the Field Museum in Chicago. True, Powell afterwards confessed to feeling guilty "of want of patriotism" in sending so many artifacts out of the country (p. 84) and in 1886 he made amends by petitioning the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia for a provincial museum. Dr. Newcombe also came to regret the export of the artifacts and, like Powell before him, became a mainstay of the British Columbia Provincial Museum. Nevertheless, despite last-minute protests from such groups as the Historic Sites and Monuments Board and the Royal Society of Canada, native Canadian artifacts continued to be carried off by non-Canadian collectors well into the 1930s.

An archivist reading *Captured Heritage* cannot help but contrast the scramble for artifacts with the indifference which attended British Columbia's documentary heritage. To be sure, tales still circulate about Hubert Bancroft's visit to Victoria in 1875, when the indefatigable journalist/historian allegedly walked off with a cache of valuable documents which he had acquired from some of the (rather inebriated) HBC pioneers whom he had come to interview. But archival documents never held the same fascination as aboriginal artifacts. Ironically, though, the archival records which were spurned by outside collectors are poorly documented, the words "Provenance Unknown" being all too common in early accessions registers. In contrast, the items which Professor Cole has chronicled are generally well-documented. In this case, the medium and the market made the difference. Since "provenance made a piece more saleable," collectors and curators were careful to provide one. Archivists reading this study will also be impressed by the author's range of sources and by the archival institutions he has surveyed. He has drawn upon an impressive array of original sources from the Public Archives of Canada, the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, the American Philosophical Society Archives in Philadelphia, the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde, the British Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, and many other major repositories. Most of all, archivists, along

with historians, anthropologists, museologists, and other students of the Northwest Coast, will be impressed with the elegance and the erudition of this work. *Captured Heritage* is capital history.

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