

The conundrum facing the “wardens” in any system of wardship is, of course, the question: at what point the ward comes of age. Ironically, in suppressing native political organization, Scott and the DIA denied Indians the forum to exercise those rights which, in theory, were the hallmark of the full citizenship which supposedly was the goal of DIA policy. Danger lies always in the possibility that the ward will make a mistake in judgement. As Titley demonstrates, however, it was more than paternalism that led DIA to thwart native political expression. Native leaders of the inter-war years challenged the assumptions on which departmental policy had been developed, and threatened the very fabric of that policy. Here was a danger more real than that posed by itinerant trouble-makers and frauds, and, in this situation, the power of the state was turned against Indian people just as it had been against workers in Winnipeg in 1919. The harassment of F.O. Loft chronicled so vividly by Titley is a sad chapter in DIA-native relations. On the other hand, the story of the Indian struggle in British Columbia for recognition of their aboriginal rights demonstrates the persistence and sophistication of the forces with which Scott had to deal.

Discussion of DIA financial problems in the late 1920s might have proved useful, especially in light of Titley’s portrayal of Scott’s intense concern with limiting expenses. For all the talk of careful fiscal management, research is now showing that the DIA management of and accounting for Indian monies was particularly suspect. The degree to which Scott, the man with the accountant’s mentality, was knowingly responsible for letting this mismanagement of Indian monies go unchecked, remains unknown. Clearly there is scope for further investigation of his administration. On balance, this book makes an important contribution to our understanding of inter-war DIA-Indian relations. It should be recognized as a starting point for any student interested in the period.

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From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography, and the Power of Imagery. MELISSA BANTA & CURTIS M. HINSLEY with the assistance of JOAN KATHRYN O’DONNELL. Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum Press, 1986. 136 p. ISBN 0-87365-809-4.

The genesis of interest in photography as an archival source has not been without its problems from the interpretive point of view. In the anthropological field, these arguments have been particularly controversial: visually powerful material being integrally bound up with sensitive historical issues such as colonial expansion and representation of indigenous peoples within a Euro-centric framework of values, issues which are still very much alive.

It is to the credit of the Peabody Museum at Harvard that they have tackled these issues in this volume and in an exhibition of the same name. *From Site to Sight* examines the use of photography in anthropology from the mid-nineteenth-century to the present day, and looks at the nature of that visual evidence, its intellectual context, its manipulation, uses, and abuses over that period. After a general introduction and fairly lengthy description of photographic techniques, the authors describe photography as applied to each of the major sub-disciplines: social and cultural, archaeological, biological, and museum

anthropology. This encompasses a wide range of photographic techniques from the historical processes to the modern and less familiar such as photogrammetry and microphotography.

Most of the major issues discussed by visual anthropologists are explained simply and clearly: issues such as the relationship between the anthropologist and “the other;” power; intrusion; control over interpretation. “Armed with the camera, anthropologists can probe, scan, magnify, reduce, isolate, debase or idealise their subjects.” (p. 23) However, given changes in society’s attitudes and in anthropological thought and method, it becomes clear that the photograph is not a static thing. It is moulded not only by the values which created it, but also by the perception and values of modern viewers; the photograph acquires layers of meaning as its perceived context changes.

Anthropological photography is a huge field to cover in 136 profusely illustrated pages. Thus, of necessity, the argument cannot be fully developed and is left resting on broad generalizations which beg as many questions as they answer. For instance, J.K. Hillers, the great photographer of the U.S. Geological Survey, is described as “coming closer to our conception of documentary realism today.” (p. 40) One would not dispute this but it immediately begs the question: what is that conception? How and why does it differ from that of the nineteenth century? Writing of travel and expedition photography, the authors state that “these images influenced Western perceptions of other people and played a role in fostering the discipline of anthropology.” (p. 39) This again is so, but is only part of the story. Surely perceptions of “others” which already existed were applied to photographic representation, given that initially new media usually adopt the schēmata which already exist. This kind of question is central to the understanding of historical photographic material, and although hinted at, one would like to see the argument further developed.

Another problem is that links between the photographic manifestations of the different sub-disciplines are not always clear. For example, the strictly scientific studies of physical types (fig. 47), the “portrait types” (fig. 50-51), and the tourist *carte-de-visite* (fig. 29) are surely linked, being different degrees of the same forces and assumptions — those of “objectification,” “collection,” and “type.” This weakness is the result of the sub-disciplinary structure of the book, which presumably follows the sections of the exhibition. This structure works very much better on the whole for more recent material where distinct sub-disciplinary methods exist. It is a less valid approach for earlier material where these distinctions were less clearly delineated.

The authors declare at the outset that *From Site to Sight* is not intended to be a definitive study. The volume is largely a synopsis of recent and current thinking rather than an advance in analysis or the presentation of a new perspective. However, whilst this approach might frustrate the specialist, the authors have indeed succeeded in providing a sound introduction to the use of photography in anthropology for the interested non-specialist and have provided plenty of food for thought. Last but not most certainly not least, the book is full of beautifully produced images, both familiar and unfamiliar, from the Peabody’s collections, which are a treat for anyone.

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