

En somme, l'auteur a effectué une excellente biographie sociale de son personnage pour lequel il a toutefois été clément, sans doute par empathie, par rapport à certaines de ses actions moins avisées comme son conflit d'intérêt potentiel concernant le contrat de construction accordé à son frère par les commissaires de la CECM, son cumul de fonctions et de salaires auprès d'un même employeur et, enfin, sa pension perçue comme ancien enseignant alors qu'il était encore à l'emploi de la CECM.  
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***Enlightened Zeal: The Hudson's Bay Company and Scientific Networks, 1670–1870.*** By Ted Binnema. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. 488 p., notes, ill., bibl. ISBN 978-1-44261-47-58, \$37.95.

In his introduction to *Enlightened Zeal*, Ted Binnema notes that there has to date been no comprehensive treatment of science undertaken in the context of the chartered monopolies. This broad survey of science in the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), specifically of the science that made it to outside recipients and the public domain, is an attempt to put that right, and the HBC is a perfect subject, given the extensive surviving archive on which Binnema draws.

Binnema's central argument is that 'the HBC's large contributions to science were made possible by the development of extensive networks that linked metropolitan and elite scientists, company directors, and HBC officers in North America (and to a lesser extent, HBC labourers and aboriginal people) in mutually beneficial and satisfying relationships' (xvi). The narrative identifies three broad periods. In its first century, the HBC made scant contribution to public knowledge and could even be a barrier to the dissemination of information. Minor exceptions came in efforts to locate the Northwest Passage and the work of individuals such as Christopher Middleton. This changed after the company became involved in the scientific activities surrounding the 1769 Transit of Venus. Henceforth, being seen to collaborate in scientific undertakings—exploration, surveying, cartography, and the observational sciences (astronomy, meteorology, natural history and ethnology)—became important to the company and its public image. This might include facilitating travel, collecting and transporting specimens, and allowing or encouraging company officers to participate.

A second turning point came with the merger with

the North West Company in 1821, ending decades of fierce territorial competition. Thereafter, the HBC and its officers productively collaborated and fed into European and American scientific discussions. The company supported Royal Navy explorations into the Arctic and in search of the Northwest Passage, as well as launching its own expeditions, including those of John Rae. It joined the "magnetic crusade," helping Toronto become an important scientific node following the foundation of the Magnetical and Meteorological Observatory. It also supported Paul Kane's attempts to document "western Indians" and the collecting activities of the Smithsonian Institution, which became the foremost repository of scientific knowledge about HBC territories.

Binnema is keen to emphasise throughout that "science is driven by interests" (294), with those of the HBC focusing on corporate image in its attempts to combat ongoing hostility towards monopolies. In this context, scientific practitioners' published praise for the company's support could be more powerful than any lobbying or advertising. Scientific collaboration could, however, be a double-edged sword: come the nineteenth century, the HBC found itself embroiled in the expansionist movements developing in America and Canada.

*Enlightenment Zeal* has much to say about the history of Canadian science and the emergence of Canadian national identity, and about broader themes too: commercial interest as a driver, and concomitant arguments for sharing or hoarding knowledge; the tension between exploration and science on expeditions purporting to undertake both; the importance of individual (rather than corporate) interest and participation. On this last point, Binnema notes that, "[s]cientific networks were maintained by the self-interest of the many that were involved in their intricate connections, but really flourished when sophisticated and empathetic scientists stirred the scientific enthusiasm of lay collectors" (289). He also notes that HBC territories were generally conducive to science: relatively free of disease, with a climate that was not too problematic for deploying instruments, and which provided an ideal laboratory for low-temperature investigations.

This is self-consciously a big picture narrative, with Binnema citing John Pickstone's *Ways of Knowing* (University of Chicago Press, 2000) in support. With this in mind, I felt that the narrative could more explicitly acknowledge the ways in which scientific practice changed over the period covered. Doing science in the late seventeenth