

Both books make a significant contribution to the growing level of sophistication of the analysis of the collections and processes of representations which lie at the core of museums and archives. But many who work in museums and archives have always known that there is much that is “good to think” within their walls. Finally, as exemplified particularly by Elizabeth Edwards, but also notably by Corinne Kratz, some of this thinking is bearing delicious fruit.

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**Ann M. Tweedie**, *Drawing Back Culture: The Makah Struggle for Repatriation*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002, xxiv + 175 pages.

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*Drawing Back Culture* is anthropologist Ann M. Tweedie's account of challenges the Makah face in their efforts to repatriate cultural objects. The Makah live in the Northwest corner of Washington State, across the strait from Vancouver Island, where other Nootka groups to whom the Makah are culturally linked are located. A great deal of media attention was directed toward the Makah in the late 1990s when they asserted their “traditional” rights to hunt whales that were regarded by environmentalist groups as a species in need of protection. The whale hunt receives a good deal of attention in the book (since whaling objects are an important class among those eligible for return), but she brings quite remarkable insights to a wide range of repatriation issues.

The author's analysis of the repatriation process, as manifested in this one particular case, is appropriately broad, but she pays particular attention to efforts to address the requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). This law (which is conveniently included in full in the Appendix) was passed in 1990, and it applies only to Native peoples living within the boundaries of the United States of America.

In terms of theoretical contributions, Tweedie's book is outstanding: through her Makah case study, she questions the suitability of several concepts and assumptions that are key to NAGPRA and thereby improves the knowledge base through which the intended results of this legislation might be achieved. Her assessments of this Act, and of repatriation policies more broadly, are equally important as an example of applied anthropology. *Drawing Back Culture* is especially compelling because it is based on sound fieldwork.

The book is nicely organized, allowing for a coherent presentation of often overlapping issues. In the first chapter Tweedie outlines Makah perspectives on NAGPRA, noting ambiguities in how concepts such as “sacred objects,” “cultural patrimony” (communal ownership), “religious leader,” and “traditional,” are understood according to the Act and

within the Makah community. Tweedie does not pretend that community perspectives are unanimous.

In the second chapter, through effective use of secondary written sources and some archaeological evidence, Tweedie depicts pre-contact Makah life, which gives the reader background information relevant to current repatriation issues. She reads this evidence as indicating that the Makah's pre-contact ancestors had a strong sense of social stratification and personal “ownership” of things, characteristics not easily reconcilable with NAGPRA's assumptions about “communities.” The Makah are apprehensive about repatriation processes, since ownership of “cultural” objects is often only traceable through individuals, and many objects, especially those associated with the whale hunt, were originally owned by elite community members. This raises contentious questions about who currently owns such objects: though most recognize potential community benefits, repatriation might also introduce or reinforce particular relations of power within the group.

Tweedie continues her careful analysis of how history is intertwined with the present in chapter 3 where she discusses the conditions under which the Makah were originally dispossessed of culturally significant items. Her treatment of this topic is typical of the sound analytical approach she employs throughout the book. While acknowledging that some “collectors” were not the most scrupulous of individuals, and that colonialist expansion should not be ignored as a backdrop for economic transactions that involved cultural objects, Tweedie also recognizes native peoples' roles in collecting activities when she notes their active responses to new market opportunities (e.g., development of new symbolic decorations on basketry made for tourist markets). Altogether, she provides a credible assessment of the wide range of social interests and conditions, at local levels and beyond, that motivated dispersal of Makah material culture.

More recent social and political conditions that are also part of the history of such objects are examined in chapter 4. Tweedie suggests that a new era in the Makah's relationship with the outside world began around 1930s, shortly after they were granted full citizenship, and were soon to be affected by Collier's Indian Reorganization Act. Subsequent community efforts noted by Tweedie as relevant to current repatriation issues include a land claim that was unresolved for 50 years, involvement in a fishing rights dispute which led to the Boldt Decision (1974), several decades of participation in local archaeological excavations, and the establishment of a Cultural Center, created in large part to house artifacts found during these excavations.

Tweedie's most thorough analysis of NAGPRA—of the disjuncture between “the spirit and the letter of the law”—is presented in the second last chapter. She notes two strategies by which the Makah are dealing with NAGPRA: they try to work with the process, and at the same time they challenge its assumptions and definitions. In explaining the first tactic, she criticizes one assessment of NAGPRA, which

regards it as problematic because it is still based on non-Native premises, and therefore not capable of fully accounting for Native views of material culture. She suggests that the problem is not so much that NAGPRA represents a non-Native perspective, but that its assumptions about "native culture" are off the mark. It reflects an idealized view that all Native groups were socially and economically communal. The author traces this assumption back to Collier and his impact on Indian policy. Collier was more familiar with Pueblo groups to whom such a characterization might be more readily applied.

In her conclusion, Tweedie notes three contributions that her study brings to current anthropological research. It highlights the importance of material culture in current aboriginal revitalization efforts: repatriation of cultural objects is not so much an end in itself as it is part of a new beginning. Another important insight is her problematizing of the notion of "ownership" and her attention to the challenges this poses for repatriation processes. Finally, through attention to this particular case, the author helps us better understand the broad phenomena of current revitalization movements among aboriginal peoples, which "force native peoples into new readings of their past to capitalize on opportunities in the present" (p. 137). She shows us how policies and legis-

lation (e.g. NAGPRA), which can present opportunities, can play a role in shaping revitalization movements.

While this book is about a group living in the United States of America, and includes only occasional references to groups from Canada, it is also relevant to Native issues here. Different legislation applies in the two countries, but the work of "renewing" cultural identity, whether engaged in by Native community members, museum curators, archaeologists, or other anthropologists, raises similar issues on both sides of the border.

Tweedie's book is an important addition to the study of current Native issues. Too few researchers attempt to explain politically contentious situations from the perspectives of Native people who are involved in them. Tweedie is both respectful of particular political positions held by individuals within the Makah community and dedicated to the pursuit of sound knowledge. While she tells the "Makah side" of this story, she also maintains a level of objectivity necessary for clarifying the complex challenges inherent in current repatriation activity. By helping us understand these challenges more clearly Tweedie has herself made an outstanding contribution to the project of "Drawing Back Culture."

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