TRACING CHANGE IN NORTHWEST COAST EXHIBIT AND COLLECTION CATALOGUES, 1949-1998

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores changing perceptions, theory, structure and policy within art exhibit and collection catalogues of First Peoples' objects from the Pacific Northwest Coast. This work looks at emerging viewpoints on material culture and its display over forty years as they present themselves in catalogue entries, textual content and labeling of Native groups and individuals. Early concepts based on salvage anthropology such as Native cultural demise and the degeneration of remaining people weakened as scholarship changed from a predominantly anthropological understanding of the objects to an aesthetic understanding based in art history. Political actions by Native groups have demanded policy changes within Canadian museum structure that includes the Native voice in curatorial decisions and textual discussions on both old and new objects. These very policy changes bring with them increased responsibility for the museum as well as new challenges of representation of the objects and their makers. The theme explored in this thesis is the changing role and responsibility of academia in the representation of the Other.
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Introduction

In this thesis I trace changes in the representations of First Nations objects and peoples in twenty-five Northwest Coast exhibit and collection catalogues between 1949 and 1998. I chose to look at art catalogues as an entry into the different ways the Northwest Coast has been looked at over time for two reasons. Firstly, using objects in catalogues as a central point for understanding First Nation’s lifeways is useful and is perhaps demanded by the pivotal role objects play in Coastal cultures. As Charlotte Townsend-Gault points out, this centrality of objects on the Coast is as important today as it was in times past. She writes, “In communities...wherever relationships are being reaffirmed, negotiated or disputed, the ownership or control of objects are always involved” (1997: 142). Given the central position of first peoples’ objects within the cultural dynamic and the powerful position of institutions and scholars as representors of these cultures it behooves one to look closer at what transformations have come to pass in the last fifty years. Initial assumptions, methods of cataloguing and decisions on what information was supplied to the reader changed dramatically over the years as professional scholars and first peoples themselves promoted different perspectives. The second reason I chose art catalogues as an inroad to the way the peoples of the Coast have been represented over the years is a purely selfish enjoyment of turning the pages of these catalogues and viewing remarkable objects.

This thesis covers almost fifty years of scholarship. The ways the peoples and their objects have been exhibited, labeled, discussed and thought about have obviously not remained static. The earliest authors approached these peoples and objects with the tools of their time—principally the idea of culture area describing the unity of the peoples on the Northwest Coast. The interests of salvage anthropology and the belief that Native cultures were disappearing coloured this theoretical approach to the peoples and material culture of the Coast. However, as with any paradigm, certain facts eventually refuted the model. This study shows that early focus
on anthropological constructions of culture areas give way to self-representations of First Nations people as discrete communities and artists. Indeed early professions of the decline of first peoples has given way to deference to the sovereignty of first peoples over the land and to their ability to authoritatively discuss their own art and culture. Taken as a whole then, the catalogues concretely reveal the changing perspectives and interests of academics and first peoples themselves. This paper follows the limits academics placed around Native cultures and their cultural material as they tried to draw those objects into the mainstream realm of art. How and what they chose to exhibit and discuss reveals theoretical models that alter as the century approached a close.

This project involved an exhaustive study of selected catalogues. The exhibit and collection catalogues included in this survey were produced by museums and galleries across North America all of which claim to represent the Northwest Coast, its peoples and objects. I did not include catalogues of individual makers or those that represented a single group such as the Nisga'a. Nor did I include collections of works in catalogues that attempted to represent all Canadian first peoples or North American groups. I subjected each catalogue to the same series of forty-one questions including searches for the distribution of objects by linguistic group, how many group names were cited in each catalogue and the relative age of objects included in the catalogue. I recorded my findings in a database using Microsoft Access. At the end of the first analysis I created further fields based on thirty-three names of First Nations groups from the Northwest Coast. Each group name has three additional fields. One field is for ethnic divisions mentioned which are associated with larger language groups. In addition to the first database, I created a second using the section titles used by the authors including sub-section headings, how long each section was and whether or not objects were shown with the text.

1 For example, a catalogue may indicate that an object is Haida in origin and more specifically, Kaigani Haida. The dominant name is Haida indicating linguistic group and as further information the listing adds the ethnic group Kaigani. A different catalogue may indicate that an object originated with the Kaigani Haida and not mention the broader language affiliation as Haida. So one of the thirty-three groups is Kaigani Haida but the name may also appear as a sub-group to the Haida category depending on how the authors of the catalogue used the names.
The information in these two databases is summarized in three tables, found in the Appendix to this thesis. Table 1, “Distribution of Objects in Catalogues by Group” totals the number of objects in a catalogue cited as coming from a particular group. Table 2, “Native Names Used by Date and Author” notes how many and what names were given in catalogue entries for peoples on the Coast in each catalogue. Table 3, “Distribution of Old/New Objects” summarizes the answers to three questions: how many objects were in each catalogue, how many were old and, how many were new. Though several other tables could be produced from this method of tagging information, these three tables help illustrate the most pertinent changes over my time period.

Catalogue writers have represented these objects and their makers in very different ways between 1949 and 1998. The underlying theories and insights of a particular catalogue often had an impact on subsequent catalogues and succeeding authors. For this reason I chose to present a chronological review. I have roughly divided this time interval into three periods. The first period between 1949 and 1969 focuses on two main discourses drawn upon by the authors: the idea of distinct culture areas and the degeneration and impending death of Native culture. These discourses demonstrate the authoritative role of anthropology as expert on the Coast at this time. These restrictive models had the subsequent effect of discouraging the exhibition and production of new objects. In the second period, the 1970s, objects were increasingly viewed as forms of fine art rather than as ethnographic objects. This change indicates the acceptance by catalogue authors of the continuation of current First Nations’ cultures as well as a new recognition of early Native object makers as “artists”. Now seeing their object as the study of “Native Art” catalogue writers tentatively prefer an art historical analysis to the earlier ethnological perspective. In the third period, from 1980 to the present, First Nations’ object makers became firmly established as

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2 These are the names given in catalogue entries only. Many authors used many more names in the text of their publication.
3 I classified an object as ‘old’ if it was made more than twenty years before the publishing of the catalogue. Very few objects were close to my cut-off line. Most ‘new’ objects were made within two years of publication and most objects classified as ‘old’ were more than fifty years old.
artists. This has led to discussions of the proper contexts for understanding Northwest Coastal
"art". Three directions for discussion in particular emerged from these catalogues: cultural
exchange, the tourist trade and cosmological meanings and power of the objects. This thesis
describes these three periods and then, in conclusion attempts to partially account for them in
terms of changes in museum and gallery policies and changes in the political strength and goals
of first peoples.
PART I: Culture Area and the Catalogues

This section examines the first of the three periods. I suggest that the years 1949 to 1969 form a discrete period as the books of this time share several features. Firstly the books in this section have the most involvement of anthropologists of any time. Art historians and museologists are involved in many of the projects, however, the influence of anthropology is notable. Moreover, the texts are primarily formatted using the culture area construct and reflect writing motivated by salvage anthropology. Following the anthropological model of culture area the many peoples along the Coast are divided linguistically merely into six large language groups. The same groupings designate the objects in the catalogue entries. The cultural unification of the Coast is promoted in several ways. Repeatedly objects are labelled as being made by one of the six language groups rather than more discrete groups. This is demonstrable as objects of a similar function or material are shown in a comparative manner with little emphasis on with which specific group the object originated. Furthermore, the salvage anthropology model of culture promoted the understanding that the Coast cultures were dead, and that the remaining Native people are degenerate versions of their ancestors.

Twelve catalogues exist for this first period between 1949 and 1969. Anthropologists wrote most of the works or an anthropologist was a key member in the catalogue’s creation. Robert Tyler Davis provided the earliest catalogue. He was the Director the Portland Art Museum in 1949. Erna Gunther assisted Tyler in checking the anthropological material in his work. She was the single most influential writer during the 1950s and 1960s. Virtually all authors appear to be influenced by this prominent Northwest Coast anthropologist. She held several notable positions

4 Wilson Duff's The Arts of the Raven was published in 1967 and should, by date alone, be included here. However, it is not included because it differs so radically in concept from the bulk of catalogues during this time period. Although some of the other catalogues that were included have some traits that would better fit in section two, overall they share more similarities than differences.

5 These six groups, as used at this time, are the Tlingit, Tsimshian, Haida, Kwakiutl, Nootkan, and Salish. Sometimes included in this primary group were the Bella Coola. These names have gone through many transformations over time and I have written them in each section as the authors of the time period used them.

6 Several books and monographs were written on this subject in addition to several key displays of objects prior to 1949. However, I was unable to uncover earlier catalogues fitting the criteria from the resources available to me.
during this period. She was the Director of the Washington State Museum until 1962, as well as Professor and Chairperson for the Department of Anthropology at the Universities of Washington and Alaska. Gunther contributed four catalogues to the corpus of Northwest Coast Native art and was cited as a source for most of the catalogues at this time. In fact she organized exhibits at the La Jolla Art Centre in California- "Indians of the Northwest Coast" (1951), the Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Centre- "Indian Art of the Northwest Coast" (1962), the Seattle Museum- "Northwest Coast Indian Art" (1962) and, the Portland Art Museum's "Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians" (1966). Audrey Hawthorn, an Associate Curator at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, contributed a single publication in 1956. Allen Wardell, Curator of Primitive Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, wrote Yakutat South. Edward Malin, an anthropologist and Norman Feder, Curator of American Indian Art for the Denver Art Museum co-wrote the text for the Denver Art Museum's 1968 catalogue. Susan Barrow, during the publication of Arts of a Vanished Era was the Director of the Whatcom Museum. Spencer MacCallum a graduate student at Princeton University wrote the final catalogue for this section. Bill Holm, though not a direct writer or designer for exhibitions during the Sixties, excepting "The Arts of the Raven", had a hand in Erna Gunther's 1962 catalogue for the Seattle World's Fair and Malin and Feder’s revised edition of the Denver Art Museum’s 1962 catalogue.

**Culture Area**

Given its primacy in these early catalogues this thesis begins with a review of the history of the culture area construct. The culture area concept has been used within anthropology for most of this century. Although often criticized, its constructive power still exerts influence over the way anthropologists and other academics divide cultures. A culture area is a delimited geographic area wherein several distinct societies exist. These societies share similar culture traits due to adaptation to similar environmental conditions and the diffusion of traits common across the region. These traits may include elements of social structures, material culture, economic structures, subsistence patterns, ceremonies, etc. The culture area model produces an
ethnographic map delineated by geographical or environmental boundaries. This idea has provided a means of limiting research as well as providing a structure of approach for anthropologists.

The history of this concept is important to look at, as its development has had a profound effect on the way anthropologists and museum curators have represented various peoples of the world. It is significant that this concept was developed throughout the twentieth century with particular reference to Native peoples in North America. Initially the culture area concept was proposed by Clark Wissler and expanded upon by A.L. Kroeber, though it has been traced back to Freidrich Ratzel (Harris 339; Kroeber 1963: 6) and Otis T. Mason (Harris 374; Kroeber 1963: 7). It was developed to oppose European Three Age classificatory systems in museum displays (Garabino 51, Harris 374). Wissler, working with Franz Boas, wanted to renounce such classificatory systems of exhibitions then popular in European institutions. Thus artifacts were arranged by region. Wissler pointed out that physically proximate cultures share many similarities, which he felt owed to diffusion and a common subsistence base. He developed the culture center concept from which an assemblage of cultural traits diffused outward. He eventually shifted his attention from cultural inclusion based on a common subsistence base to inclusion by classification of shared cultural traits. This latter conception traces where a given culture trait originated and how many societies within a geographic area contain a given trait. These traits could most easily be mapped through material culture however this left the researcher with cumbersome and analytically difficult trait lists. The culture area technique inspired monumental trait lists and culture area divisions (Kroeber and Driver 1932, Kroeber 1939). Proponents of this model relied on critical trait lists whereby each trait is given a value of one.

7 A similar concept developed in Europe, the notion of Kulturkreise. Harris (1968) describes this as “large complexes of traits which had lost their geographical unity and were now dispersed throughout the world” (373).

8 See for example, Driver and Coffin (1975) Classification and Development of North American Indian Cultures: A Statistical Analysis of the Driver-Massey Sample. This analysis exposes some of the inherent problem with trait analysis. However, it does not attempt to be terribly critical of the concept just that analysts should not be using the culture area concept ‘intuitively’. Rather, rigorous statistically testing of data must accompany any analysis of trait elements in a culture area.
The existence of a Potlatch ceremony may count as one as well as, for example, one point for the presence of a bow.

The culture area model was associated with an understanding of the methods and goals of anthropology that Gruber (1970) later dubbed “salvage anthropology”. Prior to the Second World War, almost all anthropological fieldwork on the Northwest Coast had as its central purpose the collecting of information on the local cultures as they had existed prior to substantial European contact. This was understood as a matter of great urgency. First Nations cultures had been devastated in the nineteenth century by introduced diseases, land theft and displacement. Missionary evangelists, white settlement, the emergence of a capitalist economy, government regulations against key cultural institutions like the potlatch- these and many more introductions continued the assault. Anthropologists believed, with good reason, all knowledge of ways of the past would be lost forever.

Laudable as the attempt to record the past culture was, the focus of anthropological energies on reconstructing past indigenous cultures had some unfortunate implications for both scientific and popular understandings of the situation of contemporary Natives. Ethnological writing, relying on a salvage anthropology model implied the previous existence of an authentic Indian untouched by modern life. This allows a high valuation for older objects and a devaluation of those newly produced. The preponderance of this thinking shaped how the public and scholars related to peoples of the Coast: such that, not only were the peoples and their cultures dying out but, those people who remained were degenerate versions of their authentic and pure ancestors.

**Six Language Groups, One Culture**

During the first twenty years Northwest Coast exhibits were structured with the idea that “Northwest Coast Indians” shared similar lifestyles over a broad territory. Most gave a brief description of the peoples of the Northwest Coast; often this was simply the name of the six major language groups, Tsimshian, Tlingit, Haida, Kwakiutl, Nootka and, Salish. These early catalogues provided quite limited information on the diversity of cultures from the Coast. It was not until the
middle 1960s that the catalogue authors began providing detailed information about who was who on the Northwest Coast.

The earliest book included in this survey is Robert Tyler Davis' (1949) *Native Arts of the Pacific Northwest*. It was published at the height of the popularity of the culture area concept within anthropology. As with so many other catalogues between 1949 and 1969, Tyler's description of the peoples of the coast was kept simple and followed the belief that shared environment meant shared culture.

The people of this cultural area on the Northwest Coast were divided into a number of distinct language groups, each with dialects and subdialects. They were as divided, by language and details of customs, as are contemporary Europeans. Yet they show a surprising cultural unity. There are differences in the details of the organization, customs, and interests of the various groups, but they are all closely related in culture... The cultural unity was no doubt the result of the identical environment of all the groups, and all made similar adjustment to it... So, enclosed [by mountains, dense woods, open coast] the various groups, despite their language and racial differences, developed a singularly homogeneous culture which gave all their artistic expression a definite and indigenous character (Davis 1949: 13-14).

Like most writers of this period, Davis shows little interest in providing the reader with cultural details for any peoples. In fact, he mentions merely five groups of people (Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl, and Salish) as opposed to the average of eight groups other authors used over this time period. This simplification is justified citing the unity of culture over the Coast. This and other catalogues over the first period follow the principles of culture area for two reasons. First, this was a convenient framework for organizing an exhibit warranting the inclusion of particular objects produced by specific language groups and the exclusion of various other objects and groups. Secondly, there was an intuitive truth to the assertion of similarity. Few would disagree with Albert B. Elasser that "the art forms, while not the same from north to south, nevertheless share much in their basic styles, media and subject matter" (Harner, Michael and Albert B. Elasser 1965: 7). What I wish to criticize here is the over-generalization of this "intuitive similarity".
Catalogue Structure: Form and Function

Boas and Wissler had criticized the practice of classifying museum objects as discrete types to be arranged in evolutionary sequences without regard to their situation in particular cultures. They replaced the grand picture of human cultural evolution with the idea of the culture area. Ironically, this change seems to have encouraged a similar ordering of artifacts by type within the culture area. Many authors during this period designed their catalogues to reflect comparison between objects of similar function, material or shape. The underlying culture area construct is made visible in the catalogues in two ways. First in the structuring of information in the section titles, and second in the subordinate placement of group names in the catalogue entries.

Erna Gunther drew on this comparative framework for her 1966 publication, Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indian. She structures the catalogue in eight broad parts that are further broken up into subsections. The objects are discussed in the text according to their function within a generalized culture as per the culture area construct. She notes with which culture the object originated but gives this less importance than the object’s function. Objects are shown side-by-side with pieces that share a similar purpose but are from different groups. For example one of Gunther’s chapters is titled “Art in Daily Occupations” in which she describes the daily activities of men and women. Within this broad label are several sub-sections with titles such as “Household Utensils”, “Spoons”, “Salmon Fishing”, and “Hunting-with Firearms”. Using this organizational method Gunther shows objects with little attention to the originating cultures. Nor does she spend much space distinguishing between the six language groups. She does get a little more specific about the spiritual life of the Salish in her section “Art for Secret Societies” with its sub-section “the Guardian Spirit and its Northern Sublimation”. But she neglects specific cultural groups in the following sub-sections “Masks and Their Functions”, “Musical Instruments” and “Staffs”.

The impression of a solid culture area was supported by the catalogue entries for most publications over this initial period. In their 1968 catalogue, Indian Art of the Northwest Coast Malin and Feder use both comparison as above and, prioritize function over group name. Consider,
for example, objects 5 and 6 in their catalogue. The top of the page is titled, “TWO FIGURE POLES- Bella Coola and Kwakiutl”. The discussion following provides a generalized description of various functions poles have fulfilled on the Coast without reference to specific groups. This is followed by single paragraphs for each type of pole in the photographs. The principal placement of form and function over cultural individualism was, with some exceptions, formulaic for this time period. The catalogue entries, while usually providing some ethnological information, downplayed the originating group by placing function above people.

Culturally Degenerate

In addition to fitting the diverse Coastal peoples and their objects within broadly undifferentiated groups, the catalogue authors repeatedly draw attention to the loss of Coastal culture thus reiterating a “salvage” perspective. Concurrently with thinking that objects of the Coast were best viewed as similar, made by similar peoples, the authors gave their readers the impression that the cultures of the Coast were either wiped out completely or that those individuals who remained were merely degenerate versions of their ancestors. This impression fails to advocate the exhibition of newly created objects and encourages denial of value for newer objects while; older objects were valued as “genuine”.

This dismissive attitude is prevalent in much of the writing at this time. Susan Barrow and Garland F. Graebert published Arts of a Vanished Era in 1968. They write,

Northwest Coast Indian Art is, obviously, spectacular. Its unquestioned acceptance as “ART” is comparatively recent, so far as the general public is concerned. In 1939, at the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco, in the Department of Fine Arts, there was an exhibition of Indian Arts directed by Rene D’Harnoncourt, assisted by F.H. Douglas, with Erna Gunther in charge of the Northwest Coast section. From that time on, the popularity of Northwest Coast Indian Art has grown at an ever accelerating pace” (Barrow and Graebert 1968: 5).

It is quite evident that the authors are intent on pursuing the idea that Northwest Coast objects are “art” and, that the general public now views these objects as Western art. That is, that the objects are, scarce, authentic, and produced by artists and are now being sought out by collectors and museums. However they insist that this art lies mostly in the past.
Today the majority of the Indians of the Northwest Coast and the Eskimos of Alaska are fairly well acculturated and the process is continuing at an accelerating pace. True there are still rituals and customs perpetuated by some of the older people and even here and there interest is shown by a few of the young ones who have a justified pride in their heritage. But in fact the conditions and cultures that produced this great aboriginal art on the Northeast [sic] Pacific rim are gone. This is the Art of a Vanished Era (1968: 10).

The authors thus downplay the fact that some people are still continuing the old traditions and some youngsters are reconnecting to them. This may be because “primitive art” should be old to have value or because the culture has been contaminated by acculturation and is not therefore “authentic”. Both reasons corroborate the scarcity of the objects thereby increasing the value of the exhibited objects. Barrow and Graebert dismiss any newly made objects from entering the world of exhibition by denial of their existence.

It is usually the case that the identity of the maker of an older object is not known. This anonymous producer may become an index for his or her culture whereby the image stands for the society. “Objects are collected no longer because of their intrinsic value but as metonyms for the people who produced them” (Domínguez 1986: 548). As Sally Price, in Primitive Art in Civilized Places, notes, “the popular image of Primitive artists as the unthinking and undifferentiated tools of their respective traditions --as people who are essentially denied the privilege of technical or conceptual creativity-- raises interesting questions about the ways in which 'exotic' peoples are used to legitimize Western society and culture” (60). She goes on to argue that, “a case can be made that the "anonymity" (and its corollary, the "timelessness") of Primitive Art owes much to the needs of Western observers to feel that their society represents a uniquely superior achievement in the history of humanity” (Price 1989: 60).

The catalogue authors from this period tend to lead their readers to believe that there may be some Natives left on the Northwest Coast but they do not live in Native cultures since that has been destroyed through contact and assimilation. Many authors indicated that Native peoples of the Coast poorly imitate their ancestors’ past objects (Davis 1949; Allen Wardell 1964; Barrow 1968). The segregation of a Europeanized present and (dead) Native past informs the reader that
whatever objects Natives make now are not useful, beautiful or traditional.

**Problematizing the Culture Area Concept**

There are signs of slippage in the culture area construct over this period. There is no single author one can attribute this change to; each contributed small textual details or formatting variations such as the adding of a new Native group name to a catalogue, introducing a Native artist’s name or, providing a little more description distinguishing one group from another group. These small differences in approach facilitated positive future changes in the theory and structure of the catalogues.

A glance at Table 2 in the Appendix reveals three 1960s authors who stand out in their effort to provide many names of groups on the Northwest Coast; Alan Wardell (1964), Erna Gunther (1966) and Edward Malin (1968). These authors initiated changes in cultural labelling for catalogue entries. Although an art catalogue is not the best forum for discussing the complexity of relations and cultural differences found along the Coast it should provide its reader with the specific name of the Native group created the object in question even without a detailed cultural description. Though the assumption of regional cultural unity discourages specificity, close examination of the objects reveals stylistic differences traceable to particular groups. These three authors noted the unique art forms particular to smaller groups than the six language groups most frequently used.

Other authors chose to break the Northwest Coast into smaller areas of cultural similarity. Spencer MacCallum wrote a sensitive9 article for the Art Museum of Princeton in the catalogue *Art of the Northwest Coast* (1969). Following the contemporary convention MacCallum divides Northwest Coast groups by language, but then he breaks up the culture area into three areas, northern, middle and southern,

The peoples of the Northwest Coast did not organize as tribes, but were divided on the basis of language into six principal groups. The region as a whole comprised three main geographical and cultural areas. There were the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian

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9 I use the word sensitive because MacCallum is the only author until 1998 to completely avoid the use of the word “Indian” he refers to the peoples of the Coast as people, person, man, woman or by their language group name such as Tsimshian or Haida. The word Indian is found only once in the Preface written by Gillet G. Griffin.
speakers in the northern area, Kwakiutl and Nootka speakers in the middle area, and Salish speakers in the southern area. Included in the northern area were a pocket of Salish just south of the Tsimshian, the Bella Bella. The Northern region is the area of major interest to us, since it was the area of the most distinctive Northwest-coast art style, although immediately to the south, the Kwakiutl and their neighbors achieved a vigorous artistic style of their own (MacCallum 1969: 8).

MacCallum, like many authors, curators and anthropologists highlights the northern peoples of the Coast. The Princeton exhibit showed only objects from the Tlingit groups and Haida groups with a lone piece of Kwakiutl work. Although this should have eliminated this catalogue from this discussion, the title and text of the catalogue informs the reader that this is an exhibit on the art of the Northwest Coast. It serves as an excellent microcosm for the northern emphasis found in almost all the catalogues used herein. A quick glance at Table 1 (Distribution of objects in the catalogue by group) will quickly demonstrate the heavy representation of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian groups by the number of objects attributed to them. This Northern emphasis is mentioned in several catalogues and the center of the culture area seemed best represented by the Haida for most authors. In MacCallum’s text the objects, social structures and ceremonial life of the Haida most closely fit the general description in these catalogues. The Kwakiutl are often singled out to best exemplify dramatic ceremonial practices found on the Coast. The Salish are frequently selected as the best examples of the individual guardian spirit complex. The overabundance of Tlingit objects may also be attributed by the excellent and numerous northern collections most museums appear to have. This structure was probably inspired by Erna Gunther’s similar repeated format in all of her textual discussions on the Coast.

MacCallum, Gunther and Malin thus explicitly recognized by the latter 1960s that the Coast was not as culturally unified as had been previously assumed. Although he does not list more than seven group names in his catalogue entries, MacCallum points out that several geographically adjacent language groups share closer stylistic similarities with one another than say the most northern peoples with the southern peoples. The publication of Bill Holm’s (1965) definitive book on Northwest Coast design analysis Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form must have
shaken up the curatorial community with its descriptions of distinctive cultural stylistic analyses and, prompted a closer look at what made Tsimshian art Tsimshian art and not Salish art. Late in the Sixties authors increasingly discuss the complexity of cultures on the Coast shifting from a focus on language group and culture area to locality and individuality. One of the failures of accepting a mere six language groups without acknowledging significant variation in style, even within a single language group, is the oversimplification of the people who made the objects and, an underestimation of the maker’s artistic intent. The authors of the 1970s catalogues begin to address some of these concerns.
Part II: From Ethnography to Art

The Arts of the Raven (Duff 1967), marked a signal transformation of thinking about Northwest Coast objects reflected in several catalogues published in the 1970s. Earlier exhibitions had recognized artistic qualities in the objects, but they structured their exhibitions according to the culture area model. Not only did they tend to neglect objects that did not clearly belong to "traditional" cultures they paid relatively little attention to the aesthetics of the objects they did include. Holm's Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form (1965) demonstrated that indigenous objects could be appreciated in their own formal styles and discipline, much like any object of art in Western art traditions. The door was thus opened to a new appreciation of the Native producer as an artist and Native objects as "art" to be admired for their intrinsic qualities. Along with these changes, came a budding awareness of and appreciation for contemporary Native artists, largely lacking in earlier catalogues.

A small group of writers working with Northwest Coast objects during this period collaborated and assisted one another on several fronts. One can feel a kind of synergy pushing changes through most of the catalogues. Wilson Duff (anthropologist), Bill Holm (teacher and definitive author of Northwest Coast stylistic analyses) and, Bill Reid (Haida artist and authority on Northwest Coast cultures) wrote the first in the series, The Arts of the Raven (Duff 1967). Gerald LePage, wrote Art of the Northwest Coast Indian (1972), describing objects in a commercial gallery. Bill Holm contributed his first catalogue, The Crooked Beak of Heaven (1972). The Museum of Anthropology's two premier catalogues celebrating the opening of the new institution, Indian Masterpieces from the Walter and Marianne Koerner Collection (1975) and Northwest Coast Indian Artifacts from the H.R. MacMillan Collections (1975), were contributed by Audrey Hawthorn (curator) with anthropologist Marjorie Halpin contributing an important article. Allen Wardell, with his publication, Objects of Bright Pride (1978) rounds out the contributors at this time. He was the Director of the Asia House Gallery in New York.
Though most of the catalogues at this time had anthropologists working on them in some way, there was a decided shift from a concern with Northwest Coast culture to an appreciation of the objects as artistic productions in their own right. The catalogues at this time can be broken up into three groups. First, Wilson Duff’s *The Arts of the Raven* shows the objects as high art without providing anthropological background. Second, Allen Wardell’s *Objects of Bright Pride* and the two publications by the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia focus upon institutional collections. Finally, Bill Holm’s *Crooked Beak of Heaven* and Gerald LePage’s *Arts of the Northwest Coast Indian* combine ethnographic information with an aesthetic appreciation for the pieces. Further, these last two authors acknowledged the existence of individual master carvers of the past. The shift from an ethnographic to an aesthetic framework did not develop evenly. Ironically academic anthropologists appeared more willing to dispense with the ethnographic framework and recognize individual artists than was the case with writers for commercial galleries, who continued to dwell upon the cultural background of Northwest Coast artefacts.

**Persistence of Native Culture through Art**

By the late 1960s predictions of Native cultural death were being refuted in First Nations communities by the persistence of identity reaffirming cultural practices, increasing populations, and the interest of a younger generation in the cultural practices of their ancestors. Writers of exhibit catalogues began asserting the survival of First Peoples beginning with Wilson Duff’s exhibit, “The Arts of the Raven”, in 1967. This was the very first large-scale public display of newly created objects by First Peoples; it included thirty new objects by seven artists—Robert Davidson; Henry Hunt; Bill Reid; Bill Holm, Douglas E. Cranmer; Tony Hunt and, Don LeLooska Smith. Part of the stated intent of the display and catalogue is to elevate the anonymous Native producer, named where possible, to the title of master carver and artist.

10 I draw heavily on this exhibit catalogue in this section for it was arguably one of the most influential Northwest Coast exhibits ever to have been shown in North America.
Native objects are removed from the ethnological realm and re-imaged as high art.

Anthropologist, Wilson Duff, Haida artist, Bill Reid and, teacher and author Bill Holm each wrote an article for the catalogue, while Duff wrote all the introductions to the eight galleries and was responsible for the preparation of the catalogue and the editing of it. Widely acknowledged as an incredibly influential exhibit, "The Arts of the Raven" deserves a closer look as an honest attempt to present the objects of the Coast as fine art to the Western public.

One of the express purposes of this exhibit and catalogue was to pave the way for First Nation's art to be viewed as fine art. In his fascinating introduction to "Gallery 8- The Art Today", Duff comments,

Art styles, it would seem, have greater viability than the cultures that produce them. The old Indian cultures of the coast are dead, but the art styles continue on in new and modern contexts. The Kwakiutl style never did suffer a full eclipse, but was kept alive by such artists as Charlie James, Mungo Martin and Ellen Neel. Today in the hands of Henry Hunt and Tony Hunt of Victoria, Doug Cranmer of Vancouver, and Henry Speck and many others in the Kwakiutl villages, it is continuing as always to find new expressions. The Haida style kept barely alive for many decades by a handful of slate carvers, has recently been rediscovered and revived by Bill Reid, Bill Holm, and others, and finds a promising future in the hands of young Robert Davidson of Masset (Duff et al. 1967: 106).

Duff tells us several important facts. First, that while the old cultures (note the plural indicating diversity) are dead, the art styles continue in new ways and the fate of Native arts rests in the hands of a few gifted artists. As sensitive to Native concerns as was Wilson Duff we see here both his desire to champion Native causes as well as his comfort with allowing two groups, the Kwakiutl and the Haida, to represent the artistic heritage for all Coastal peoples. Robert Davidson, a budding artist at the time, serves as a representation for Northwest coast Native art and, concurrently, the future direction of Native culture.

It is evident that the authors are intent on pursuing the idea that Northwest coast objects are art and that the general public should view these objects as art in a more Western sense. That

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11 The Galleries were titled, "Faces"; "Small Sculptures in Wood"; "Gallery 3"; "Slate, Ivory, Horn, Bone, Silver"; "Flat Design"; "Charles Edenshaw: Master Artist"; "Masterpieces of Northwest Coast Indian Art"; "Arts of the Kwakiutl" and, "The Art Today".

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is, that the objects are, scarce, authentic, produced by individual genius artists and the objects are
being sought out by collectors and museums. This is the most explicit text for the purpose of
elevating these objects as art up to this date. However the focus is still primarily on past object
makers and to a much lesser extent on those few who are reviving old techniques.

Unlike all authors of the earlier generation of catalogues, the authors of The Arts of the
Raven mostly ignore ethnology in favour of highlighting the work of individual master artists.
For the first time in a collective exhibit of Northwest Coast art a single person had a large section
of an exhibit apportioned to his works. Gallery 6 (49 objects) is dedicated solely to work
attributed to Charles Edenshaw, “This is the first formal exhibit of works of the most famous and
most productive of all Haida artists” (Duff 1967: 74). Though in some earlier catalogues artists
had been singled out, none to date had had a large display of their pieces. The choice of this man
rather than any of the other people Duff mentions in his opening paragraph may suggest that
Haida art is to be singled out as representative of the Coast. Admitting the view that the North is
most representative of the Coast and, given the fact that Bill Holm and Bill Reid were significant
contributors to the catalogue, the choice of Edenshaw to represent ‘Master Artist’ is simply not
surprising. The selection of Edenshaw to represent the finest of Northwest Coast carvers aside,
the elevation of an individual to such an honour clearly differs from earlier object function
following comparative restrictions, assertions of producer anonymity, social degeneration and
cultural demise.

**Thinning of Ethnography and the Creation of Native Art**

The catalogues at this time demonstrate a shift from an anthropological to an art historical
focus. Ironically, both disciplines used the other to legitimize their effort. It appears that art
historians drew on ethnology as a means to increase value ascribed to Native objects while
anthropologists, such as Wilson Duff, reduced ethnological information as a means to present
Native objects as “high art”. Anthropologists were trying to appeal to public ideas about what
defines art versus ethnology. In this case they were removing the objects from their social and
cultural contexts encouraging people to view them as “high art” rather than understand them in terms of their social roles. To illustrate this point I must make a distinction now between art and commercial art galleries and museums as spaces with different goals. The art gallery and museum share the goal of bringing in the public. The art gallery is publicly perceived as a space showing “art” while the museum space adds an educational component to exhibition. Commercial galleries are retail spaces and sale is the primary goal.

To demonstrate how the catalogues meet the goals of the particular space, gallery or museum, I draw on Murray Satov’s (1997) article, “Catalogues, Collectors, Curators: The Tribal Art Market and Anthropology”. This paper discusses commercial assumptions held by auction houses, curators and collectors around the “primitive art” market. Similar changes found in these catalogues include a reduction of text concerning collection history, an increase of object descriptions for artistically centered publications and a reduction of description for ethnologically centered publications. These changes indicate “that the process of reifying the objects’ value (monetary, cultural, artistic, or other) has shifted away from players within the commercial network, toward academics and curators” (Satov: 224-226).

The Arts of the Raven illustrates several of the trends Satov identifies. In this catalogue the objects were thinly catalogued reducing ethnological associations such as collection history and provenance. The catalogue authors mention no collectors with the exception of a single man (Paul Kane on his journey of 1846-48) and, with few exceptions, does not identify objects with a place of origin other than the language. The catalogue lists five spoons that are noted as being collected at Fort Simpson but it does not state what group may have produced them. Other communities are not mentioned nor are local affiliations made except a single reference to

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12 Satov compared the changes in Sotheby’s and Christie’s catalogues over three decades. Sotheby’s dropped such descriptive characteristics as “fine” or “rare” in the mid-1970s, Christie’s on the other hand increased their use of such terms. This trend at Christie’s coincides with the appearance of William Fagg who wanted to bring scholarship to the market.

13 There is one mention of a collected object (a chest) from the Nass River, two objects designated Tlingit but collected in Haida area, four Haida totem pole sections collected at 1- Anthony Island, three at Tanoo, one Headress collected at Alert Bay- no group association. Object 512 House Front Kwakiutl is interesting because Kitamaat is in
Kitamaat. The entries do not describe the objects’ historical uses nor describe the possible symbolic meanings. An example of an Edenshaw listing follows (1967: 82):

400
*Bowl Charles Edenshaw ATTR.*
Frog
Wood, paint, abalone inlay L. 12½
The Provincial Museum of British Columbia

The thinness of description, not simply of Edenshaw’s work but throughout the text is at odds with entries in earlier catalogues. Compare the Edenshaw entry with an example from one of Erna Gunther’s catalogue entries¹⁴.

COMB. Tlingit, Wrangell (48.3.359) A comb of yew wood, the bulk of which consists of the carved figure of a hawk. The back of the hawk is hollowed out, and between the hawk and the teeth is an eye design, which appears on both the front and the back of the comb. Charlie Tagcook carved this piece after the picture of a Wrangell comb in one of Swanton’s publications. According to Tagcook, doctors used such combs ceremonially in the treatment of patients. L 12½, W 3 5/8 in. (teeth) L 15/8 in. Collection data: Obtained from Charlie Tagcook, November 19, 1936 References: Swanton (1904-05). (1966: 469)

Gunther provides ethnological information and even some historical particulars of the object in question. In contrast the entry for Edenshaw’s bowl is spare in the extreme. The prominence of object over data focuses the reader’s attention on the beauty of the object thereby removing the piece from any social role other than ‘object in an exhibition catalogue’.

The catalogue, Art of the Northwest Coast Indian, was produced from a showing of Leonard Lasser’s collection at the Mirski Gallery opening of May 12, 1972. LePage’s catalogue nicely illustrates the differences in orientations of public museums and commercial art galleries alluded to above. The exhibit was titled, “The Ethnographic Art of the North American Indian and Eskimo, featuring The Northwest Coast Indian Collection and Paintings of American Indians...By the Indians Themselves and Other Fine Painters of the Old West”. Although the word ‘ethnographic’ occurs in the title, little attempt has been made in this catalogue to provide

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¹⁴ I selected this entry for its depth as a means to starkly contrast those entries found in The Arts of the Raven. While most other catalogue entries at this time did not include this amount of information virtually all contained more details than those given by Duff, Holm and Reid.
ethnographic information. Yet, the catalogue provides at least as much information on the objects as found in *The Arts of the Raven* and even more for many pieces. While LePage does not furnish provenance and collection history for most of the pieces, I think that by mentioning tribes or sub-groups within a language group for some of the pieces, he does manage to break up the coast somewhat from earlier monolithic constructs through finer distinctions between groups. This kind of specific information may have worked to increase the value of the objects. As Satov suggests, one of the means of reifying the art market for “primitive” objects is by providing additional information to the reader. A discussion of art history and/or ethnologically interesting facts about the pieces raises the value of the “Primitive art object”. Often this additional information can be found in a footnoted section with additional references to other sources of information. Lasser draws primarily on Bruce Inverarity (1950) as a Northwest Coast authority. One of his discussions associated with a Ceremonial Pipe on page 26 says,

Inverarity’s book [#272] illustrates a large totem pole, designated “The man with the killer-whale hat” in front of Chief Shakes’ house in Wrangell. The hat and this pipe are nearly identical. This pole has been in the same location since the 1860’s undergoing restoration in the 1940’s. It probably commemorates the wresting of the killer-whale crest and the name Shakes from the Nisqa Tsimshians by the Stikine Tlingits through war in the late eighteenth century. This pipe is known to have belonged to Shakes V, who was one of the early builders of unique, fine totem poles (LePage 1972: 26).

This single entry provides more information than any of the entries in *The Arts of the Raven*. Though often lacking in detail, LePage’s descriptions do provide some ethnographic information and, unlike Duff, Holm and Reid, LePage attempts to make discrete tribal affiliation where possible. For instance this is the catalogue entry for one object,

MALE LABRETTED MASK-Tsimshian [Nisqa tribe], c. 1810-40. Painted red, black and green. Nose restoration. 8” x 10 ½”

The power and uniqueness of this mask is thought to reflect the very late white man’s contact [1825] with the inland dwelling Nisqa.

15 The word tribal was used by LePage to indicate a smaller group who shared a language, in this case Tsimshian, with other small groups. This complicates the broad language-based, territorial divisions used in “The Arts of the Raven”. 
Only about a third of these objects in the Lasser catalogue have as much detail as this but none of the listings are as bare as Duff’s or the two 1975 publications from the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia.

**Ethnography and Art**

Bill Holm’s first catalogue, *Crooked Beak of Heaven*, written for the Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum and the Henry Art Gallery in 1972, successfully blends both ethnography and artistic integrity within a single catalogue. Unlike his earlier work with Duff and Reid Holm provides detailed information on each object in the catalogue including its spiritual purpose and associated mythology, the construction of the object and how it was used or worn. The entries for each piece are extensive giving the reader a description of the piece as well as how, when and why the piece would have been used by the people it originated with. Though this publication contains only a single newly created objects it mentions many object makers. This publication humanizes the peoples of the coast by showing current photographs of various chiefs, their wives, and living and deceased carvers as well as photographs of recent dances. Though Holm was not the first author to use photographs in a catalogue, his are most effectively used. This catalogue is an excellent example of a balance between ethnographic interests and artistic analyses.

**Highlighting the Collector/Collection**

An alternative approach some catalogues from this period take to the exhibition of Northwest coast objects is the focussing on the collectors. This textual format results in the reduction of ethnological association, without detracting from the “artistic” nature of the objects’ photos. The Museum of Anthropology’s (MOA) two publications, *Indian Masterpieces from the Walter and Marianne Koerner Collection* and *Northwest Coast Indian Artifacts from the H.R. MacMillan Collection*, both extol the virtues of the collectors and celebrate the opening of the.

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16 Isaac Chapman, Charles Edenshaw, Charlie George, Hayogwis, Henry Hunt, Willie Seaweed, George Walkus, Joe Seaweed, Charlie George Sr., Jack James, Arthur Shaughnessy and Ellen Neal are some of the makers mentioned.
new museum. The format downplays the ethnological history of the objects while focussing attention on their aesthetic qualities, the skills of the collector and the museum’s own role in bringing these objects to the public’s attention. Marjorie Halpin’s article for Indian Masterpieces, skillfully introduces the reader to some of the fundamental problems of housing and showing the objects of the Other. She points to how anthropologists, curators and art historians alike struggle with the difficulties in describing these objects as ethnological “facts” that may be “read” as the display of “fine art” in galleries (Museum of Anthropology 1975:41-45).

Allen Wardell’s catalogue for the American Museum of Natural History Objects of Bright Pride (1978) takes a similar approach. This catalogue concentrates on the history of the collection itself rather than the peoples or the objects. It makes no claim as to whether First Peoples’ objects are high art or not. Unlike many catalogues of the 1970s Wardell provides more ethnographic information in his introductory sections, than any other catalogue at this time, excepting Holm (1972). Wardell stylistically, both recalls earlier catalogues and points to future emphases with his focus on the spiritual nature of the objects. The catalogues in the 1980’s and 1990’s follow some of these lines. His first six sections, ‘Masks’, ‘Textiles and Painted Hide Costumes’, ‘Rattles and Speakers’ Staffs’, ‘Shaman’s Guardian Figures’ and, ‘Shaman’s Charms’ discuss the ceremonial and spiritual nature of the First Peoples of the Northwest coast. However, his focus is the collection and not ethnographic data. He spends eight and a half pages of text discussing in detail how the collection was pulled together. The remainder of the text is brief introductions to each section, photographs of the objects and, the catalogue entries.

The catalogues of the Seventies changed the direction anthropologists and art historians took in considering the objects produced by the peoples of the Coast. The authors from this period provide new formats for future authors to follow. The catalogues of the Fifties and Sixties in the main followed an established format including sections describing “The Life of Northwest Coast Indians”, giving generalized environmental background to the area and providing additional ethnographic information in the catalogue entries. The general thinness of description
found throughout the publications of the Seventies, with the exception of Bill Holm’s Crooked Beak of Heaven, is indicative of a shift in the structure, meaning and content of Northwest Coast exhibit catalogues. These objects removed from their original social roles and distanced from cultural meaning are representatives of high art, or the genius of a collector. Taken as a whole the changes indicate a shifting from a primarily ethnology focus to an awareness of the more purely artistic qualities of these objects. The publications of the 1970s reflect the movement of Native objects to art galleries and the recognition of the master craftsman as “artist”. Gallery owners legitimized the valuation of these objects as commercially viable “art” through the inclusion of ethnological information; while, those public galleries and museums legitimized the labeling of objects as “high art” through the reduction of ethnological information.
Part III: Presenting the Artist

The changes that had taken place over the previous three decades set the stage for the third period in Northwest Coast exhibit and collection catalogues. As we have seen, the earliest set of catalogues subsumed objects within the construct of Northwest Coast culture area. This had created the sense that similar peoples produced similar objects. In addition, the writers of these catalogues conveyed an impression that the peoples of this area of the world had become extinct, assimilated or at best degenerate versions of earlier pure Natives. The catalogues of the Seventies, our second period, refuted these ideas. Objects originally shown in the Sixties as ethnological curiosities were by the Seventies exhibited as the creations of individual genius artists of the past. This reflected the shift from a purely anthropological treatment of the objects to one that was more art historical in tone. This, in turn, facilitated viewing First Nations’ objects within a Western art historical perspective. The most recent catalogues, like those of the Seventies, transverse a broad range of topics and styles. It is difficult to generalize about them given their variety. The relative unity of the earliest catalogues thus have frayed over time as curators, art historians, historians and anthropologist have come to appreciate the peoples and cultural productions of the Coast in ever more detailed, individualistic and historical terms.

The nine catalogues, produced over the period between 1980 and 1998, share certain features. All of them were quite long, averaging 156 pages. Catalogues in the Sixties averaged 94 pages while the average dropped somewhat in the Seventies to 89 pages. However, the number of objects shown is actually fewer, averaging 122 per catalogue compared to 138 objects in the Sixties and 142 objects in the Seventies. This shift in format is indicative of the significant textual changes to be found in these books. The catalogues of the last two decades have become textually dense publications which feature extended scholarly discussions by academics, often focused upon the artistic and historical backgrounds of the objects.
It is notable that the authors of the most recent catalogues are not, by and large, anthropologists but come out of fine art traditions of study. Peter Macnair prepared the text for the first catalogue with Alan L. Hoover and Kevin Neary preparing the appendices. As well, Macnair was the co-author and co-curator writing most of the text of the last catalogue with contributing a section by Robert Joseph. The Introduction was written by the senior curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Bruce Greenville. Victoria Wyatt and Aldona Jonaitis are both art historians. Steven C. Brown is an artist, curator and scholar of the Northwest Coast as is Bill Holm whose accomplishments have already been discussed. The backgrounds of the authors reflect a more general reassessment of Northwest Coast objects as forms of art, rather than as ethnological artifacts, as much or more at home in galleries than ethnological museums.

In this section, I note several recent developments. Firstly, the catalogues of 1980 to 1998 begin to pay considerable attention to the work of the currently producing Native artist, not only the pre-Contact makers. Second, the catalogues play far more attention to the details of location, in both the ethnographic and historical senses. This is represented by the increased number of names used to describe the peoples of the Coast as well as the increased discussion on the history of the territory, including the impact of colonization. Finally, many authors discuss the increasing production of art for sale to non-Natives. The catalogues of the Eighties and Nineties thus continue and expand upon certain themes of the Seventies, drawing the modern catalogues further and further away from the classical anthropological treatment found in earlier years.

**First Nations Artist and Art-Making Arrive**

Some catalogue writers prior to the 1980s noticed contemporary Aboriginal artists. As seen in Table 3, three catalogues from the Seventies, *The Arts of the Raven*, *The Crooked Beak of Heaven* and, *The Walter and Marianne Koerner Collection* and, a single catalogue from the
Sixties The Arts of a Vanished Era, showed new works by current artists. However, it was not until the Eighties and Nineties that the catalogues' curators and authors significantly highlighted the new artists and acknowledged that many "traditional" artifacts continued to be made by coastal peoples. The manner in which art was and is created became a key object of scholarly concern. We find in the catalogues extended discussions of the technical aspects of carving, painting and weaving along with intense discussions of stylistic differences between objects such as ceremonial spoons or canoes produced in different cultural traditions along the coast. And we find a great deal of attention devoted to the personal histories of the artists themselves.

The first catalogue I wish to examine, Peter Macnair (et al.'s.) The Legacy illustrates several of these themes, particularly the shift from anthropological concerns to a more purely artistic appreciation. The Legacy devotes four of its five sections to a discussion of the production of art along the Coast. Like the works in the Seventies, The Legacy looks at past artists and art making but it historically contextualizes those artists in the times around them to a far greater extent. Written by Macnair, Part Four of this book is titled, "Art and Artists in a Changing Society". Macnair provides brief descriptions of the careers of Charles Edenshaw, Charlie James, Mungo Martin and Mrs. Ellen Curley, focusing primarily on the objects they produced, where they made them and whom they made them for. Over the course of these fifty-five pages, readers are introduced to these individuals as "artists" and have the opportunity to admire their art through the illustrations that accompany the text.

In his section, "The Art Today", Macnair turns to currently producing artists, their histories both as first peoples and as students and often relatives of older "masters" of various artistic traditions. This acknowledgement of the personal dimension of the transmission of skills

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18 This catalogue was originally printed in 1971 associated with a travelling exhibit that opened in August 1971 at the British Columbia Provincial Museum in Victoria, BC. This exhibit changed over its eleven-year life span. I have included it in this section rather than the previous section as the copy used for this project was published in 1984 after the exhibit had finally ended. I was unable to find a copy of the first catalogue but comments in the 1984 edition indicate that the original show in 1971 did indeed include new works by current artists but it had greatly expanded that portion of the exhibit by 1980 (MacNair 1984: 9).
marks a significant shift. While anthropology is certainly concerned with the transmission of cultural knowledge and traditions, it tends to deal with such things at a general social level. The traditions of art history here have a better fit with the more personal associations between persons, names and skills found in First Nations families. Macnair discusses artists in terms of their cultural backgrounds, as Haida, Taltan-Tlingit, Tsimshian, Southern Kwakiutl, Westcoast and Coast Salish. He provides biographical and stylistic information as well as peer influences, distinguishing characteristics within the artists' body of work, career highlights and special contributions. Macnair's aim is to trace both genealogical influences and the direct passing of skills and knowledge from masters to apprentices.

For example, he spends three pages examining Bill Reid's history and the fact that he studied Bill Holm's 1965 work (1984: 85) and then turns to Reid's own student, Robert Davidson, focussing particularly on Davidson's sensitivity to and interest in Haida traditions of artistry.

All artists who are represented in this exhibit have ancestors who lived and participated in Northwest Coast Indian society. And all are artists who reached maturity by clearly demonstrating they understand and can execute the old forms of sculpture or two-dimensional design. And in most cases, they are artists who have significantly contributed to those aspects of surviving traditional culture which require the participation of art and artists (Macnair 1984: 85).

The transmission of knowledge as from master to apprentice resonates mutually with art history and First Nations' cultures. Students of the great artists in the Western tradition pay a great deal of attention to the movement and development of traditions within schools, as passed on from master to student. Macnair clearly understands First Nation's artistic traditions in an analogous way. For example, he discusses the Hazelton craft village of 'Ksan and its role in assisting and training many young artists (1984: 90). This 'School' of art influenced and directed the students in a similar manner as any 'School' of art will produce a body of students whose work is identifiably linked to the other students. Lying beyond these contemporary teachers and schools,
of course, are the elders and ancestors who are, from the perspective of contemporary First Nations artists, their chief muses and inspirations.

Providing biographical information on the individual artist accents individuality reflecting the acceptance of First Peoples’ objects as “art” and the people who made them as “artists”. Hoover and Neary’s Appendix II is a wonderful innovation. They alphabetically list forty artists mentioned in the text. All of the makers have associated photographs. Although there have been photographs of artists in other catalogues this is the first publication to systematically provide biographical information with included photographs. Macnair’s (et al.’s) later work *Down From the Shimmering Sky* (1998) includes a similar type of biography although he has not here include photos of the artists.

Innovative as it is, *The Legacy* is not without certain limitations. As the quote above indicates, Macnair tends to restrict his recognition of contemporary Native artists to those who are clearly working from traditional stylistic traditions (as these were defined earlier by Bill Holm). He recognises the appearance of new materials such as argillite, silver and gold, but adopts a rigid notion of style. That said, *The Legacy* presents a major innovation that has clearly influenced many of the catalogues that have followed it.

The full acceptance of First Nations’ artists as artists may be best exemplified in Dawn Hassett’s *The Arts of the Salmon People* (1981). This is the only catalogue I review in this thesis not published by a major gallery or museum. This was an exhibit at the Museum of Northern British Columbia in Prince Rupert. Following Murray Satov’s assertion (1997: 40) that less ethnographic information encourages the perception that the objects are high art, *The Arts of the Salmon People* has the least text associated with objects -- simply the title, materials and artist’s name. It stands as the only catalogue at this time that displayed only newly produced pieces created by Northwest Coast artists. This catalogue, like *The Legacy* and

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19 Except an artist known as Gwaythil who was born around 1912 with no known date of death (1984: 182).
Down from the Shimmering Sky, provides biographies of the artists at the back of the book, albeit very brief sketches. Though one of the shortest works in this period, its spare representation of the objects and their makers closely resembles the gallery catalogue later produced by William Moore and Charles Peacock, The Peacock Collection: A Collectors Vision (1988). In both catalogues the intent of representing art is no less diminished by an avoidance of in depth textual analysis.

Moore and Peacock's The Peacock Collection is, in fact, even less textually informative than The Arts of the Salmon People. Only twenty pages long, with only four dedicated to the catalogue listings, it is the shortest catalogue in the group I have examined and the one that most explicitly displays Northwest Coast objects as art in the Western sense. Its main innovation is an interview with a major Northwest Coast artist, Robert Davidson. Although other catalogues often quote Native artists, an interview invites readers to more fully identify an individual as a true “artist”. The cultural identity of the artists, however, remains important. The biographical information provided in The Arts of the Salmon People and The Peacock Collection prominently display the artists’ cultural designations next to their names under the “Participating Artists” section.

Bill Holm in all his works is the most consistent in representing First Peoples’ objects as art while honouring cultural meaning. Although Holm does not provide a biographical section, he consistently identifies the makers of objects, when that information can be found, and often provides additional background information on individual artists. His uniformity over the decades is remarkable. He has worked on many catalogues and has clearly influenced other catalogue writers. Holm, however, has shown relatively little interest in contemporary objects and artists. The Box of Daylight (1983) and Spirit and Ancestor (1987) examine materials, construction techniques and the symbolic meanings of various carvings and paintings. These two catalogues were published as celebrations of the collections at the Burke Museum and the Seattle Art Museum. Holm in both of these books spends much of the space describing the manner the
collections were amassed, acknowledging the key role played by collectors. In this regard they are similar to the publications of the Seventies. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they reflect Bill Holm’s style, including his earlier catalogue, The Crooked Beak of Heaven (1972).

**Histories and Localities**

The catalogues of the 1980s and 1990s do more than simply accept and celebrate the work of contemporary Native artists. Several catalogues now include scholarly articles on the people and places associated with artifacts. They pay much more attention to the colonial history of the region. Further, rather than presenting the cultures of the region as monolithic wholes, several of the catalogue writers now closely examine the objects themselves, making them the focus of attention, revealing local styles, individuals and histories in relation to them. The articles thus accept the objects as forms of art, rather than expressions of ethnology that can be best understood in the context of discrete local communities of art production. Overall, the account of articles in these catalogues is much more focused, less holistic and more particularistic. The authors refer to specific groups, places and names. They examine individual objects in detail, attending to stylistic differences and similarities between individuals, localities and language groups.

We can see these traits emerging in Peter Macnair (et al. ’s) *The Legacy* (1984), which I examined above. Macnair’s chapter on “Sculpture”, draws on some familiar ethnological distinctions, grouping objects in terms of large language groups: Haida, Tsimshian, Westcoast and Salish. Interestingly, however, Macnair’s meticulous examination of objects apparently leads him to fracture the old singular category “Kwakiutl” into two – southern and northern – and to add Bella Coola to the usual listing.

Victoria Wyatt takes a decidedly historical approach to objects in her *Shapes of Their Thoughts* (1984), viewing art objects as types of records of historical change. Wyatt’s assumption behind her exhibition is that Northwest Coast art is a “valuable historical resource
reflecting changes resulting from culture contact" and that "studying the process of collecting Northwest Coast Indian art provides valuable insights about relationships between Indians and newcomers after contact" (Wyatt 1984: 10). The text of the catalogue accompanies the display of the objects, with the book as a whole reading something like a history lesson. Interestingly, however, Wyatt falls back on the concept of the culture area, paying relatively little attention to the differences between peoples and places. As Table 2 indicates, she limits her description of groups to a mere seven names. She does spend a page comparing differences in settlement, trade and government policies between British Columbia and Alaska (1984: 16-17). But generally she assumes that the diverse groups on the coast experienced colonization in identical ways.

Aldona Jonaitis also places objects into a historical context by turning a scholarly focus on the collection history of the Coast. From the Land of the Totem Poles (1988) provides an in-depth examination of the collection of northwest coast ethnological artifacts now located in the American Museum of Natural History. Jonaitis discusses by whom, how and why the artifacts were collected, reflecting on the personalities involved and how they shaped attitudes towards first peoples over the course of a century of collecting. The objects in this catalogue thus serve as jumping off points for a discussion of the history of collecting in the region. This catalogue is unusual for the time as it provides little discussion on the objects as forms of artistic production.

Bill Holm's Spirit and Ancestor (1987) and The Box of Daylight, like the MOA publications in the 1970s also focus upon make collection history. Unlike Jonaitis, Holm focuses on understanding the objects in their own right. In both books, he attends to the objects and the people who produced them but the pivotal function of the catalogue texts are to reveal the objects' histories as collected pieces.

In The Box of Daylight, Holm continues to work with the old cultural area distinctions between the large coastal groups, but in the catalogue entries the objects themselves and their immediate cultural and historical contexts form his chief concern. Readers are encouraged to think about the dynamics behind the original creation of objects through scholarly reviews of
post-Contact object making, the emergence of markets for northwest coast artifacts and the influence of cultural borrowings between different groups. Holm deals with many of the same themes in *Spirit and Ancestor*.

Holm’s work is most remarkable for the attention he gives to the original location of objects. Recall that earlier catalogues such as Erna Gunther’s *Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians* (1966) or Audrey Hawthorn’s *People of the Potlatch* (1956) lumped objects with similar use, functions or associated myths together and thereby played down or ignored the cultural differences between the producing groups. Table 2, “Native Names Used by Date and Author”, reveals how authors over time increasingly demonstrated the diversity of groups on the Coast simply by supplying more names for the peoples and places where objects were and are produced. Earlier writers were certainly aware of cultural differences – Edward Malin and Erna Gunther, for instance, refer to a variety of groups – but it is only after the publication of Bill Holm’s (1983) *The Box of Daylight* that first people’s group names become discrete identifiers of current artists. Holm goes further in *Spirit and Ancestor* by extending this regional distinction to the anonymous masters by organizing objects according to linguistic and regional criteria. He provides brief histories for each language group, including consideration of colonial impacts. Finally, Holm provides background information on each object – at least the language group and, when known, the village of origin. This sensitivity to place culminates with Steve Brown’s *Native Visions*, which identifies twenty-seven First Nation groups as well as many sub-groupings.

**Art and Cultural Exchange**

*Native Visions* (1998), in a similar fashion to *The Legacy*, demonstrates the ongoing and continual legacy of art tradition on the Northwest Coast. Like so many writers during this period Steven Brown does not attempt cultural descriptions in his text but, like Holm’s works at this time, details the structure of Northwest Coast painting and modeling while embedding this in the larger history of contact and cultural change. Brown’s goal is the intimate examination of each
object to determine when and where an object was produced from painting style, carving style, line thickness and material. The changing scene of Northwest Coast object production from individual makers, materials, ability, quantity and quality of objects is contextualized through punctuated discussions of the changing social fabric of the Coast. Because Brown is looking at these objects and the traditions on the Coast he includes an important section on current artists and their places in this on-going tradition that both influences and is influenced from internal cultural change and external change.

This period’s most recent catalogue Down from the Shimmering Sky (1998) presents the clearest vision of these objects as art and their makers and artists, as well as growing scholarly interest in cultural exchange. Following trends originally found in The Arts of the Raven and further entrenched in catalogue entries of the Seventies the objects in Down From the Shimmering Sky are presented as art without social context. The descriptions per piece are minimal, limited to the town or area the piece was found/collected from. The collector was not mentioned. However, all of the catalogues from the 1980s onward have a great deal of text, and this one is no exception. Great care has been taken to provide as much historical information surrounding the Coast, its peoples, trade relations with Europeans and how all of this has impacted object production on the Coast. This is the culmination of many ideas established during this period.

Down from the Shimmering Sky explores how the first peoples’ object production is a positive, culturally savvy response to colonization that has benefited not only Natives but their colonizers. This contrasts with earlier catalogues, which rarely discussed the positive contributions of first peoples on Canadian culture. Interactions were occasionally discussed as an exchange between two cultures but more frequently viewed as the cultural decimation of one people by another. Macnair (et al.) treated the peoples of the Coast as having goals and agendas of their own when dealing with Europeans. Like Bill Holm (1987) and Victoria Wyatt (1984), Macnair (et al.) devote textual space to discussing the interaction between European markets and
Coastal object production. While not directly focussing on cultural exchange and the experiences of colonization, Peter Macnair’s section does address the cultural exchange and artistic renaissance the presence of non-Natives had on the Coast. For example, he discusses how European centers such as Fort McLoughlin in Heiltsuk territory encouraged exchange of artistic styles between First Peoples (1998: 47). This, however, is secondary to his interest in the sale of objects crafted for the tourist trade. These two ideas are complementary and indicate two of the new directions many anthropologists and art historians are taking when looking at indigenous responses to colonization around the globe.

The catalogue authors of the latter period eliminated impressions of cultural death implied in earlier catalogues through textual discussions and by highlighting of currently producing artists. Most of the catalogues published through the Eighties and Nineties, accept that first peoples’ old and newly produced objects are art, identify makers as individuals from a specific group, and imbed ethnic identity in local difference and the unique circumstances of smaller communities. Though most of the catalogues still include anthropological contributions, the incorporation of art historians, historians, and the voices of first peoples themselves demonstrates new ways of looking at, thinking about, and writing about the objects.
Part IV: Museum Policy Changes and Issues of Representation

This part of the thesis reveals how the ideals of “partnership” and “co-management” of “cultural resources” are replacing paternalistic patterns of exhibition and catalogue design. The changes noted herein proceed from the dynamic interchanges between first peoples and scholars. This horizontal relationship between Northwest Coast scholars and First Nation individuals results in catalogues that reveal these objects as treasured by not only anthropologists as cultural signifiers or art historians as finely crafted examples of high art but also, by cultural representatives as living objects of cultural continuity.

With these changes come complex problems relating to the representation of first peoples within Western institutions. Museums and galleries are weighted political spaces with historical ties to colonialism and assimilation. The old objects have power and history and, a multitude of competing voices asserting divergent viewpoints on how to best displayed them (if at all). Questions of ownership and honour demand compromises from the families, First Nations groups, museums and governments with different claims to the objects. Moreover, newly made objects are accompanied with problems relating to traditionalism as well as questions of rights and ownership of images and stories within Native communities. All pieces, whether already in a museum or newly crafted, demand that those involved ask several questions: where should the objects be housed, who represents them, by what right does any institution or individual own them?

Museum Policy - Meeting the Particulars

The transformation in catalogue entries, structure and content are some of the on-going results of changes in attitudes, academic theories, power balances and interests between the key players in catalogue construction. Several important policy and procedural changes have occurred within museums over the last twenty-five years, in many cases as a direct result of the actions of First Nations groups. Some examples of these newly implemented policies are the

Many Canadian museum policy changes have recently been implemented in policy procedures resulting, in part, from Native opposition to the way museums relate to indigenous peoples and their cultural objects. One of the primary papers guiding museum policy in Canada, “The Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples” (1992), exists as a response to Native (in this case the Lubicon Cree and other indigenous supporters) opposition to an exhibit of Native objects entitled, “The Spirit Sings”.

The Lubicon boycotted the exhibit put on by the Glenbow Museum to accompany the Calgary Olympics in 1987. The protest had two principal objections. Firstly, the Lubicon rejected the exhibit’s focus on past lifeways of Natives in Canada. It was felt within the Native community that the Museum should inform the public on the current problems the Lubicon were facing with land rights and self-definition. Secondly, a significant issue for many Lubicon was the sponsorship of Shell Oil for the museum. This company, along with other oil multinationals, was in the midst of a struggle to obtain mineral rights on land the Lubicon claim as part of their pre-contact territory. It was felt by many that Shell was attempting to promote a positive public image, demonstrating indigenous sympathy, while trying to railroad Lubicon sovereignty and that Glenbow was being insensitive to Lubicon concerns (Goddard 1991).

Reacting directly to the Lubicon boycott of “The Spirit Sings”, the Assembly of First

20 The Lubicon are a Cree band from Northern Alberta. They gained international attention in the 1980s for their difficulty in maintaining reserve land. Canadian governmental definition of status Lubicon Cree declared there to be only nine members, while Lubicon self-definition declared 506 members (Goddard 1991: 197). For an in-depth look at these issues from the Lubicon Cree perspective see Goddard (1991) and for a discussion from the museum perspective
Nations (AFN) under then National Chief Georges Erasmus invited the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) to co-sponsor a symposium (Hill and Nicks 1992: 81). This groundbreaking conference was titled “Preserving Our Heritage: A Working Conference Between Museums and First Peoples”. This meeting lead to the formation of a joint taskforce between the AFN and the CMA. The mission statement of the Taskforce was to, “develop an ethical framework and strategies for Aboriginal Nations to represent their history and culture in concert with cultural institution” (AFN and CMA: 1992). This symposium resulted in a consultation that identified Native and museum concerns including: partnership with cultural and object interpretation; Native access to the collections and information; guidelines for the repatriation of cultural patrimony and human remains; training for Natives as museum professionals; and, the encouragement of federal officials to fund the CMA and AFN’s recommendations. These suggestions are summed-up in “The Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples” (1992).

Applying the Ideals

Down from the Shimmering Sky

21 The most recently published catalogue examined in this thesis was the first exhibit of Northwest Coast objects to occur after the publication of the taskforce’s recommendations. This exhibit catalogue has met the ideals and guidelines put forth by the AFN and CMA. The ideal of “partnership” was expressed in this exhibit through a three-member curatorial team representing anthropology, First Peoples and art history. The Vancouver Art Gallery invited Peter Macnair, an anthropologist and Robert Joseph, a member of the

see Grant and Blundell (1992).

21 The text of this catalogue included articles by the three curators. Bruce Greenville wrote a brief introduction explicating the desire of the gallery to produce a “hybrid project that acknowledged the social and historical context for the production and use of the masks while at the same time documenting their aesthetic and conceptual evolution from the time of first contact with Europeans to the present”(1998: 14-15). Robert Joseph wrote a much longer section describing his memories of dancing the masks as a boy during the anti-potlatch years. He emphasized the centrality and power of the masks and the continuity of past and present. Much of the textual space in the book is devoted to exploring cosmology on the Coast with reference to variations between groups. Peter MacNair takes on the task of describing the objects themselves using the four components of the Cosmos, the Sky World, the Undersea World, the Mortal World and the Spirit World as a means of ordering the objects. He is drawing on a cosmological construct that was, according to him, shared on the Coast. He also spends several pages describing how adaptable and ingenious Coastal peoples were to develop tourist art for trade at the time of contact.

22 This ideal, involving first peoples in the entire process of creating a museum exhibit, while not entrenched in
Kwakwaka’wakw Nation to co-curate the exhibit with senior curator Bruce Greenville. The partnership did not end there. The curators sought additional advice from representatives of the Tlingit, Nisga’a, Gitxsan, Tsimshian, Haida, Heiltsuk, Nuxalk, Kwakwaka’wakw, Nuu-chah-nulth, Makah and the Coast Salish Nations. They sent a special thank you to “the Musqueam people, our hosts for this exhibition” (1998: 8). The acknowledgement by a public institution of the priority of the local first peoples, though not unprecedented, has never been so clearly accepted. The consultation with first peoples on an exhibit stands in contrast to the frequently dismissive writings of thirty years earlier. This attests to both Native political strength and to the commitment by art galleries and museums to honour indigenous peoples throughout the world.

Representing the Objects

With the ideals of the taskforce to guide those involved, agreement between descendants of the original masters and the museum staff have a better chance to display objects in a manner acceptable by all. However, not all voices within the artistic and Native communities agree on how best to show (or not show) the older objects. The incorporation of First Nations’ perspectives in the museum process poses several problems of representation. Firstly, while validating (for the public) Native identities, opinions and culture, the placement of “cultural objects” within a museum or gallery implies compliance with Western perspectives surrounding the function of these objects as high art, “the meaning of art is determined by its context” (Ames: 71). The removal of these old objects from their cultural context and the resultant recontextualization within the museum or gallery threatens to transform them into “Western” objects and “tourist attractions” authenticated by the museum. Conversely, “confining an artistic tradition to its original setting, and requiring this context to always be a part of our understanding inhibits a work of art from developing that transcendence which is a hallmark of

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23 These meanings are dependent on the space. The impressions of the public take on different meaning if the gallery or museum is on reserve land or is a cultural center. With the exception of Dawn Hassett’s, The Arts of the Salmon People, the catalogues used in this thesis are from non-Native galleries and museums.
all great achievements and makes it difficult to judge a work according to general standards of aesthetics" (Ames 1992:72). Unfortunately, as Mike Ames points out, “there is no one insider perspective, no one orthodoxy. Views are continuing to evolve, to reformulate, as times change and as generations of elders come and go” (1992: 56, emphasis in original). This issue remains a problem within Native communities for newer as well as older objects; there are as many different opinions as people. How should these old and new objects be labeled and aesthetically judged? By whose authority and aesthetics are the pieces to be understood?

Funding also affects the display of first peoples’ objects within a public and frequently government institutions. The objects are as subject to market forces as the museum itself. Once within public space the pieces may take on new meanings including the marketing of First Nations’ cultures as a commodity where the standard currency is spectacle. At the same time, federal funding for museums has sharply declined. Institutions have been obligated to seek outside funding through corporate sponsors. One possibility arising from this financial need, unpalatable for first peoples and museums alike, is that the objects may function as marketing tools for multinational companies wishing to promote a certain image to the public, as in the case of Shell Oil with the Lubicon. A further point of pressure derives from the fact that exhibits are designed to draw and please diverse publics acceding some power to the public over the museum enterprise, the institution’s purpose and its collections (Ames 1992: 21). The needs of the public to view what they wish to see and, the determination of a museum’s success by its attendance figures, partly guide what first peoples’ objects are shown and how they are displayed.

**The Catalogues Ahead: Future Trends**

While many changes in the catalogues have taken place over the four decades covered in this thesis, the changes are not over. As museums and galleries continue to display Northwest Coast art, both older pieces and newer pieces, the challenges set forth by the Taskforce will provide structure to how objects are displayed. The use of First Nation’s voices during the
curatorial process will open up new visions of the objects as First Nations' cultural aesthetics' guide the exhibit process.

Several challenges will direct future exhibits. Given many of the difficulties in tracing the ownership of stories and objects on the Coast, along with the onus being on the institution to seek the truth, I suspect there will be fewer and fewer displays of older objects and an increase in the display of currently made objects. Honouring the voice of cultural representatives those politicians, artists, family heads and descendents who share ownership of the object or story will challenge museum bureaucracies by complicating preparations for exhibitions. The sheer cost of creating a public display has been raised considerably for museums and galleries wishing to follow Taskforce ideals. The less costly avenue open is to show only those pieces made by living artists.

Given the highly individualized spiritual traditions of the many cultural groups it is logical that exhibits not be about "the Northwest Coast" but instead represent specific cultural groups such as the Coast Salish. Galleries will thus probably focus more on smaller local groups as opposed to attempting to represent the entire Coast under a single theme.

Following some of the trends in the most recently published catalogues, I expect there will be less said about pre-Contact cultures. "The Spirit Sings" boycott clearly stated the determination of indigenous groups to speak for themselves about current issues. I would expect to see further discussions of current cultural practices and belief systems and, how these merge and diverge from mainstream Canadian culture. Furthermore given the attempt of museums to represent the peoples of the Coast in the best possible light I suspect that discussions surrounding spirituality and healing will become prevalent- more so than the ideas of cultural exchange and the tourist trade. This necessitates an increase in the role of spiritual specialists from whichever group is being exhibited. Again this demands that the exhibits focus on a single group.

This thesis has been limited to a review of catalogues in North America. Further research could be extended through a similar study of catalogues produced in Europe. There are
wonderful collections held the world over as the scramble for Northwest Coast objects during the
Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries saw European explorers pick up souvenirs of their
travels. The examination of these overseas collections and accompanying catalogues would
allow us to assess the ways that local anthropological and artistic traditions have shaped the
representation of Northwest Coast artifacts. It would be of particular interest to know whether
European catalogues have gone through a similar evolution to those examined here, given the
physical distance from First Nations audiences.
Conclusion

In this thesis I have chronologically traced several areas of change in exhibit catalogues of Northwest Coast art produced over a forty-nine year period. Catalogue writers represented these objects and their makers in very different ways over the years. The earliest catalogues reflect the anthropological concepts of culture area and the salvage anthropology models. While overtly the culture area model has been dropped over the years, the raison d'etre for the inclusion of specific objects in all catalogues has been an agreement between those involved that they are "Northwest Coast objects". Therefore, to meet the basic need of delimiting object inclusion exhibit and collection, those who construct catalogues continue to draw to some extent upon the culture area concept. Initial theoretical models found in the early catalogues have diversified over time as the objects have been accepted as "art", not ethnology, and their makers as "artists", not craftspeople. Though actual numbers of catalogues produced in North America have declined over the decades the cross-disciplinary approach used in the more recent catalogues has drawn the talents of first peoples, anthropologists, art historians, curators and, historians together resulting in the intensely interesting catalogues of the Eighties and Nineties.

With the publishing of Bill Holm's Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form in 1965 indigenous objects were subjected to more than an ethnological gaze. It was now possible to see the highly individualistic characteristics of design implemented by specific first peoples and the distinctive styles of individual artists. Following closely on the heels of this book was the publication of the Vancouver Art Gallery's, The Arts of the Raven, which elevated these objects to "high art". This impression generated by the writings of anthropologists intent on salvaging "traditional" ways of life denied the cultural continuity of indigenous peoples. The future of this denial was a weakening of anthropology's role in the discussions on the art and objects created on the Coast both past and present. Duff, Holm and Reid's inclusion of new objects in their exhibit showed that artists were continuing to produce the highly valued art of their cultures.
It was obvious by the 1970s that earlier fears of cultural demise were not warranted. The catalogues demonstrated the resolve of scholars to place older Native objects firmly in the realm of art. However, apart from The Arts of the Raven, the focus remained on old objects. The aesthetic valuation of newly created objects was neglected, while value was being accorded to objects created by "masters". The establishment of both old and new objects as art was accomplished in two ways depending on the institution. Art galleries drew upon ethnological interest in their catalogue entries while museums went in the opposite direction, downplaying ethnological facts presenting sparse entries. The 1980s welcomed both newly produced art—often gallery commissioned—and the artist, into the publications which now included biographies of individual artists. The catalogues, while reducing the numbers of objects shown, greatly added scholarly information on topics such as cultural contacts, cosmological meanings, individual experiences, cultural exchanges, tourist trade networks and specific histories. These changes detailed in this thesis result from museum relinquishment of the power to inform the mainstream public on the role of Native objects to First Peoples themselves. Along with this shift has come an increasing interest in exploring cross-disciplinary insights into indigenous artifacts and art. As a result of such shifts, Northwest coastal objects are no longer merely ethnological artifacts, nor simply art. They are this but also represent the living heritage of First Nations and the promise of their future. Once we recognize the tangled and complex meanings associated with these objects we have to conclude that the possibilities for future explorations, in the form of museum exhibitions and catalogues, are endless.
References


Gunther, Erna 1962a. Indian Art of the Northwest Coast. La Jolla: La Jolla Art Center.


Appendix: Tables

Table 1. Distribution of Objects in the Catalogues by Group.
This table gives object provenance. This serves dual function of demonstrating collection emphasis on objects created by northern groups as well as demonstrating relative interest on listing objects as originating with a language group or smaller local group.

| 10  | 12| 14| 16| 18| 20| 22| 24| 26| 28| 30| 32| 34| 36| 38| 40| 42| 44| 46| 48| 50| 52| 54| 56| 58| 60| 62| 64| 66| 68| 70| 72| 74| 76| 78| 80| 82| 84| 86| 88| 90| 92| 94| 96| 98| 100|
| 2  | 4| 6| 8| 10| 12| 14| 16| 18| 20| 22| 24| 26| 28| 30| 32| 34| 36| 38| 40| 42| 44| 46| 48| 50| 52| 54| 56| 58| 60| 62| 64| 66| 68| 70| 72| 74| 76| 78| 80| 82| 84| 86| 88| 90| 92| 94| 96| 98| 100|
| 2  | 4| 6| 8| 10| 12| 14| 16| 18| 20| 22| 24| 26| 28| 30| 32| 34| 36| 38| 40| 42| 44| 46| 48| 50| 52| 54| 56| 58| 60| 62| 64| 66| 68| 70| 72| 74| 76| 78| 80| 82| 84| 86| 88| 90| 92| 94| 96| 98| 100|
| 2  | 4| 6| 8| 10| 12| 14| 16| 18| 20| 22| 24| 26| 28| 30| 32| 34| 36| 38| 40| 42| 44| 46| 48| 50| 52| 54| 56| 58| 60| 62| 64| 66| 68| 70| 72| 74| 76| 78| 80| 82| 84| 86| 88| 90| 92| 94| 96| 98| 100|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A= Tlingit</th>
<th>M= Oweekeeno</th>
<th>Z= Makah</th>
<th>AL= Combined24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B= Taku Tlingit</td>
<td>N= Northern Wakashan</td>
<td>AA= Cowichan</td>
<td>AM= Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C= Chilkat</td>
<td>O= Kwakwakw'waka</td>
<td>AB= Snulquami</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D= Tenakee</td>
<td>P= Northern Kwakiutl</td>
<td>AC= Twana (Skokomish)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>E= Haida</td>
<td>Q= Southern Kwakiutl</td>
<td>AD= Haihais</td>
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<td>F= Kaigani Haida</td>
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<td>AE= Westcoast (Nuu-chah-nuulth)</td>
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<td>AF= Nitinat</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>H= Gitxan</td>
<td>T= Coast Salish</td>
<td>AG= Carrier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>U= Fraser River Salish</td>
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<td>W= Puget Sound Salish</td>
<td>AI= Cree</td>
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<tr>
<td>K= Nuxalk</td>
<td>X= Nisqually</td>
<td>AJ= Unidentified by group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L= Heiltsuk</td>
<td>Y= Quinault</td>
<td>AK= Unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 This indicates the object was labeled as belonging to two groups such as Haida and Tsimshian. In the latter catalogues this was explained as the maker had a combined heritage such as Tahltan-Tlingit. However, it was not indicated if this were the case in the early catalogues.
Table 2. Native Names Used by Date and Author

This table indicates changing use of First Nations’ proper names. The labeling of objects by language group or local cultural group is one indicator of the relative strength of the culture area model in catalogue production. As can be seen, over time, the authors have generally expanded the number of names they use when indicating which group an object originated with. This shows three possibilities. One, that the artists are consulted in self-labeling. Two, that over time scholars are now able to specify which group an object originated with. And three, the culture area model does not adequately provide a framework for the objects of the Coast.

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Table 3. Distribution of Old/New Objects

Within this table one can trace the changing perspectives in the catalogues. The absence or presence of newly made objects indicates one or more interests on the part of the catalogue. Firstly it may indicate the relative number of newly made objects accessible to the institutions and collectors. Two, it may indicate relative value accorded both old and new objects over time. Third, the presence or absence of new objects indicates the preference of an individual collector.

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