

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Rethinking Colonial Pasts  
through Archaeology*

Neal Ferris, Rodney Harrison,  
and Michael V. Wilcox, editors

Oxford: Oxford University Press,  
2014. 528 pp. £100.00 cloth.

DOUGLAS E. ROSS  
*Simon Fraser University*

*Rethinking Colonial Pasts through Archaeology* is an important and well crafted synthesis by leading scholars, marking a coming of age for the archaeology of Indigenous peoples in colonial settler societies. To some extent, the title misrepresents the volume's explicit focus on colonized peoples, but this is a conscious choice by the editors. They find "archaeology of the colonized" a problematic concept and feel the book's broad themes warrant the more inclusive title.

This edited volume has twenty substantive chapters, bookended by an introduction plus two brief commentaries and an afterword. It does not claim to be comprehensive, and the majority of authors are based in the United States, with many chapters having a US focus,

while other contributions address topics pertaining to Canada, Africa (Mozambique, Uganda), the Caribbean (Jamaica, Dominica), Australia, and Ireland. Its objective is to present a synthesis of current theoretical trends and contemporary research on the archaeology of the colonized, and to highlight the value of revisionist approaches in decolonizing our understanding of the past. As such, contributors seek to highlight the relevance of their research to descendant communities and the wider field of archaeology.

The book is divided into four sections: (1) contemporary issues in the archaeology of Indigenous-European interactions; (2) case studies on colonial landscapes, communities, households, and identities; (3) examples of marginalized groups facing challenges similar to those of Indigenous peoples; and (4) studies seeking to reframe the conceptual basis of the field and situate archaeology within contemporary political contexts and global discourses. Central themes unifying the chapters include a colonized-centric view of the colonial process, comparative studies of everyday life across time and space, and reflexive challenges to essentialized colonial categories and dichotomies like "Indigenous" and "European" that define this field of study.

In their introduction, Ferris and colleagues argue that archaeologists studying the recent past, where colonial narratives are still playing out, face particular conceptual and methodological challenges. These include the conceptualization of “culture” and “identity,” which, when examined using different scales and datasets, can appear both fluid and fixed. They identify “archaeology of the colonized” as a distinct subfield within the discipline of historical archaeology, which initially emerged in the Americas and Australia to fill a conceptual gap between archaeologies of the pre- and postcontact periods, but which has since united researchers worldwide grappling with similar challenges in conducting archaeology in colonial settler societies.

Although issues addressed in this book have relevance beyond the field of historical archaeology, the text contains disciplinary and theoretical language throughout, and the primary audience is clearly an academic one. Furthermore, while there is some discussion of Indigenous archaeology in Africa in the chapter by Paul Lane, a volume of this scope, with its emphasis on decolonization, could benefit from more explicitly Indigenous voices and perspectives on the contemporary practice of archaeology as it relates to colonized populations.

Of particular relevance to readers of *BC Studies* are chapters by Jeff Oliver and Andrew Martindale. Oliver develops an innovative approach to human agency that moves away from domination-resistance models towards a comparative framework that explores how Indigenous responses to colonialism varied over time, space, and the nature of colonial authority. He presents three case studies from Metlakatla, Kimsquit, and the Fraser Valley to show how agency is evident in aspects of everyday

lived experience, including domestic architecture, mortuary customs, and agricultural practices. Martindale draws on recent BC court decisions to present an important examination of the problematic role of archaeology in Aboriginal right and title cases. He argues that courts use outdated and essentialized models of culture taken from the archaeological literature in order to undermine Indigenous efforts to demonstrate the antiquity of their cultural practices, and he urges archaeologists to develop updated models of culture that challenge this normative approach.

By and large, the remaining chapters are equally thoughtful, and anyone researching the “archaeology of the colonized,” or, for that matter, the “archaeology of colonialism,” would do well to have a copy of this book close at hand.



*Native Peoples of the Olympic Peninsula: Who We Are*  
(2nd edition)

Jacilee Wray, editor for Olympic Peninsula Intertribal Cultural Advisory Committee

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015. 201 pp. US\$19.95 paper.

*The Sea Is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs*

Joshua L. Reid

New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015. xvi+400 pp. US\$40.00 cloth.

ALAN D. McMILLAN  
*Simon Fraser University*

WATERWAYS SUCH as the Strait of Juan de Fuca were vital transportation corridors for the First Nations of the coast. People regularly traversed the strait in their large efficient canoes for trading or raiding expeditions or to visit relatives. However, the 1846 imposition of the international boundary down the middle of the strait placed these formerly linked communities into either British or American jurisdictions, disrupting long-established networks. The Klallam near Victoria fell on the opposite side of the border to that of the three Klallam (or S'Klallam) communities on the Olympic Peninsula. The Makah, who made frequent open-ocean canoe voyages to their Nuu-chah-nulth, Ditidaht, and Pacheedaht relatives along the west coast of Vancouver Island, found themselves separated from their kin as well as cut off from important marine resources. Strong

cultural connections still exist across the strait, from both the British Columbia and Washington sides.

The Indigenous peoples of the Olympic Peninsula are introduced in the book edited by anthropologist Jacilee Wray for the Olympic Peninsula Intertribal Cultural Advisory Committee. This slender volume provides brief descriptions of the nine separate tribal communities on the Olympic Peninsula today. Eight different languages, from three distinct linguistic families, were once spoken in this region, attesting to its cultural diversity. Most belong to the widespread Salish family, as is also true on the BC side of the border. The exceptions are the Makah, closely linked to the people of western Vancouver Island, and the distinct Quileute and Hoh peoples. Each community is the subject of a chapter written by community members and reviewed by tribal councils. As a result, the chapters present tribal perspectives on their history and on those issues that are important to them today. Chapters follow a similar format, starting with an overview of the traditional culture and historic changes and then dealing with the reservation communities today, including heritage programs and visitor attractions (such as tribal museums). Shared experiences, such as the impact of the treaties signed between 1854 and 1856, run through the chapters, yet each also presents issues distinct and important to that community. Cultural traditions remain strong today, with many communities establishing heritage centres and language programs, although few speakers of the traditional languages remain.

*Native Peoples of the Olympic Peninsula* was first published in 2002. The second edition, with a different publisher, adds recent developments. Removal of two major dams on the Lower Elwha River, completed in 2014, allowed salmon to

again ascend the river and provided the Klallam access to culturally important locations for the first time in a century. Another important event for the Lower Elwha Klallam was the discovery and excavation of an ancient village at Port Angeles during a construction project, although digging came to a halt when numerous human remains were encountered. After negotiations, a portion of the site was allocated for reburials and a museum was constructed to display the artefacts and to promote cultural heritage. Another new theme in several chapters is the resurgence of “canoe culture” and the large-scale canoe journeys involving multiple communities from around the Olympic Peninsula to far up the BC coast. Despite these additions, however, most chapters have been only lightly revised and some appear almost unchanged. The Makah section provides precise numbers for the on-reservation and enrolled populations, yet these figures remain as they were in the 2002 version.

This book’s strength is in providing a concise introduction to each of the area’s Indigenous communities, showing unique features as well as the common threads of history and culture. It is addressed to the non-specialist reader, with the goal of combating romanticized and generalized stereotypes. Although it succeeds in this goal, those who own the first edition may have little incentive to purchase the second.

Joshua Reid’s *The Sea Is My Country* is a much larger, more scholarly effort, focused on one group, the Makah, around Cape Flattery at the northwest corner of the Olympic Peninsula. Reid, an assistant professor of history and director of the Native American Program at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, is an enrolled member of the Snohomish Tribe of Puget Sound. He examines Makah history from the first appearance

of European and Euro-American fur traders in Makah waters to their ongoing struggles to maintain their maritime culture and identity. The approach is that of an academic historian, presenting the results of extensive archival research in considerable detail, ending with ninety pages of endnotes and references.

One theme that runs through this volume is the idea of the Makah “borderlands,” extending from northern Vancouver Island to the Columbia River mouth. Front and back maps show the Makah within this wider world. Networks of regular contact, kin ties, trade, and competing interests linked the various people of the “borderlands.” These networks were in place at the time of first contact with outsiders in the late eighteenth century. Tatoosh, the powerful chief of the Cape Flattery area, was linked by marriage to Nuuchah-nulth chiefs Maquinna and Wickaninish, and made regular visits to western Vancouver Island. Networks of communication allowed chiefs to keep tabs on the movement of European ships and to exert some control over the trade. The more powerful of these chiefs were able to dominate their neighbours and to control the flow of goods over a wide area. During the maritime fur trade, Tatoosh appears to have dominated the Pacheedaht on Vancouver Island, much as Wickaninish subjugated groups as far south as Barkley Sound. These chiefs were the primary historical actors of the period, controlling and contesting marine and terrestrial spaces and thereby frustrating the imperial agendas of European mariners.

The second pervasive theme involves the management and control of marine space and resources. The Makah name for themselves translates as “The People of the Cape” (“Makah” is a mid-nineteenth-century term taken from their Klallam neighbours). Cape Flattery, jutting into

the Pacific Ocean at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, provided access to a vast marine space. Fishing, sealing, and whaling, central activities to Makah economy and identity, took them far offshore on a regular basis. Reid takes the title of this book from a Makah leader's statement at the time of their treaty signing: "I want the sea. That is my country" (126). This concern with marine space runs through Reid's examination of Makah history.

Well into the nineteenth century, Makah leaders were able to maintain considerable autonomy and prosperity. The Makah sold whale oil to ships passing Cape Flattery and travelled to Fort Victoria to sell furs, fish, and oil. However, the 1846 imposition of the international border disrupted the long-standing network of connections. In 1855, the Makah signed a treaty that established their reservation and led to increased outside control. In addition to fishing rights, the Makah successfully demanded that their whaling and sealing rights be recognized in their treaty, again showing their concern with the sea as the source of their livelihood. Reid documents in considerable detail Makah participation in the fishing and pelagic sealing industries, noting that many prominent Makah individuals acquired their own vessels in order to compete effectively. Overharvesting by commercial interests, however, depleted whale, seal, and fish populations that the Makah had relied upon for millennia, and government regulations increasingly restrained Makah use of traditional resources. By the end of the century, the Makah had lost much of their economic independence.

Through ongoing legal and political struggles, the Makah continue to assert claims to traditional marine space and resources. The courts have become the battleground of recent decades, and the

Makah have had some success in forcing recognition of treaty rights to marine resources. Their successful whale hunt in 1999, featured at several points in both books under review, was a significant event. Although it drew strong criticism and new legal barriers, it demonstrated Makah determination to reclaim their identity and traditional use of marine space. The Makah have maintained strong social and cultural ties to their Vancouver Island kin, although they now require passports to cross what was once their major transportation corridor. As is evident from both books, studies of the Makah and their neighbours require a broad perspective that encompasses their wide network of connections, despite the imposition of the international border late in their history.

*The Grand Hall: First Peoples of  
Canada's Northwest Coast*

Leslie Tepper

Gatineau: Canadian Museum of  
History, 2014. 108 pp. \$9.95 paper.

*Treasures of the Royal British  
Columbia Museum and Archives*

Jack Lohman, compiler

Victoria: Royal British Columbia  
Museum, 2015. 144 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

HANNAH TURNER  
*University of Toronto*

THESE TWO volumes present an impressive view of Canadian museology as it has evolved over the past thirty years. Leslie Tepper's *The Grand Hall*, an updated and revised version of Andrea Laforet's *The Book*

of the Grand Hall (1992), is a popular and accessible guide to the spectacular Grand Hall at the Canadian Museum of History (CMH), featuring the people and traditions of the Northwest Coast culture area and incorporating Aboriginal art practices and intellectual contributions in the built form of an exhibit space. A massive immersive exhibit, the Grand Hall contributes to scholarly and popular perceptions of the art and architecture of the Pacific coast – despite being over forty-five hundred kilometres away. With new additions of text, images, and contributing voices, *The Grand Hall* documents the historical origins of this space and welcomes First Nations voices to the descriptions of the CMH collection, for example, that of Meghann O'Brien, the Haida-Kwakwaka'wakw-Irish textile artist, who describes her experience as a weaver. O'Brien foregrounds the materiality of bark in her weaving, and Tepper, by pairing her story with an image of a basket in the CMH collection, presents a cultural history of berry-picking that is brought alive through reading the object (64). These short but necessary stories make this a useful guide to the CMH collections.

While *The Grand Hall* contributes invaluable contextual information about exhibit development, which is any museum's necessary outer facade, the second volume documents aspects of museum work that take place behind the scenes and outside and apart from the official narratives of display that are presented for public engagement. In *Treasures of the Royal British Columbia Museum and Archives*, Jack Lohman, the CEO of the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM), and four RBCM curators and archivists (Martha Black, Richard Hebda, Grant Keddie, and Gary Mitchell) provide curatorial chapters that reveal the detailed work of the

specialists and scholars who document and analyze the collections. These chapters remind us that modern museum work involves more than creating a clean and tidy educational narrative: it also, for example, involves conducting new research and bringing ideals of collaboration into the core of practice rather than just seeing them as tactics used in visual display. *Treasures* argues that museums, as sites of knowledge production, must continuously examine the collections that are their foundations. Black, for example, in her history of the ethnographic collections at the RBCM, argues that we should be attentive to the nineteenth-century classifications that are manifest in museum documentation. She documents the changing relations between RBCM curators and First Nations and emphasizes early collaborative efforts that resulted in the inclusion of First Nations ways of knowing in visual displays. Moreover, by understanding the diversity and richness of First Nations languages, "old museum classifications can be overwritten with First Nations histories and intellectual concepts" (66).

By incorporating chapters from across departments and disciplines, *Treasures* masterfully weaves a narrative that explores the interconnections between natural, cultural, and historical spheres. Although the concept of the "natural history museum" may seem outdated with the emergence of community-centred institutions, subject-specific museums, and even science centres, Lohman emphasizes that we are all connected to the places and times in which we live and are bound by the natural world and the cultural histories that have come to define our places within the world. Similarly Hebda, in his chapter, implores us to appreciate the BC landscape and the importance of understanding our relationship to the environment.

With its combination of ethnography, archaeology, natural sciences, and the archives, this volume is much more than simply beautifully illustrated: in its very form it mirrors an argument for an increased connection between disciplines whose boundaries are still regularly upheld, and, with chapters that span disciplines and decades, and even eons, Lohman et al. demonstrate that the natural history museum can be the ideal venue for conversations that are both historically important and contemporarily relevant.

Both volumes advocate for sustaining the rich and diverse collections in Victoria and Ottawa and suggest ways that new knowledge can be gleaned from a deep recognition of and respect for the traditions of the First Peoples of the Pacific coast. For example, in his foreword to *Treasures*, former lieutenant-governor Steven Point describes visiting the First Nations big house at the RBCM. He dwells not on the construction of the exhibits, or on the intellectual history that devised and is inscribed on exhibit labels and texts, but, rather, on the smell of cedar that permeates the big house. For Point, the cedar smell invites and imagines an emotionally charged experience at the museum. He argues, and I agree, that these affective experiences are ultimately important if museums are to remain “a part of an ongoing story” (16). As the RBCM and CMH, and other museums, try to reach new audiences and, through new technology, strive to become a part of contemporary public discourse, we must remember the important contemplative and affective spaces created when people are in the presence of sacred and ancient material objects. Readers of these volumes will readily appreciate Point’s sentiments after viewing the towering house posts and poles and contemplating the images and dioramas of archival photographs of age-old cedars described

and portrayed in *Treasures* and *The Grand Hall*. Telling the stories of how museums create these powerful spaces continues to ignite curiosity and wonder.

*Three Athapaskan  
Ethnographies: Diamond Jenness  
on the Sekani, Tsuu T’ina and  
Wet’suwet’en, 1921–1924*

Diamond Jenness (Barnett  
Richling, preface)

Oakville, ON: Rock’s Mills Press,  
2015. 325 pp. \$24.95 paper.

ROBIN RIDINGTON  
*University of British Columbia*

DIAMOND JENNESS was a diligent and talented ethnographer, and the years 1921–24 were particularly productive. In the summer of 1921 he visited the Sarcee (Suuu T’ina) of Alberta and wrote a report based on “field-notes he gathered on that occasion” (90). In the summer of 1924, he spent four weeks with the Sekani of British Columbia and later that winter, 1924–25, spent three months with their western neighbours, the Wet’suwet’en (whom he referred to as the Bulkley River Carrier). All three spoke related Athapaskan languages, but their cultures reflect very different ecological and cultural environments. The Sekani were still a hunting-and-trapping people in 1924. They spent most of the year on the land and supported themselves, in part, through subsistence hunting. The Wet’suwet’en continued a fishing-based economy. By 1921, only the Sarcee had been entirely removed from their traditional bison-hunting economy and had been confined to reserves. In all three groups the Native

languages were still widely spoken.

No better contrasts could illustrate the remarkable adaptability of Athapaskan-speaking peoples. The Sekani are Arctic drainage hunting people whose culture probably approximates that of ancestral northern Athapaskans. The Sarcee are fully realized Plains Indians, and the Wet'suwet'en are culturally allied with Pacific drainage Northwest Coast peoples. Bringing these three ethnographies together in a single volume invites a comparison Jenness left to others.

Jenness never had a university appointment. He did his ethnographic work through Canada's Department of Mines and Resources. Jenness has been criticized for writing ethnography rather than theory; however, looking back on his work almost a century later, one can see that theories flourish and disappear while ethnography remains. In these three studies Jenness demonstrates his ability to record an astonishing amount of ethnographic information in a relatively short period of time. His fieldwork was based on intensive collaborative interviews with knowledgeable members of the communities he visited. He was obviously able to establish a rapport with elders.

For the Sarcee, bison hunting and warfare were only real in the memories of elders. Jenness was fortunate in establishing productive relationships with twelve of these people. They told him of their exploits in war, their bison hunts, and their elaborate ceremonial life. Jenness diligently wrote it all down from field notes. He also documented ceremonial traditions that were still active, even as important sacred objects like medicine bundles were being sent to museums such as the one affiliated with the Department of Mines and Resources. It is interesting to wonder what more he might have documented had the means to

record these narratives as audio actualities been available. The texts he recorded are glosses rendered in the "proper" English of his day. Jenness focused on narratives of events rather than on the poetics of First Nations narrative. One should praise what he accomplished rather than hold him to today's standard.

The Wet'suwet'en ethnography lies somewhere in between the Sekani and Sarcee texts in terms of its being based on culture as it was lived rather than as it is remembered. Jenness documented hereditary phratry (clan) organization and the prescribed seating at potlatch gatherings. He recorded extensive first-person narratives, again as glosses in the tradition of the brothers Grimm, rather than the ethnopoetics that some of his contemporaries, like Fletcher and La Flesche, used in their presentation of Omaha songs and texts.

All three Athapaskan peoples are strong and thriving today. The Sarcee negotiated the repatriation of sacred objects such as the Starlight Bundle in 1989. The Sekani took adhesion to Treaty 8 in 2000, and the Wet'suwet'en were plaintiffs in the monumental *Delgamuukw* court action. Recent Supreme Court of Canada decisions have given greater weight to First Nations history and oral tradition. In republishing these three ethnographies together, Richling has given First Nations and academic scholars an opportunity to compare traditional Athapaskan cultures and recent histories.





*Where the Rivers Meet:  
Pipelines, Participatory  
Resource Management, and  
Aboriginal-State Relations in the  
Northwest Territories*

Carly A. Dokis

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 240 pp.  
\$95.00 cloth.

MARK STOLLER

*University of British Columbia*

**I**N *Where the Rivers Meet*, Carly Dokis skilfully examines local responses to the Mackenzie Gas Project – a proposed natural gas pipeline through the Sahtu Region of the Northwest Territories – and how these are interpreted through state-operated environmental impact assessments and other participatory practices. By showing how Sahtu Dene participation is ultimately transformed through community hearings, Dokis depicts a review process that is incommensurable with the desires and preferences of local residents. These processes, Dokis argues, are intimately bound to questions of governmentality and the political and increasingly corporate tone of state practices that are reflected in participatory management processes. Blending established social theory with current scholarship, Dokis offers a timely and important study of how participatory practices are used to marginalize Indigenous ways of being and to limit local influence in decision-making processes.

Methodology quickly emerges as a central theme and is among the book's strengths. Through participant observation, Dokis focuses on local attitudes at both official community hearings and in the homes and social circles in three of the five Sahtu

communities. The contrast is effective at demonstrating how local knowledges and their forms of expression are distorted when seen through legalistic and non-local assumptions about the nature of the world. Care taken to tie her observations to her own experiences enables Dokis to reflect upon the bounds of scholarly research more generally. By referring often to the Berger Inquiry of the 1970s, Dokis traces historical changes that have taken place in the Sahtu since then, enabling readers to better understand how present-day decisions regarding resource development are influenced by "multiple and complex factors that are neither wholly novel nor wholly traditional" (12).

Early chapters – which will be of particular interest to readers of this journal – focus on the technocratic nature of participatory practices and how methods used in evaluating an impact's "significance" tilts the process in the proponent's favour. Emphasis on how such methods blur differences between participation and consent, and depoliticize local resistance, hit upon questions at the heart of contemporary development debates. Later chapters are devoted to the broader context of land claims negotiations and the corporate and governmental practices that are mirrored in participatory management structures. References to the foundational works of social theorists like Habermas and Durkheim help to confirm the findings of contemporary scholars of participatory and comanagement regimes. I wondered, though, what specific insights Dokis drew from her experience that might complement (or complicate) these materials and how these could inform researchers doing similar work.

Readers of *BC Studies* will recognize important parallels with pipeline debates in western Canada and the book's relevance to questions raised by

fracking in northern British Columbia. Despite a strong focus on questions of law, policy, and social theory, the book's clear organization and reflective prose will appeal to a wide readership. This is an excellent addition to an existing Northern Studies literature and should be read by scholars of anthropology, history, geography, political science, and environmental planning who have research interests in participatory resource management and Indigenous governance.

*The Land We Are: Artists and Writers Unsettle the Politics of Reconciliation*

Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill and  
Sophie McCall, editors

Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2015. 240 pp.  
\$24.95 paper.

*The Poetics of Land and Identity among British Columbia Indigenous Peoples*

Christine Elsey

Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2013.  
156 pp. \$19.95 paper.

CHRIS ARNETT

*University of British Columbia*

*The Land We Are: Artists and Writers Unsettle the Politics of Reconciliation* and *The Poetics of Land and Identity among British Columbia Indigenous Peoples* reflect an iconic theme of recent Canadian writing, academia, and art practice – namely, the reconciliation of settler and Indigenous histories. Both books rely on Western epistemologies, one the result of modern

art practice and critical theory, the other the result of the application of European philosophies of poetics and phenomenology to historical Interior Salish ethnography. A major theme of both books is the connection between Indigenous peoples and the land. Both books are fragmented by a reliance on the Western lens, but readers will find some gems in them.

*The Land We Are* is an attractive collaborative compilation of art, poetry, and analysis by nineteen contemporary artists and academics, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, whose main premise is that the “reconciliation” aspect of the federal government’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which ran from 2008 to 2015, was disingenuous because it implied some sense of closure while erasing the main issues of restoration and restitution. A concise introduction by editors Gabrielle L’Hirondelle Hill and Sophia McCall charts the contested terrain of reconciliation and the role of the contributors, who offer thought-provoking work as a catalyst for discussion. The “settler” contributors struggle with guilt and ignorance after years of socialization, while for Indigenous artists, not surprisingly, “the question of land remains central to Indigenous art and cultural politics,” and both groups assert “that Indigenous land rights are central to reimagining the future between Indigenous and settler people” (12). All royalties from sales of the book go to the Unist’ot’en camp in Wet’suwet’en territory in the central interior of British Columbia, which will balance the irony (and good fortune) of receiving funding in the form of federal grants.

The contributors to *The Land We Are* acknowledge the challenges faced by activist artists working within the mandate and policy of a well funded federal initiative; indeed, some of the

contributors have been involved in other TRC projects. Despite any TRC connections, they argue, as artists do everywhere, that their work may transfer something tangible to the audience that is intensely personal, such as the text and performance piece “Writing Touch Me” by Skeena Reece and Sandra Semchuk, or something intensely cathartic, such as Ayumi Goto and Peter Morin’s performance piece “Hair.” Others encourage participation: David Garneau and Clement Yeh’s “Apology Dice” features multi-sided dice inscribed with words that, when thrown sequentially, form short sentences pertinent to the discourse of reconciliation, including “Apology,” “Denial,” and “Fatigue,” a process that invites the player to agree or disagree. That three performance-based art projects are effective in a book format is a tribute to the designer, Terry Corrigan.

*The Land We Are* asserts that meaningful questions and answers can emerge through the catharsis of art practice. Whether this always works is a site of debate and contest among the contributors in their quest to heal – to know the past – and to create “productive sites of discomfort, disconnection and disruption” (13). The book is divided into four parts that move from a text and image-based critical analysis and theoretical discussion of public art to commemorative art, poetry, prose, and conceptual performance. A few examples from each demonstrates the mix. In Part 1, “Public Memory and the Neo-liberal City,” Dylan Robinson and Keren Zaiontz contribute a photographic essay of Vancouver public art in “a civic infrastructure of redress” (22), which, they argue, in its attempt to Indigenize the landscape effectively, in fact dismisses local Indigenous history. Part 2, “Please Check against Delivery: The Apology Unlocked,” deconstructs Stephen

Harper’s 2008 residential schools apology. Jordan Abel uses the “cut-up” technique of the American writer William Burroughs, himself influenced by Canadian-Anglo-French painter Brion Gysin, to dismember Harper’s text with interesting results. Part 3, “Collaboration, Creative Practice, and Labour,” celebrates craft and collective labour in commemorative art, including Jonathan Dewar’s photo essay of the stunning “Walking with Our Sisters,” the moccasin memorial to murdered and missing Indigenous women. Part 4, “Insurgent Pedagogies, Affective Performances, Unbounded Creations,” contains a reconciliatory chapter by self-styled “non-Indigenous scholars” Alison Hargreaves and David Jefferess.

True to participation in a federal project, national sentiment prevails in *The Land We Are* (particularly in the title, which might have taken on quite a different meaning had it been *We Are the Land*). Regional variation is noticeably absent – and incongruous given that there is no national Indigenous identity. For example, the treaty rhetoric of Adrian Stimson’s “Drawing Treaty” is interesting but only as a cautionary tale in British Columbia, where there are few treaties. Reconciliation necessitates decolonization of the local. Decolonization, as Hargreaves and Jefferess argue, “requires understanding history not as a linear series of events but as a layered presence; what lies beneath rocks in our gardens may be hidden or ignored but it is not gone” (204). (Tell that to an archaeologist!)

In *The Poetics of Land and Identity among British Columbia Indigenous Peoples*, anthropologist Christine Elsey gets more local and explores how Indigenous views of the land in British Columbia are different from those of the market-focused settler state. She uses European concepts of enfoldment, poesis, and poetics to illustrate the

“body-world synthesis as argued within European philosophy” (57). While Elsey dismisses European Cartesian dualism she is comfortable “employing such European philosophical concepts as phenomenological perspectives of the body, self, [and] world” in the hope that her work “will make possible the creation of a non-ethnocentric niche within mainstream philosophical and litigious argumentation for the discussion of First Nations Land claims” (4). If non-Natives think this way, she argues, a better understanding and even reconciliation will result.

Drawing on the work of ethnographer James Teit, Elsey examines a wonderful array of stories about transformer rocks and rock art, which are the physical reminders of past events and cultural teachings. However, she all but ignores Indigenous perspectives rooted in language, and when she introduces them, she misunderstands them. For example, she uses the term *sptaqulh* (origin stories) (99n5) to describe the beings of the mythological age as entities (which they certainly were), but she misses the point that they are also stories with teachings of identity and place – the existence of which is the very thing her poetics wish to demonstrate. Their presence in the landscape, which is well documented by Elsey’s collection of published ethnographic data, is indeed phenomenological – the body is there, ours and theirs – but to understand the relationship between teaching and entities requires only knowledge that both are *shyAktnmbh* (people/relations). Elsey perceives this relationship, but it would be better said by people in the living Indigenous tradition, who are strangely absent from the book. Elsey employs a lot of “enfolding,” “embodiment,” and “presencing” of “self,” terms that are foreign to Indigenous discourse. And where is a discussion of

*atsama* (“to quest for spirit power”), the ultimate Indigenous research method to test the validity of the origin stories and the phenomenology of space? The “vision quest” is mentioned here and there, but its essential role in identity formation at many scales is missed by Elsey’s reliance on European philosophy.

These two books are a reminder that European methods can obfuscate Indigenous epistemologies when, in fact, both methods have equal philosophical depth. The two ways are not irreconcilable, but they demand the mutual comprehension of methods specific to and negotiated within each situation. As both these books show, mutual recognition of a shared history is a first unsteady step towards true reconciliation.

*Truth and Indignation: Canada’s  
Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission on Indian  
Residential Schools*

Ronald Niezen

Toronto: University of Toronto  
Press, 2013. 173 pp. \$26.95 paper.

DAVID GAERTNER  
*University of British Columbia*

THE STRUGGLE to articulate Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has seen varying degrees of success since the commission was established in the 2006 Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. In 2008, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation published *From Truth to Reconciliation: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools*, which calls for closer attention to the concepts of “truth” and “reconciliation” as they

existed in relation to Canadian and Indigenous contexts. Now, as the commission draws to a close, one of the most nuanced, penetrating, and sometimes disquieting examples of such scholarship has appeared in Ronald Niezen's *Truth and Indignation*.

Niezen, a professor of law at McGill University, clearly develops his argument through extensive research conducted at national TRC events and through interviews with Oblates, both priests and nuns: this is a work about what is "sayable" within the discursive structure of the TRC and how that structure has come to exist and persist. For Niezen, Canada's victim-centred TRC produces a limited space in which testimony regarding the residential schools can be heard and received. This is not to say that the "T" in TRC is a misnomer but, rather, that some kinds of truths work to overshadow others. "The events of the TRC," Niezen writes, "are not just sites for gathering knowledge; they are also active in producing it" (103).

For instance, the commission focuses on the abuse of children, which has obvious visceral and affective qualities for the speakers and the audience. While child abuse in residential schools certainly must be addressed, it overshadows other important political issues, such as land claims. This type of elision functions on a smaller scale as well: as stories of egregious abuse rise to the surface of the TRC, via reporting and selected editing of survivor testimony, some survivors feel that their own stories are not worthy of public testimony. Understanding the TRC's structural limitations and how it produces knowledge, Niezen argues, will provide deeper insight into the residential school system and contemporary abuses of power.

This study is a welcome corrective to the too common insistence (usually coming from the liberal settler population) that Canada's TRC will finally unveil the

"Truth" of Canada's residential schools and shed light on "a dark chapter in Canadian history." Of course, in order to take his thesis to its conclusion, Niezen must delve into the issues that many are unready or unwilling to address, which is what makes this text so powerful and challenging. As Niezen demonstrates, if there are any truths without any place in the current TRC discourse, it is testimony from priests and nuns who insist (1) that Indigenous children were in fact happy at the schools at which they worked and (2) that they, too, have been injured by these events.

The testimony that Niezen provides from his interviews with priests and nuns speaking to these points is, without a doubt, the most contentious element of this book, and he does well to illustrate how and why that is so. Well after I had finished reading I found that a number of resonant questions lurked in my mind as I wrote this review: How do we in fact reconcile the need to know the capital "T" Truth of residential schools with the fact that this Truth invites stories and testimony that many survivors find repelling? Is this Truth necessary if it comes at the expense of the well-being of survivors and their families? Or is it yet another iteration of the colonial drive to know, whatever the costs may be? Niezen opens up these questions with care and precision, most particularly, I think, in his consideration of "indignation" and the survivor's right to be disgusted by and to reject the perpetrator's narrative. At times I found myself wishing that Niezen's own indignation had found its way into his analysis of Oblate testimony; however, even if the author sometimes applies them with too light a touch, the tools for expressing this indignation are certainly there for the reader to take up and apply.

That being said, for those of us who find ourselves confronted by the scope

and impact of the Canadian TRC, *Truth and Indignation* is indispensable in that it offers a clear blueprint for determining the borders and boundaries of that commission. Niezen advocates not only for a victim-centred analysis of the TRC but also for an analysis directed at the peripheries of TRC testimony – analysis that incorporates those who do not make the news or the TRC “highlight reel.” “We can start [future work]” he writes, “with narratives given by those who are categorically excluded from the highlight reels, the stroke victims, the schizophrenic, the mute-from-grief, those who only make noises in a struggle to communicate” (149). *Truth and Indignation* stands as a powerful, evocative example of this kind of TRC ethnography and is vital reading for anyone – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – who wants to better understand the TRC.

*Indigenous Women and Work:  
From Labor to Activism*

Carol Williams, editor

Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2012. 320 pp. \$30.00 paper.

LORAINÉ LITTLEFIELD

*Tsawwassen*

*Indigenous Women and Work*, edited by Carol Williams, consists of seventeen chapters that examine the history of Indigenous women and wage labour in Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. The object of these chapters is to stimulate a transnational conversation about the experiences of women under similar British-capitalist policies and ideology. Written by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, the

chapters describe women’s participation in a huge range of industries from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the late twentieth century.

The preface, written by Marlene Brant Castellano, Mohawk scholar, sets the tone of the collection by noting how the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing offers a fresh historical perspective on Indigenous women’s lives. This is followed by an introduction by Williams on the importance of looking outside of the settler narrative to discover Indigenous women’s labour history. For those who follow the theoretical threads of feminist theory, the first chapter, by Joan Sangster, gives an excellent overall summary and, importantly, points out the benefits as well as the disadvantages of the transnational approach.

Only one chapter in this selection deals specifically with BC history. Inspired by a 1940s photograph of Shishálh (Sechelt) women holding hand logging tools, Susan Roy and Ruth Taylor, in “We Were Real Skookum Women: The Shishálh Economy and the Logging Industry on the Pacific Northwest Coast,” write about the “unexpected” history of women in this industry. For many decades this industry was important for the Sechelt, and, as part of the family venture, women helped men transport logs to the booming grounds. This role is not well documented, if at all, in any of the forestry history written in British Columbia. The authors blame a gender bias that essentially minimized women’s contribution in this industry, emphasizing instead what were considered appropriate feminized occupations such as basket weaving and other related crafts. “We Were Real Skookum Women,” however, speaks to the Indigenous viewpoint of women who acknowledge their important contribution to their family’s hand-logging production.

Two other chapters in this collection offer close connections with BC history and First Nations women's experiences in its early economy. Shelly Farrell Racette, in "Nimble Fingers and Strong Backs: First Nations and Métis Women in Fur Trade and Rural Economies," examines the changing role for women in Saskatchewan and Labrador from domestic partners in the fur trade to contract rural labourers – a change that shifts women's employment into the twentieth century. While Chris Friday, in "From 'Superabundance' to Dependency: Women Agriculturalists and the Negotiation of Colonialism and Capitalism for Reservation-Era Lummi," examines women's loss of control over Lummi potato production (just south of Point Roberts), first to men and then to the end of agricultural dominance in the wider economy. Both chapters speak to the changing demand of labour and the detrimental effects this change brought to women's lives, just as it did in British Columbia.

All the chapters are well written and well researched. I particularly liked Lynette Russell's "Procuring Passage: Southern Australian Aboriginal Women and the Early Maritime Industry of Sealing," which I found very instructive to compare with our own West Coast sealing and whaling industry. Occurring in southern Australia at a much earlier time, and when women's traditional roles were significantly different from what they were on the Northwest Coast, sealing led to a surprising degree of independence and autonomy for Aboriginal women. Also of interest is Cathleen D. Cahill's "An Indian Teacher among Indians: Native Women as Federal Employees," which looks at the hiring policy of the Office of Indian Affairs in the United States, which, at the turn of the century, accepted Indigenous women for positions in

education and administration. Women successfully sought these positions and were supported by their communities in carrying out these roles. No such early hiring policy seems to have occurred in Canada, which leads one to wonder why, especially given that the policies of the Department of Indian Affairs often matched those of the Office of Indian Affairs.

This transnational approach has promise, and Williams must be commended for this collection. I hope that this book will inspire further research into "unexpected" histories of women still to be discovered here in British Columbia, and I predict that collaboration with First Nations women and their communities will ensure that this occurs.

*Aboriginal Populations:  
Social, Demographic, and  
Epidemiological Perspectives*

Frank Trovato and Anatole  
Romaniuk, editors

Edmonton: University of Alberta  
Press, 2014. 600 pp. \$60.00 paper.

LEAH WIENER  
*Simon Fraser University*

THIS SUBSTANTIAL collection brings interdisciplinary approaches to a range of questions on Aboriginal populations. Aiming to bring about a "comprehensive understanding of the social demographic transformation of the Canadian Aboriginal population" (ix), the contributors review important questions of social demography. Trovato and Romaniuk argue that the demographic outlook of Canada's Aboriginal population is hopeful. The collection comprises

four sections, covering demographic, epidemiological, sociological, and international perspectives, respectively. The first two chapters provide essential historical and methodological context, making the collection accessible to an interdisciplinary readership; however, its questions are more likely to interest researchers in the social sciences than researchers in the humanities.

Several of the contributors emphasize the role of policy in shaping past, present, and future demography; they consider the ways in which policy affects how data are collected and how data collection can inform social policy. For instance, Guimond, Robitaille, and Sénécal note the impact of legal changes, such as the 1985 amendment to the Indian Act, on ethnic mobility (113). King proposes a wider conceptualization of health, so that we understand initiatives affecting poverty and education as potential health initiatives (208). Some contributors critique the approaches that are common to policy regarding Indigenous peoples: Kukutai and Pool note that “closing-the-gap” policies focus on the perceived deficits of Indigenous people, ignoring cultural and socio-economic heterogeneity in Indigenous communities (442). They argue that demographers focus on Indigenous populations at the expense of Indigenous peoples (443) partly because it is hard to operationalize experiences like colonialism in social science research (444). This deficit paradigm is arguably entrenched in many chapters in this collection, which portray Aboriginal people as service users, obscuring their potential and actual role as policy-makers.

The Canadian decennial census looms large as the key source for most of the chapters, and most of the contributors offer critical perspectives on the utility of historical and contemporary census data.

Goldman and Delic liken census data to a mirror (59) reflecting social values. Given the politics of census design and collection, it is perhaps not surprising that a collection that draws significantly from the census offers relatively little in the way of Aboriginal perspectives on Aboriginal populations, with only a handful of Aboriginal contributors. The goal in this collection is to present information rather than to decolonize a discipline.

The chapters in this collection present a wealth of data covering topics such as educational attainment, changes in fertility and mortality, employment, and language use in Aboriginal populations in Canada, New Zealand, Russia, and Australia. A list of the dozens of tables and figures would be a useful feature but, unfortunately, is not included in this text. *BC Studies* readers looking for content specific to British Columbia may be disappointed: only one chapter is dedicated to the study of this province. This is Chandler’s examination of First Nations youth suicide, through which he shows the need to consider the experiences of specific communities rather than solely to analyze aggregate data (189). However, the national and international content in this collection mean that it will be of value to readers seeking a geographically expansive, interdisciplinary overview of Aboriginal populations.





*The Writings of David  
Thompson. Vol. 1: The Travels,  
1850 Version*

William E. Moreau, editor

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press; co-published with the Champlain Society, 2015. 432 pp. \$44.95 cloth.

*The Writings of David  
Thompson. Vol. 2: The Travels,  
1848 Version, and Associated  
Texts*

William E. Moreau, editor

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press; co-published with the Champlain Society, 2015. 436 pp. \$44.95 cloth.

BARRY GOUGH  
*Victoria*

AT AGE FOURTEEN, a well-educated Londoner of Welsh parentage entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) as an apprentice clerk. He would have preferred to enter the Royal Navy. He was strangely unsettled in character. Given the mathematical education he had received at Grey Coat School, Westminster, he had expected better but found himself at Fort Churchill, then assigned to the life of northern posts. Disenchanted, he left the service of the Bay traders and joined its archrival the North West Company and held the view that the HBC did only what the British government required of it in the way of discoveries. The Nor'Westers he regarded as far more liberal and public in spirit. He became a tireless, inveterate traveller, sometimes

accompanied by his wife Charlotte Small and their children. He unlocked many secrets of the rivers of the west. His powers of observation were acute and the subjects of interest to him unbounded in number and various in character. The Nez Percés of the Snake River called him "Koo-Koo-Sint" – that is, "Star Man" or "He Who Shoots the Stars."

From the time he began with the North West Company in 1797 until the summer of 1812, Thompson did more than any other, perhaps save Sir Alexander Mackenzie, in plotting the rivers and watersheds of western North America. He ranks in the highest category of discoverers, and he revealed to the wider world many little known facts about Native peoples, geography, and geomorphology. Of a thoughtful disposition, he recorded his observations in various journals. The geological surveyor Joseph B. Tyrrell discovered Thompson, or, as he says, "re-discovered" him, and in an article in the 1928 *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* explains how, in his own work as a surveyor, he still consulted detailed surveys compiled by Thompson in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. It was the meticulousness of these maps of a tortuous network of mountains, valleys, passes, and rivers that attracted Tyrrell. Unusual in the fur trading line of work at a time of competition between the HBC and the Nor'Westers, it is said that Thompson would not trade spirituous liquor to the Aborigines. He had a strong puritanical streak. Thoroughness invited or necessitated slowness, and Thompson was methodical in carrying out duties entrusted to him. He went in search and found one of the sources of the Mississippi River. He charted the Saskatchewan and the Columbia rivers. In later years, he surveyed sections of the Canadian-American border in that

essential line of work, delineating, as it were, the extremity of the future Dominion and giving special unity to the whole in terms of longitudes and latitudes. He was a creature of the empirical age, a deft hand with a sextant, and a sure draftsman when it came to map-making and views of rocky ramparts. That he acted almost alone is part of the charm of the whole story, and it is this that has attracted many a neophyte biographer to try to step in his shoes and paddle with him in his canoes. We wait in hope for a psychological profile of one of the outstanding characters of all history.

His journals, which survive in the Archives of Ontario, Toronto, have never been published *in toto*, though many regional clusters have appeared in works such as Catherine White's *David Thompson's Journals Relating to Montana* (1950) and Barbara Belyea's edition of his *Columbia Journals* (1994). The Champlain Society, modelled on various British records societies, such as the Hakluyt Society and the Navy Records Society, has always been the leader in printing documentary editions of David Thompson's writings. In 1916, the society published Tyrrell's edition of *Thompson's Travels*, and collectors have found this edition so important and attractive that, on occasion, they have bought whole sets of the society's works just to get it. Only 562 copies were published, and it was never reprinted (which it certainly could have been, though now it can be found in digital form on the society's website). In 1962, under the editorship of the remarkable and inquisitive Richard Glover, the society produced a new edition with a more critical and scholarly apparatus than had appeared in Tyrrell. For all their differences, the beauty of the Tyrrell or the Glover is that they are each one volume. For years the Council of the Champlain Society adamantly feared publishing works that

required two volumes, and the journal of the Nor'wester Alexander Henry the Younger, published in 1988 and 1992, is the last of a breed.

Enter partners in a renewed enterprise. Now, tracing over the collected manuscripts and in a new editorial format, two volumes of a projected three have been published by McGill-Queen's University Press (and the University of Washington Press) in cooperation with the Champlain Society. Subscribers to the society have happily been able to purchase copies that bear the emblematic hallmark of the organization and are bound in its handsome, iconic, and legendary red covers and gold imprint. As a Life Member of this Society, and at one time owner of the full set (Number 75), I can testify that members of the society guard their treasures; indeed, I have witnessed many casting their eyes with wonderment for the first time on shelves of red and gold, a testament to the finest printed legacy of the pre-digital era. When combined, as mine were, with the Hudson's Bay Record Society – with which the Champlain Society had a working arrangement for thirteen years, resulting in the joint publication of twelve volumes – it was a sight to behold. Some full sets may still exist in private hands.

Happy memories are revived by this new publication agenda on Thompson, but, for reasons to be explained, I am not sure that the society will conclude that this is the last it will publish of Thompson. It is claimed that this edition is definitive. But is any edition definitive? And equally important to any champion of making our history accessible to the reading public, is it user-friendly? The more extended and protracted the editorial apparatus, the more bibliographies are required (one for each volume), the more indexes are needed (again, one for each volume), and the more difficult it is, and will

be upon completion, for the reader to grasp the unity of the enterprise. For the serious researcher, with time to devote to it, the rewards may be forthcoming but are gained only by assiduous hard work. For the general reader, I fear, confusion and dismay may result. For myself, as a student of Thompson's life and revelations for decades, I will still be looking for a one-volume edition of *Thompson's Travels*. To date, only one such attempt has appeared: *David Thompson: Travels in Western North America* (1971), compiled and edited by Victor Hopwood, a professor of English at the University of British Columbia. Hopwood never lived to fulfill his dream to complete his biography of Thompson.

Reverting to the books under review, this new edition of Thompson's *Travels* presented the editor and the editorial advisers and overseers with a notable problem. In his latter years, those of impoverishment, encroaching blindness, and growing isolation, Thompson gathered together his main texts. The final result was a compilation of 1850. This is the text for Volume 1. Thompson's earlier (1848) version of his *Travels* is here published as Volume 2. Literary sleuths will happily devote themselves to comparing and contrasting the two versions, noting discrepancies, championing literary progressions, and the like. The projected Volume 3 will consist of various notes and letters that are, presumably, supplemental to these first two volumes.

Students of BC history will be familiar with what is known as "the dalliance of David Thompson." The argument runs that, rather than pressing on to the mouth of the Columbia River, Thompson was delayed for various reasons. Accordingly, he did not arrive at the destination before John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company's expedition had landed from the *Tonquin* and built the post Astoria in 1811. It is

a moot question whether Thompson's earlier arrival would have tipped the balance in the imperial rivalry that developed between the United States and Great Britain. In any event, Lieutenant Broughton in the Royal Navy brig *Chatham* had surveyed the river in 1792 and had laid claim to it as a possession of King George III. Thompson was in no position to oust the American traders at Astoria; they thought him a spy. But the charm of the story of fur trading rivalries will continue in the literature. There is much romance in Thompson's story. He is one of the few fur trading explorers to leave a substantial literary and documentary trail. He is one for the ages and will be with us for many a future book. It is the vibrancy of his observations and experiences that charm us most, and most of his biographers cannot touch his powers of observation or ability to transpose us in time and space, taking us back to a North American west before the sternwheeler and the railway, the barbed wire and the surveyor's chain. Of great merit is Thompson's famed and very large map of North America, now in the Library and Archives Canada, which, like James Cook's survey of the St. Lawrence River, ranks as among our true cultural treasures. Thompson will continue to fascinate, and every now and again another book appears about him – though we are still waiting for a full, comprehensive, and learned biography. The new Champlain Society volumes will ease the passage of such a work, but still it is in the journals in the Archives of Ontario that the real gold nuggets are to be found.

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### *Carlo Gentile, Gold Rush Photographer, 1863-1866*

Ronald A. Greene

Victoria: Greene Frogge Press, 2015.  
158 pp. \$75.00 paper.

DAVID MATTISON  
*Victoria*

LIKE MOST colonial-era Victoria photographers, Carlo Gentile arrived and departed with little notice. Born in Italy, he eventually found his way to California around 1860. Having reached Victoria from San Francisco in 1862, he was active as a photographer only between 1863 and 1866, when he purportedly returned to San Francisco. He briefly carried on a photographic business there before moving on. His career, not unlike that of many others in the late nineteenth century, consisted of wandering from one commercial opportunity to another, including the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. While living in the US southwest, Gentile – pronounced Gentilly – even managed to purchase a young Apache (Yavapai) boy whom he raised as a son and who became famous in his own right as the physician Carlos Montezuma. In 1877,

Gentile finally settled in Chicago where he carried on with his photography. He died in 1893 and left behind his adopted son and a fourth wife.

While little known outside of photographic history circles, Gentile's work during his brief time in Victoria was highly significant. Unlike his competitors, who were chiefly studio portraiture photographers, Gentile travelled widely between 1864 and 1866, visiting the Alberni Valley, Leech River during its short gold rush, the Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, Comox, New Westminster, Kamloops, and parts of the Cariboo region via the Harrison Lake and Fraser Canyon routes. The latter journeys in 1865 were made partly in the company of Governor Frederick Seymour. During his last active year as a Victoria photographer, Gentile also travelled to Washington Territory where he created the "earliest known views of Seattle" (123). Whether for commercial purposes or out of humanitarian interest, Gentile's studio and outdoor portrait work included many First Nations individuals and groups.

Greene's welcome study of Gentile's life and photographs is one of only a handful devoted to nineteenth-century BC photographers. Remarkably, it is also the second book on Gentile (see also Cesare Marino, *The Remarkable Carlo Gentile: Italian Photographer of the American Frontier* [Nevada City, CA: Carl Mautz, 1998]). The genesis of Greene's book was a photographic album he owns whose origin seems as mysterious as do parts of Gentile's life. Greene's initial intent was to publish the contents of his album (which was last owned by the historian and journalist Bruce A. McKelvie), but fortunately he acted on a suggestion to expand his scope so as to provide greater visual and historical context to Gentile's work. Greene, a retired entrepreneur and well

known local and numismatic historian, has very capably and thoroughly pulled together the diverse traces of Gentile's time in Victoria.

Following a short introduction to Gentile's life, the photographs are presented. Greene chose to group them by geographic location or subject matter, many with detailed captions. The photographs from his album are designated with the prefix "DP" (for Destrube Photo), and the detailed and worthwhile listing of "Known or Attributed Gentile Photographs," which precedes the index, is organized by the book's page numbers. This listing, or concordance, includes the contents of the Arthur Nonus Birch album located at Library and Archives Canada; photographs located at the British Columbia Archives, although none is specifically identified as belonging to the Engle album; and photographs from the ethnological collection at the Royal British Columbia Museum. While some maps are reproduced in colour, all the photographs are black and white. No glass plate negatives by Gentile are known to have survived. Given the difficulties of working with the wet collodion process that Gentile favoured, and Gentile's own uneven technique, it is not surprising that the quality of the reproductions is not always the best. For comparative purposes, an interested reader might examine the digitized contents of the Arthur Nonus Birch Fonds (R9701-0-1-E), which consists of an album at Library and Archives Canada, and the high-resolution "Charles Gentile Early British Columbia Photos," which are part of the Uno Langmann Collection at the University of British Columbia Library. The latter are not included in Greene's concordance of Gentile photographs.

Also useful for further studies are the reproductions of all known versos of carte-de-visite-sized photographs

and the endnotes. An index rounds out the volume. Gentile has for a long time deserved a more comprehensive treatment of his short time in Victoria, and Greene has now provided it.

*The De Cosmos Enigma*

Gordon Hawkins

Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2015.

170 pp. \$17.95 paper.

*The Honourable Aleck:  
Love, Law and Tragedy  
in Early Canada*

Ian Bruce Robertson

Victoria: Friesen Press, 2013. 344 pp.

\$19.99 paper.

ADAM COOMBS

*University of British Columbia*

ON A GREY DAY in November of 1868, lawyer Alexander "Aleck" Rocke Robertson met with journalist and politician Amor De Cosmos. Both men had been born in eastern Canada and, while pursuing different careers – Robertson (from Canada West) in law, and De Cosmos (from Nova Scotia) in photography and journalism – both moved to Victoria to pursue their substantial ambitions. The subject of this meeting was what they considered the disastrous result in that month's colonial elections. A few days earlier, the political faction supporting British Columbia's entry into Confederation, of which De Cosmos and Robertson were leading figures, had suffered a massive defeat; even De Cosmos lost his Victoria seat to anti-Confederation stalwart Dr. John Helmcken. Despite the

setback, both men were cautiously optimistic that the impending transfer of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Canadian government would renew support for British Columbia's entry into Confederation (Robertson, 177-78). Ultimately, their optimism was justified, and, thanks in part to the efforts of these two men, fewer than three years later British Columbia became the sixth province to join Canada.

While historians are broadly familiar with the role Robertson and De Cosmos played in pushing British Columbia to join Confederation, Gordon Hawkins's book on De Cosmos and Ian Robertson's on his ancestor Alexander Robertson document the political careers of these key figures. Hawkins seeks to address what he perceives as the relative lack of attention De Cosmos has received since his death – part of what he terms “the enigma of De Cosmos” – arguing that “he failed to secure the degree of fame and respect he both deserved and expected” (141). However, as Hawkins admits, writing about De Cosmos is exceptionally challenging given the lack of primary sources, and he was forced to rely on secondary sources to fill in substantial gaps in De Cosmos's life. Sometimes, such as when dealing with the cause of De Cosmos's late-life insanity, Hawkins is forced to rely on pure speculation.

Similarly, Robertson's self-described work of “creative non-fiction” focuses on the life of Alexander Robertson and his wife Margaret. Using a collection of letters exchanged between them, Robertson reconstructs key moments in their lives. When the letters provide only limited information, such as regarding Alexander Robertson's initial trip from Ontario to British Columbia in 1864, Robertson relies on secondary literature to fill in the gaps. As he openly admits in the introduction, he creatively imagines

how the events described in the letters occurred, including the dialogue between the key actors (xii). The 1868 meeting between De Cosmos and Robertson described above is one such example of this. For Robertson, the letters provide a framework within which to explore the world of his subject, but his recreative enterprise is not limited by their content. Indeed, the creative and non-fictional aspects of his work are present in equal portion.

While neither author has written a conventional biography, their works are important contributions to the political and legal history of British Columbia: Robertson has never been the subject of a monograph, and the last book-length biography of De Cosmos (George Woodcock's *Amor de Cosmos: Journalist and Reformer*) was published in 1975. The strongest moment in each book comes when the authors employ the biographical tradition to its fullest potential to open a window onto the world inhabited by Amor and Aleck: both books pay considerable attention to the broader political and social context when assessing their subjects' prominent intra-provincial role in securing support for British Columbia's entry into Confederation.

Despite their excellent use of secondary literature to depict the political situation in British Columbia, both Hawkins and Robertson might have engaged with a broader body of writing, particularly with works from outside political and legal history. While Hawkins focuses almost exclusively on the colony's white settlers, a number of scholars, including Robin Fisher (*Contact and Conflict*), Cole Harris (*Making Native Space*), and Douglas Harris (*Fish, Law, and Colonialism*) demonstrate that Aboriginal inhabitants of the colony played an integral part in many aspects of its history. Key events, such as the gold rush, which brought

De Cosmos to British Columbia, are impossible to describe adequately without considering the role of Aboriginal inhabitants in the Pacific colony. Moreover, as owner of the *British Colonist* between 1858 and 1863, De Cosmos, in his editorials and articles, was aware of, and commented on, issues relating to the often confrontational relationship between white settlers and Aboriginals, particularly in the Fraser Valley and the Gulf Islands. De Cosmos's engagement with Indigenous issues makes Hawkins's almost exclusive focus on white settlers seem somewhat incongruous.

While Robertson limits his focus largely to white settlers, his narrative is driven by the content of his letters, which reflect the biases and priorities expressed by Alexander Robertson and his wife in their epistolary exchanges. However, his work would be strengthened by incorporating insights from cultural history, particularly gender history. Robertson recreates the couple's daily interactions as well as some of their social relationships, including parent-child and cross-gender friendships, but his characters speak and react in a manner similar to what one would expect from people today, despite the massive gulf in social norms and expectations between Victorian Canada and the present. By drawing on the pertinent work of historians such as Adele Perry (*On the Edge of Empire*) or Sarah Carter (*Capturing Women*), Robertson could have constructed a much more textured and convincing dialogue for his characters while deepening his analysis of their relationships.

Overall, both Robertson and Hawkins tackle a conventional subject – political history – in an unorthodox but informative and entertaining manner. By focusing on these key figures, both books chart broad political and legal changes in British Columbia in the latter half of

the nineteenth century. While both could benefit from engaging with a greater range of existing analytical literature, they remain worthwhile and useful for scholars and members of the general public interested in exploring the political and legal history of this province.

*Patrician Liberal: The Public and Private Life of Sir Henri-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, 1829-1908*  
J.I. Little

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. 376 pp. \$37.95 paper.

PATRICIA E. ROY  
*University of Victoria*

AT FIRST glance, a review of the biography of a nineteenth-century Quebec politician seems out of place in *BC Studies*. Born in France in 1829 to a wealthy French Protestant father and his Roman Catholic wife, the heiress to the Lotbinière seigneurie southwest of Quebec City, Sir Henri-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière spent his childhood in Quebec, graduated from the Université de France, was called to the Quebec bar, and married the Anglican daughter of a prominent Quebec merchant.

Playing a patrician role with a “reputation as an honourable and principled man” (244), Joly was paternalistic towards his former *consitaires*, used his farm to demonstrate improved agricultural methods, and employed his one-time *consitaires* in his lumber business. He practised sustained yield in the seigneurie's forests and became Canada's “most prominent proponent” of the infant forest conservation movement (200). As a railway promoter and

provincial politician, Joly carefully avoided potential conflicts of interest. In 1878, the lieutenant-governor dismissed the premier and invited Joly, the leader of the opposition, to form a government. After losing support in the legislature, Joly resigned the premiership but remained a critic of the Conservative government and defender of provincial rights.

Joly had opposed Confederation; later, he became deeply concerned about preserving national unity in the crises over Louis Riel and Manitoba schools. In the 1896 federal election he ran successfully for the Liberals and became minister of inland revenue, a minor post noted for its patronage opportunities. His opposition to the spoils system and to raising the Chinese head tax made him unpopular in the cabinet.

What did this have to do with British Columbia? Given confusion in provincial politics (which Little succinctly explains), Prime Minister Laurier wisely looked outside for a lieutenant-governor to replace the dismissed T.R. McInnes “to stabilize the state” and “restore investor confidence” (214). A “patrician sense of pride and duty” (215) led Joly to accept the post. For British Columbians, Joly’s knowledge of constitutional law, railway construction, and forestry, plus his knighthood and membership in the Anglican Church, overcame any unpopularity caused by his sympathy for the Chinese. As lieutenant-governor, Joly was discreet but more than a figurehead. In 1903, when E.G. Prior, the fifth premier in five years, saw no wrong in using inside knowledge to benefit his hardware firm, Joly dismissed him and invited Richard McBride, a Conservative and leader of the opposition, to form a government and to introduce party lines to the legislature.

Joly expected to mentor the thirty-two-year-old McBride and, informally,

he did. Little shows how Joly’s Quebec experience influenced his actions in British Columbia, including conservation policies in new timber legislation, insisting that the legislature vote on the report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Kaien Island land deal and providing hints on arguing for “Better Terms” from the federal government. Little surmises that Joly may have modified McBride’s actions towards Asians and encouraged him to be less strident towards Ottawa.

This well researched and well written biography is set within a framework of contemporary historiography. For example, Little observes that, while in some ways Joly fits Ian McKay’s concept of the liberal order, McKay fails to recognize the role of paternalism in the economy and politics. For British Columbia, Little questions Robert A.J. McDonald’s arguments about the significance of the introduction of party lines. In sum, Little has admirably used biography to examine politics, the economy, culture, society, and historiography – especially in Quebec and British Columbia.

*The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada’s Colour Bar*

Hugh Johnston

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 268 pp.  
\$29.95 paper.

SHARANJIT KAUR SANDHRA  
*University of the Fraser Valley*

IT IS WITH great anticipation that those of us who study South Asian migration to Canada have awaited the expanded and revised version of Hugh Johnston’s *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru*. Johnston’s original monograph on the *Komagata Maru* incident,



published by Oxford University Press in 1979, was the first and remains the most detailed exploration of the exclusion from Canada in May 1914 of most of the ship's 376 passengers, of whom 340 were Sikhs, and the ship's forced return to Calcutta in September of that year. Johnston's magisterial analysis of this infamous Canadian race-based infraction against human rights has stood the test of time. His revised edition, published strategically to coincide with the centennial year of the *Komagata Maru*, exceeds my expectations.

The great value of this revised edition is Johnston's placing of South Asian migrants within the ever-complicated and often contradictory subject of empire. Johnston provides the larger context of the South Asian role not just in Britain and India but in the Caribbean, Mauritius, Fiji, Singapore, Hong Kong, and elsewhere. Returning from the macro to the micro, Johnston explains how Canadian politicians sought to exclude South Asians from the Port of Vancouver based on their race. Johnston's placing of South Asians within the Imperial project fits with current diaspora scholarship that considers the impact of imperialism on specific cultural communities.

Throughout the book, Johnston displays his ability to convey detail and context with precision and fluidity – a skill and asset that any historian or scholar might hope to achieve. And Johnston has added valuable detail to many aspects of his 1979 narrative: for example, in his deeper analysis of the impact of the Ghadar Revolutionary movement in North America (Chapter 3), and with the additional detail on the life of key Ghadarite Bhagwan Singh Jakh, where Johnston adds new information and historical context to the restriction of the passengers on the *Komagata Maru* in 1914. In addition, Johnston's key players

all become real-life characters during the three-month standoff itself, from imperial spy William Hopkinson to member of Parliament Henry Herbert Stevens to Husain Rahim of the shore committee. Johnston unveils other new pieces of information, including the little-known fact that the shore committee sent letters of help to the Maharajas of Patiala and Nabha in Punjab in an attempt to gain support for those aboard the ship. Johnston also adds new detail to the "fugitive" years of the ship's charterer, Gurdit Singh Sarhali, and the nationwide attention the tragic incident received following Indian Independence in 1947.

For any scholar of Canadian or BC history, colonialism, or empire, Johnston's revised and extended monograph on the *Komagata Maru* is a must-read. Based on an incident of which many Canadians remain unaware, Johnston weaves in many larger subjects that speak to a range of twentieth-century historical themes.



*Uprooted Again: Japanese  
Canadians Move to Japan after  
World War II*

Tatsuo Kage, translated by  
Kathleen Chisato Merken

Victoria: Ti-Jean Press, 2012. 180 pp.  
\$19.95 paper.

*Ethnic Elites and Canadian  
Identity: Japanese, Ukrainians,  
and Scots, 1919-1971*

Aya Fujiwara

Winnipeg: University of Manitoba  
Press, 2012. 288 pp. \$27.95 paper.

*Trouble on Main Street:  
Mackenzie King, Reason, Race  
and the 1907 Vancouver Riots*

Julie F. Gilmour

Toronto: Allen Lane Canada, 2014.  
256 pp. \$34.00 cloth.

JORDAN STANGER-ROSS  
*University of Victoria*

THE HISTORY of Japanese Canadians has been told in rich and powerful ways. The events of the 1940s, when Canadians of Japanese ancestry were uprooted, interned, and dispossessed by the federal government, have received particular attention in a scholarship that has conveyed the era as an outcome of long-standing structural racism, an exemplar of the unjust exercise of state power, a catalyst to postwar reconsiderations of Canadian pluralism and civil rights, and a key chapter in the memories, gendered and family histories, and political consciousness

of Japanese Canadians. The strength of this scholarship has sometimes also been its weakness: the importance of these events in the history of Canadian racism seems to compel what Kirsten McAllister (2001) describes as the “paradox of repetition” (99), wherein the repeated narrative of the 1940s obscures the heterogeneity and complexity of the Japanese-Canadian past. The three titles considered in the present review converge with one another as each of them touches, in its own way, upon the history of Japanese Canadians. They share an orientation to international contexts, but each situates itself in a distinctive fashion. Only one (Fujiwara’s) is a conventional scholarly history, while the other two are intended for popular audiences. Taken together, they point towards a historiography that escapes the “paradox of repetition” and moves towards a more varied and eclectic telling of the past.

Of the three books, Kage’s *Uprooted Again* is the most closely tied to the existing historiography on Japanese Canadians. A translation of his 1998 work in Japanese, the book tells the stories of some of the almost four thousand Japanese Canadians who were exiled to Japan in 1946. While aspects of this history – including the failure of the legal challenge to the policy and the eventual success of the political campaign to halt further deportations – are well known, too little work has been done to tell the stories of the exiles themselves, who represented almost 20 percent of the pre-war coastal Japanese-Canadian population. Supplementing oral history interviews with selective archival research, Kage tells this history in the voices of the exiles. For example, the coercion involved in the supposedly voluntary choice of “repatriation” by many Japanese Canadians is revealed in

the specifics of individual lives: a father of three children and his ailing wife accepted exile to Japan as a means of keeping the family together; a mother of a newborn child still recovering from the birth and unable to undertake a journey to eastern Canada chose instead government-sponsored exile; a fisherman “ridiculed [by officials] for expressing the ludicrous idea of returning to the west coast” acquiesced to deportation with disgust (18-19, 53). The injustice of exile, told at the level of the individuals who experienced it, flows into a similar narrative of the particular challenges faced by Japanese Canadians as they sought to establish themselves in a devastated postwar Japan. Many sought to return to Canada in the 1950s. Others succeeded in Japan but still bore the legacies of their double uprooting. As one man poignantly remarked, since his exile: “I’ve always thought that wherever I live, it’s just temporary” (56). Kage’s book, in many respects, is about this loss of place.

If Kage pushes the historiography to extend beyond national boundaries by following the paths of exiles, Fujiwara’s comparative analysis focuses on transnational concepts and myths. Drawing Japanese Canadians into historical comparison with Canadians of Ukrainian and Scottish heritage, the book spans the years 1919 to 1971, exploring how leaders in each community helped to steer Canada “from unofficial ‘Anglo-conformity’ to official multiculturalism” (3). Although, by admission of the author (18), Scots sometimes fade into the background, the comparison is novel and illuminating. Fujiwara argues that leaders of all three groups (often riven by internal differences) worked separately, but in ways that ultimately converged, to redefine “ethnicity, race, democracy, and citizenship” (13), eventually contributing to Canada’s reimagining as a multicultural society. This framing of the trajectory of

Canadian pluralism tends sometimes to flatten an uneven past, as, for example, Fujiwara underplays the enduring importance of race in Canadian public life and policy in the post-Second World War period (119, 122) and acknowledges but underestimates the controversy surrounding the Royal Commission that examined the property losses of Japanese Canadians (120-24). However, her analysis also uncovers new complexities.

Particularly revealing is a strain of analysis that runs through the book detailing the different fates of “homeland myths” in the construction of community by the Ukrainian and Japanese-Canadian ethnic elite. In the pre-war period, leaders in both groups drew mythologies of “home” and traditional sources of identity together with articulations of where immigrants fit into Canadian society. Fujiwara argues that pre-war Japanese-Canadian *issei* leaders found ways of merging their own feelings of common lineage and racial superiority with a commitment to Canadian pluralism (67). For example, in 1934, the *Tairiku nippō* newspaper argued that “maintaining racial pride and strengths would never prevent [Japanese immigrants and their children] from becoming good Canadian citizens” (57), a sentiment echoed, as previous scholars have noted, in the interwar Ukrainian press. However, this commonality of the pre-war period was lost during the Second World War. During the wartime years, nationalist Ukrainian Canadians “could renew their ethnic consciousness around their long-term goal of Ukrainian independence,” (102) while seeing their communist rivals marginalized. By contrast, Japanese Canadians were forced to abandon celebration of Japan and racial constructions of their identities, replacing these with anti-racist and assimilationist perspectives in a process that accelerated a shift in communal leadership towards

the Canadian-born *nissei* (Chapter 3). These changes, wrought during the 1940s, had enduring legacies as each group contributed very differently to the postwar emergence of multiculturalism.

The *Trouble on Main Street* is by no means conceived by its author as a work of Japanese-Canadian history. Nonetheless, the book connects with the previous two because it pivots on the “series of unplanned opportunities” (204) that presented themselves to a young William Lyon Mackenzie King after he was dispatched to oversee the federal inquiry into a landmark event in Japanese-Canadian history: the 1907 rioting in Vancouver that targeted Chinese-Canadian and Japanese-Canadian neighbourhoods. A work of biography that draws primarily upon King’s own private writings, the book proposes that his experiences as a young civil servant and then politician open “a fascinating window into Edwardian Canada and its place in the world” (3). King’s role in the inquests that followed after the riots – offering compensation to Japanese-Canadian and later Chinese-Canadian property owners – established him as a leading voice in discussions of Asian migrants in Canada, a role that, in turn, afforded him a place in sensitive and complex international negotiations, for which he travelled to England and the United States, and subsequently to India, China, and Japan. For Gilmour, this is the story of the education of an influential Canadian who learned, in the course of these travels, how to operate at the highest level of international politics and who came to believe “that a time was coming” (202) when Canada would require its own international presence. Within this framing, King’s early career is a context for understanding the subsequent evolution, under King the prime minister, of Canada’s role on the world stage and his responses to, among

other matters, the question of Europe’s displaced persons after the Second World War (205).

King was also the prime minister who presided over the uprooting, internment, and dispossession of Japanese Canadians. For readers with a focus on this aspect of his legacy, the book offers glimpses of another area of education: in his early career King was also absorbing and refining a racialized perspective on the world. In these years, King observed intense hostility within “white Canada” (54) to Asian migrants. He acquired skills of misdirection and euphemism in matters of racial discrimination against, for example, migrants supposed, falsely (113), to be “accustomed to the conditions of a tropical climate” and hence “wholly unsuited to this country” (98). In February 1909, travelling from India to China, King boarded a German ocean liner and reflected in his diary: “It is impossible to describe how refreshing it is to be again with people of one’s own colour. One becomes very tired of the black races after living among them” (168). Almost forty years later, King would teach Canadians about the “extreme difficulty of assimilating Japanese persons in Canada” (House of Commons Debates 1944). Gilmour’s book hints at the international stage upon which race ideology was learned by key figures of the mid-century.

Scholars will find that each of these works leaves room for significant further research and writing. Kage and Gilmour, as might be expected given their intended audiences, offer little analysis, and Kage’s book, in particular, is somewhat anecdotal. Fujiwara’s mishandling of some key issues – for instance in presenting Lord Tweedsmuir as a “strong advocate of ethnic pluralism” (58) and William Lyon Mackenzie King as a “sympathetic” and “moderate” voice on Japanese-Canadian matters (80–

81) – and questionable terminological choices (including her consistent use of “Japanese” instead of “Japanese Canadian”) somewhat undermine the care that she exhibits elsewhere. Nonetheless, all three books contribute to pushing the historiography that they share in new and promising directions.

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*Allied Power: Mobilizing Hydro-Electricity during Canada's Second World War*

Matthew Evenden

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. 290 pp. \$32.95 paper.

JONATHAN MCQUARRIE  
*University of Toronto*

IN *Allied Power*, Matthew Evenden expertly demonstrates how private and public power commissions and corporations throughout Canada expanded hydro-electric capacity in response to the ballooning demands for power and production during the Second World War. He argues that the war “facilitated an unprecedented expansion of state control over hydro-electric development” (8). To establish this, the book traces the federal efforts, particularly those directed by power controller Herbert J. Symington, to increase and channel hydro capacity to essential war industries like aluminum

and ammonium nitrate production, all while navigating a tangled web of private, provincial, and international power interests. In some sense, these federal efforts are presented as relatively successful as hydro capacity increased significantly in some parts of the country. However, Evenden demonstrates that this expansion of hydro power in the name of wartime expediency came at significant costs, including displacement of Aboriginal peoples like the Innu along the Peribonka River; disruption of parkland near Lake Minnewaka, Alberta; and exacerbation of regional cleavages in industrial development as provinces without significant hydro power (such as Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia) were left further behind.

Drawing from a range of archival collections throughout Canada, this book weaves several provincial accounts – notably ones in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta – into a fascinating narrative that contributes to North American histories of international relations, energy, environment, political economy, and consumption. For instance, Chapter 4 explores the impact of wartime power restrictions and how they intersected with gendered understandings of citizenship and consumption patterns within the context of long stalled Canada-US negotiations over water diversions along the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin. Sensory experiences of the darkened city, reminiscent of Joy Parr’s *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments, and the Everyday* (2010), are considered alongside the protracted St. Lawrence Seaway negotiations that were recently studied by Daniel MacFarlane in *Negotiating a River: Canada, the US, and the Creation of the St. Lawrence Seaway* (2014). A great strength of this book is the sheer number of historical conversations to which it adds.

Readers of *BC Studies* might be particularly interested in Chapter 7, “Wringing the Last Kilowatt,” which explores the origins of particularly sharp energy shortages in British Columbia in 1944, even as the war had turned decisively in the Allies’ favour. In particular, Evenden reveals how difficulties in interconnecting the two main power companies (the BC Electric Company and the West Kootenay Power and Light Company) combined with limited federal knowledge, corporate unease over public power campaigns, and an ill-timed dry spell in 1943 all contributed to power shortages. The completion of the Brilliant Dam on the Kootenay River eased these shortages, but difficulties with connecting to the BC Electric’s Lower Mainland system meant that capacity problems and debates over energy in British Columbia persisted well after the war. Evenden explores aspects of these postwar debates in his previous work, *Fish versus Power: An Environmental History of the Fraser River* (2004).

Many of the accounts in the book speak to studies of the state perspective on modernization, which explore the ramifications of the technocratic perspective that emphasized centralized planning and diminished local knowledges. The book produces glimpses of the interplay between state and local knowledges, such as the labour of Nakoda people during the dam construction near Lake Minnewaka, Alberta, (148) and of Doukhobor people in the Kootenay Valley (173). More theoretical scaffolding for studying and understanding modernization would have helped to further clarify the significance of these encounters between the central and the local. A recent model can be found in Tina Loo and Megan Stanley’s examination of postwar high modernity on the Peace and Columbia rivers

(*Canadian Historical Review* 92, 3 [2011]). Further, the extent to which wartime conditions produced exceptions in the firm connection between modernization and capitalism in Canada would bear more explicit commentary, although some discussion about Symington’s link to private power concerns are suggestive (24).

Befitting a book with national scope and wide ambitions, much of the analysis suggests new directions for study. To give but one example, the relationship between the need for constant power and the “temporal rhythms of the market” is noted and merits further consideration in other forums (104). How do rhythms, seasonality, and dry spells operate alongside the abstract views of energy marketplaces produced by state representatives like Symington, which prized predictability and measurability? I finished Evenden’s work with a mind full of new ideas and unexpected connections, and I strongly suspect that other readers will enjoy a similar experience.

*The Chinchaga Firestorm: When the Moon and Sun Turned Blue*

Cordy Tymstra and Mike Flannigan

Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2015. \$34.95 paper.

STEPHEN J. PYNE  
*Arizona State University*

SOME FIRES are justly renowned. Some are celebrities – known for being known. A few are famous for being unknown. The 1871 Peshtigo fire in the United States has long marketed itself as America’s Forgotten Fire. The Canadian equivalent may be the 1950

Chinchaga burn.

In truth, the Chinchaga fire complex has been known in the Canadian forestry community since it happened, and, over the past couple of decades, it has been studied by Peter Murphy and Cordy Tymstra, who worked out its dimensions and dynamics. But there is a difference between a big fire and a great one, and the Chinchaga complex has nestled among the big. Now Tymstra and Mike Flannigan have returned to argue that it is also a great fire in its ecological and political effects and its message for Canadian society. No longer a big burn, it is reimagined as a firestorm.

The Chinchaga fires became large because the boreal forest is extensive, unbroken by the lakes of the Canadian Shield; because the major fires started early and burned through the long season; and because, north of the Peace River, the fires were beyond the established line of control for both the British Columbia and Alberta forest services. The largest of the pack, the 1.4-million-hectare Chinchaga River Fire, merits detailed reconstruction here in its own chapter. Some 81 percent of fire spread occurred over a fifteen-day period, the bulk during the great wind of 20–22 September 1950.

It's harder to demonstrate the Chinchaga fires' significance beyond that staggering scale. They didn't get recorded in official statistics or fire atlases. They didn't seem to influence major policy shifts, which were under way for other reasons. They didn't burn in or over communities as did the 2003 Okanagan Mountain Park Fire, near Kelowna, and the 2011 Slave Lake Fire. Their major influence was an extraordinary plume – what became known as the Great Smoke Pall – that, “sandwiched” between inversions, stayed aloft for seven days while it trended southeast to the United States before warping northeastward and turning the sun and moon blue in

Scotland. The pall and its effects merit two chapters.

The text covers a lot of topics – anything that might give explanation, context, or comparison to the Chinchaga fires. But like the scattering of light by which smoke obscures visibility, a narrative scatter blurs rather than sharpens the contours. The text bounces from fact-particle to fact-particle, from one research project to another, from people who are introduced in 1952 and who then reappear in 1948. The authors note that a fire prevention program in the Peace River Country was a “huge success,” as reported by the *Peace River Record Gazette* on 21 September 1950; yet this was exactly the time of the great surge of burning (122). The fires were singular, yet “not an anomaly” (133). The Chinchaga River Fire had “lasting impacts,” yet it is absent from the 1957 forest cover map of Alberta that “represents the first view of Alberta's forests” before modern fire suppression ramped up (xxiv, 13). A kind of explanatory pall hangs over the book that impresses by its dimensions yet can confuse in its details.

This is surely the definitive account of the Chinchaga complex. It will be welcomed by the North American fire community and by anyone interested in the settlement of the Boreal Plains Ecozone of western Canada.



*Made in British Columbia:  
Eight Ways of Making Culture*

Maria Tippett

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,  
2015. 272 pp. \$32.95 cloth.

MICHAEL KLUCKNER  
*Vancouver*

AT FIRST GLANCE, I was sceptical of *Made in British Columbia*. What more could possibly be written about painter Emily Carr or architects Francis Rattenbury and Arthur Erickson? But Maria Tippett's carefully crafted biographies of them, and of novelist Martin Grainger, writer/critic George Woodcock, playwright George Ryga, composer Jean Coulthard, and artist Bill Reid, deftly examine their artistic legacy on the Left Coast.

The subtitle of the book refers to "making culture" rather than to "making a culture"; it is in the subjects' distinctive oeuvres, and the paths they took to create them, that the book becomes more than the sum of its parts. As Tippett writes in her epilogue, the shaping of British Columbia's culture "has more than one plot" (231). She makes no distinction between the fine arts – painting, music, and fiction-writing – and the applied arts, such as architecture, non-fiction-writing, and jewellery-making, and she focuses the same level of analysis on each.

Her subtext suggests a British Columbia that was a wilderness Eden once occupied only by Nature's innocents ("One can only wonder what the Lekwammen people must have thought" [22]) who were dispossessed of their land and culture, a theme that becomes focused in analyses of the work of Grainger, Carr, and Reid. No human-made landscape, the book implies, could equal the glory of the natural cathedral.

Her interpretations of broad themes of art, and of artists' lives, make worthwhile reading, especially in understanding the patterns that unite and separate them. The majority – Rattenbury, Carr, Woodcock, Coulthard, and Erickson – applied foreign-learned techniques and aesthetics to their work. Carr, Woodcock, and Ryga could be said to be Outsiders versus the Establishment, while Coulthard and Erickson benefited greatly from parental support and connections. Rattenbury, Carr, and Erickson were lucky, while Woodcock achieved his literary reputation through vast productivity and dogged persistence. Rattenbury, Woodcock, Reid, and Erickson were relentlessly and successfully self-promotional, while Carr, Ryga, and Coulthard struggled along more like the solitary artists of legend.

Carr, Woodcock, and Reid were initially successful elsewhere, if only in eastern Canada, giving them credibility at home; Carr and Coulthard, especially, were disadvantaged by living in British Columbia rather than in, say, culture-centric Toronto. Ryga and Woodcock used their art as a vehicle for social change. Reid and Erickson happily took sole credit for collaborative efforts. As Tippett notes, all wanted to move "beyond provincialism" (192), meaning they wanted their work to speak to tastemakers in bigger, older, more important cities. The CBC is mentioned many times and was germane to the success of Woodcock, Ryga, and Reid.

All the voices are culturally white, including Reid's with his "artifakes" (180), reflecting his conflicted part-Haida ancestry. Tippett provides an interesting analysis of the appropriation debates that challenged both Reid's and Carr's work; however, some comparison with, for example, the development of Inuit art and its introduction into the museums



and galleries of southern Canada would have been welcome.

The odd one out is Englishman Martin Grainger, author of *Woodsmen of the West*. Published in London in 1908, it was more successful there than in British Columbia and was out of print until 1964. It is read “less as a work of imagination than as a documentary chronicle” (30). His is the only true *colonial* story, of “man” exploiting the wilderness, whereas all of the others pursued their muses amidst a more settled society.

Missing from the collection and analysis is an Asian-ancestry voice, perhaps a writer’s. Tippett’s very few missteps concern people of Japanese ancestry, 21,079 of whom, not 27,000 (202), were removed from the coast in 1942. Raymond Moriyama, Tak Tanabe, and Joy Kogawa “never had a chance to gain early recognition ... for the simple reason that they were interned” (233) – they were only sixteen, nineteen, and nine, respectively, when the war ended. Architect Kenzo Tange becomes Tange Kenzo in the text (214).

In her epilogue, Tippett notes that the contemporary artistic scene is considerably more diverse than the one she has written about. British Columbians such as artists Ken Lum and Ian Wallace are now “exporting their culture” (237). Pop culture goes unmentioned – perhaps a future volume could tackle that subject? And, finally, she does right one wrong of many previous, including recent, works on Erickson: the voice of architect Geoffrey Massey, long subsumed in the tsunami of hagiography about his former partner, is clearly heard.

## *Writing the Okanagan*

George Bowering

Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2015.

320 pp. \$24.95 paper.

IAN POOLEY

*Kelowna*

GEORGE BOWERING’S new anthology, *Writing the Okanagan*, is a collection of Bowering’s fiction associated through setting, choice of characters, or autobiographical referents with the Okanagan, chiefly the south Okanagan, where he grew up. Many of the pieces, poetry, short stories, and excerpts from longer works use the town of Oliver, where Bowering’s father taught high school chemistry, as a backdrop.

Some of the sharply framed pieces draw on Bowering’s own experiences of life in a small farming town; they include baseball games viewed from the rickety press booth on top of the bleachers, where the teenage Bowering worked as a sports reporter, the rites de passage of youth, summer jobs on orchards and in the local packing house, and a story about a self-conscious young man returning to his home town for a class reunion. Bowering is particularly good at evoking, without indulging in nostalgia, an adolescent’s identification with the local landscape, in this case the dry, sagebrush-covered hills surrounding the town, a place that offered escape from the stifling routines of small-town life, and room for contemplation and solitude to a creative and ambitious high school student.

As a writer of fiction, Bowering has the freedom to mischievously insert invented characters into the local setting. I enjoyed finding a thinly disguised D.H. Lawrence preparing to meet a rattlesnake, a very well read vigilante heroine passing the night at the mining town of Fairview,

and a talented female disciple of W.H. Auden writing poetry on the sly in an unobtrusive cottage tucked away in a peach orchard.

The compact space of an anthology can cause problems, particularly for poetry. "Desert Elm," a longer poem about Bowering's father, suffers from the omission of several verses. However, even in an excerpted prose piece, like the fragment reprinted from *Cars*, Bowering's terse style is funny and satisfying, sufficient in itself: "my buddy Willy would say to a girl from Osoyoos, maybe, want to go for a spin in my snappy red convertible, and what he had was a 1954 Morris Minor with the top sawed off" (250).

Oliver has a strong cultural connection with the Okanagan First Nations, and the anthology contains several articles and poems that touch on First Nations in the Okanagan Valley. It includes a short sketch from his novel *Shoot!* that contains a fictionalized portrayal of a First Nations man whom Bowering calls "Windy Bones." The portrayal succinctly hits the mark: "Windy has a sense of humour that tells you that you had better be content to be a white man surrounded by irony" (246).

Particularly moving is Bowering's essay on Mourning Dove, born Christine Quintasket in Idaho in 1885, one of the earliest North American First Nations women to write a novel. Before writing the piece, Bowering visited her grave in Okanogan, Washington. He outlines her struggles to be a writer and her close ties with her First Nations family north of the border, which included both of her grandfathers and one of her grandmothers. Mourning Dove herself taught at what Bowering calls "the Indian school" north of Osoyoos in 1917.

Throughout the book, Bowering's lyrical sense of place shines through, both in descriptive passages and in evocations of

local people. As he says himself: "You don't cast aside your boyhood *locus*; it remains as part of the breath and sound trying to make what you are trying to make. Trying even now, forty-nine years on" (37).

### *Okanagan Artists in Their Studios*

Patricia Ainslie

Calgary: Frontenac House, 2013. 208 pp. \$50.00 cloth.

MARIA TIPPETT

*Cambridge University*

IT IS OFTEN said that the images that come to mind when thinking or writing about the cultural history of British Columbia are the province's varied landscape and the art of the First Nations people. One look at Patricia Ainslie's *Okanagan Artists in Their Studios* tells a different story. Among the thirteen artists featured in this book are three landscape painters: Joice M. Hall, David Alexander, and Ann Kipling. And there is one sculptor, Byron Johnson, whose installations comprise cast-off farm implements. Yet these artists are in the minority. While Bryan Ryley's studio might be surrounded by dense woods, the source of his stunning non-objective paintings and collages comes from within: "I am searching for a language wherein perceptual change is activated through a constant flux of elements from one edge of the painting to the other" (26). Jock Hildebrand's bronze and stone sculptures, among which are *Dancing Pedestrians* (2001), speak to the human form rather than to the landscape. And while photographer Fern Helfand might have turned her camera to clear-cut logging in West

Kelowna, it is in her photographs and digital montages of Inner Mongolia, Las Vegas, and Paris that she finds her “voice” as a photographer.

So why did Patricia Ainslie choose to approach the artists featured in her book through their studios? Was she inspired by Robert Amos’s *Artists in Their Studios, Where Art Is Born* (TouchWood, 2007)? Did this approach offer the only way of coming to grips with the mélange of styles and subject matter of her chosen artists? Or did the author feel that viewing artists’ studios was “user-friendly” in that it offered her readers a segue into the sometimes difficult-to-understand contemporary art of the twenty-first century?

Ainslie gives her own view. “Artists surround themselves with objects and materials that are an intrinsic part of their ideas, thought processes and work” (7) and, she continues, they “are the sanctuaries that inspire their work” (8). The spaces featured in *Okanagan Artists in Their Studios* are as different as are the artists. Julie Oakes’s studio on the outskirts of Vernon is high-walled and pristine. The arched stained-glass windows and vaulted ceiling of Jim Kalnin’s studio-home leaves no doubt that this space was once St. Mary’s Anglican Church. On the other hand, there is little romance in Fern Helfand’s multi-screen computer-printer dominated studio. Only David Alexander’s studio fulfills the cliché of what we think an artist’s studio should look like: splattered paint dishes and brushes, rolls of canvases, and a cabinet stocked with art books. In the midst of this apparent chaos stands the artist looking at his work.

Patricia Ainslie presents these interior images to us through the eyes of her photographer, Glenna Turnbull, who played no small role in shaping this beautifully presented and informative look at artists and their studios in the Okanagan.

*The West Coast Modern  
House: Vancouver Residential  
Architecture*

Greg Bellerby

Vancouver: Figure 1 Publishing and  
the Charles H. Scott Gallery, 2014.  
175 pp. \$45.00 paper.

*Finding a Good Fit:  
The Life and Work of Architect  
Rand Iredale*

Kathryn Iredale with Sheila  
Martineau

Vancouver: Blueimprint and  
Kathryn Iredale, 2008. 375 pp.  
\$49.95 paper.

HAROLD KALMAN  
*Vancouver*

WEST COAST Modernism describes a particular brand of mid-twentieth-century architecture that developed in the Vancouver region, a style much talked about but not widely published. The firms most closely associated with the manner include Thompson, Berwick, and Pratt; Hollingsworth and Downs; and Erickson Massey. This mid-century style developed in parallel with International Style Modernism, which prevailed in central Canada, led by Toronto’s John B. Parkin Associates. The two variants of modernism shared many features. Both abandoned historicism, featured vertical posts and horizontal beams with flat roofs, used large expanses of glass, and adopted open planning. The West Coast version distinguished itself by exploiting wood as the main structural and cladding material, developing a particularly

close relationship between building and landscape, and exploiting post-and-beam construction aesthetically as well as structurally.

Gallery director and curator Greg Bellerby focuses on the style's residential buildings in *The West Coast Modern House*. He reprints a landmark 1947 article on the emerging style by architect-protagonist C.E. (Ned) Pratt and follows this with two short essays: "Landscape and the West Coast Modern House" by architectural historian Jana Tyner and "The Next Modern House" by architectural educator Chris Macdonald. The principal section is a collection of fifty-three houses built between 1940 and 1966. Each features a short description and superb black-and-white photographs, mostly from *Western Homes and Living*. The monthly magazine, launched in 1950, documented new residential architecture and commissioned talented architectural photographers, principally Selwyn Pullan (subject of a recent monograph), John Fulker, and Graham Warrington. The final section offers colour photos of selected "contemporary" (1990-2014) houses.

The book is a pleasure to thumb through but thin on critical analysis. The houses have been thoughtfully selected to represent what are arguably the finest domestic buildings by both familiar and forgotten architects. In contrast to Macdonald's and Tyner's general insights, however, Bellerby's introductory chapter and the descriptions of the houses provide no new observations.

One architect omitted from Bellerby's book is W. Randle (Rand) Iredale (1929-2000). He opened his practice in 1957 and soon joined in partnership with William Rhone. Rhone and Iredale Architects (1960-80), along with Thompson, Berwick and Pratt, was one of two incubator offices that immersed a generation of

Vancouver architects and planners in West Coast Modernism.

In *Finding a Good Fit*, Iredale's widow, Kathryn Iredale, perpetuates her husband's memory and presents his work as a designer and educator. The book takes the reader on a quirky but delightful journey, combining the personal memories of Kathryn and their children with a biographical narrative and descriptions of about forty projects in architecture and planning, ranging in scale from the powerhouse and associated buildings built for the W.A.C. Bennett Dam to modest residences. Iredale's UBC student seminars in Venice and at the family's Mayne Island retreat rounded out his professional work. Kathryn Iredale's text is supplemented with excerpts from Rand's writings (principally his *Project Manager's Manual*, 1997), the architectural press, professional reports, and comments by colleagues. The book offers a wealth of insights, if relatively little new analysis, although it would have benefited from a firmer structure and tighter editing.

*Last Dance in Shediac:  
Memories of Mum,  
Molly Lamb Bobak*

Anny Scoones

Victoria: TouchWood Editions, 2015.  
192 pp. \$19.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT  
*Cambridge University*

**T**HIS IS A very peculiar book. Although its subject is an artist, the Vancouver-born painter Molly Lamb Bobak, the first female war artist in Canada, there is little about Bobak's art.

Molly Bobak did much more than record the Women's Army Corps (WACS) during the closing days of the Second

World War. Working largely in the watercolour medium she painted exquisite “portraits” of flowers and crowds. I would have expected a book about Bobak to compare her affinity with the flower painter Winifred Nicholson, whose work Bobak would have encountered when she and her painter-husband, Bruno, lived in England during the 1950s. I would have expected the author to compare Bobak’s stick-like figures to the oil paintings of another English painter, L.S. Lowry. And, indeed, to tell us about Bobak’s extraordinary father, Harold Mortimer Lamb, whose own paintings, photographs, and, above all, participation in Vancouver’s cultural life during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s helped build artistic reputations, including that of Emily Carr, and make culture in British Columbia what it is to this day. But this book is not about Molly Bobak the artist. As the subtitle of *Last Dance in Shediac* makes clear, this is Anny Scoones’s recollection of Molly Bobak as a mother. Moreover, on the few occasions when the author ventures into artistic territory, descriptive phrases like “humanistic painting” fall flat (48).

*Last Dance in Shediac* is annoyingly self-indulgent; but, although the author rambles from one subject and from one time frame to another, the book somehow works. This is because the author structures her narrative around road trips made with her mother on both sides of Canada, particularly during the closing years of Molly Bobak’s very long life. Scoones also writes about the tensions that existed between Molly and Bruno. She explores Molly Bobak’s physical decline and her own struggle to broach geographic distances and to cope with nursing homes and all the other things associated with death and dying (Bobak died in 2014 at the age of ninety-four).

Anny Scoones shows, above all, what it was like to be the child of an artist-

couple: “Mum and Dad were part of a bigger world than their family. For their art to be honest and free and worthwhile, they had to be open to more than just being paternal or maternal.” “Children of artists and creative thinkers,” she concludes, “must accept this” (147).

Scoones explores all of these themes brilliantly. And anyone who might be disappointed in not learning more about Molly Lamb Bobak the artist will come away from *Last Dance in Shediac* with something that transcends art.

*Live at the Commodore:  
The Story of Vancouver’s Historic  
Commodore Ballroom*

Aaron Chapman

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press,  
2014. 206 pp. \$28.95 paper.

DAVID WRIGHT  
*Douglas College*

FROM THE beginning, Aaron Chapman is clear about his intentions for *Live at the Commodore: The Story of Vancouver’s Historic Commodore Ballroom*. The renowned Granville Street concert venue is a place where “the history of the room is the history of how Vancouver has entertained itself” (ii). Chapman’s large-format book is full of pictures of the ballroom’s past, present, and future; scattered concert ephemera and paraphernalia accompany the in-depth historical record. The anecdotes and materials Chapman collects speak loudly to the cultural history that has passed through the doors of this venerable Vancouver institution.

Beginning with a brief history of Vancouver itself, Chapman sets the historical scene of 1920s Vancouver

into which the Commodore was born. Referencing the shifting landscape of Granville Street, Chapman moves chronologically through the Commodore's early cabaret days to its current status as a live music and entertainment venue.

More than simply a musical history, Chapman's book combines the visual scope and presentation qualities of a good coffee-table book with an in-depth cultural history. Numerous images of Commodore ephemera – floor plans, tickets, menus, concert bills – help the text work through key junctures in both the ballroom's history and Vancouver's. The text never lingers too long, moving quickly to the next representative figure, cultural scene, or musical act that might serve as an exemplar of the Commodore's significant historical value.

The book might be accused of relying too heavily on anecdote and reportage after it leaves the confines of a well documented pre-1950s cabaret history and moves into a prolonged survey of arguably the Commodore's high-water mark as a concert venue in the 1970s through to the early 1990s. That said, some of the book's more colourful tales come at precisely this juncture and provide counterpoint to the established history. We move briskly through the eclectic musical acts representing movements such as the Blues Revival, Punk, New Wave, and Grunge. Pictures of Kiss, playing with all their makeup, attitude, and high-booted style, to an audience of fewer than a thousand, and Nirvana's debut as an opening act for another less-iconic band, are both representative examples of how Chapman's book underscores the role cultural institutions such as the Commodore play in anointing, supporting, and facilitating shifting cultural moments.

There is a prevailing sense of loss in the book. A tone that suggests that things

are not the same as they used to be and that the Commodore's days are numbered even as its doors remain open. To this end, the book is a wonderful example of the odd paradox that permeates histories of buildings: there is a tendency to lament the loss of something that is still there. The ephemera the book collects, both through text and image, while certainly referencing the ballroom, speak more to the different socio-cultural eras hosted by the Commodore's uniquely sprung dance floor. To that end, Chapman undoubtedly accomplishes what he sets out to do: show that the stories about the entertainment history of Vancouver are indeed etched in the walls of the Commodore Ballroom.

*No Regrets: Counter-Culture  
and Anarchism in Vancouver*

Larry Gambone

Edmonton: Blackcat Press, 2015.  
200 pp. \$19.95 paper.

ERYK MARTIN  
*Simon Fraser University*

SINCE THE 1960s, anarchist activism has played a critical role in shaping the radical political landscape of Vancouver. Nevertheless, there are very few scholarly considerations of this history. Instead, most of the work that has gone into documenting anarchism's recent past has come from activists themselves, many of whom were participants in the assorted array of anarchist political and cultural initiatives that emerged at the end of the 1960s and expanded rapidly across the 1970s and 1980s. Larry Gambone's autobiography, *No Regrets: Counter-Culture and Anarchism in Vancouver*, is an exciting and thoughtful contribution to this body of writing. Through a

compelling personal narrative, the author effectively demonstrates how anarchism and the counterculture shaped Vancouver's radical history, and he passionately defends their continuing relevance in the present.

Starting with Gambone's early experiences in the Comox Valley during the 1950s, the author quickly moves to describe and explain the politics, activism, and culture of the radical left in Vancouver during the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s. In doing so, Gambone discusses his involvement with a host of left-wing movements and cultural influences. These include the bohemias of the beatnik scene, the counterculture, and an eclectic array of Maoist, Trotskyist, and anarchist political traditions. From this narrative, Gambone effectively explores the complicated political diversity of the New Left and argues that the activism and culture of the 1960s was crucially important for the expansion of social movements in the decades that followed.

At the same time, the author situates this personal narrative within a wider pattern of social activism taking place both locally and globally. Gambone places his personal involvement with the growth of the counterculture, the student New Left, anti-war protests, environmental activism, labour and community organizing, and the creation of a dynamic array of anarchist political projects taking place in Vancouver into a broad geographical context. In doing so, he demonstrates that activists in Vancouver filtered local experiences through a global political imagination. *No Regrets* also illustrates that activists in Vancouver did more than merely imagine themselves as part of a larger political community; rather, they actively created links with activists in other places, connections that facilitated the movement of people, ideas, and material

items between Vancouver and the wider world.

Narrated with both humour and wit, Gambone's autobiography provides an accessible and engaging entry point into a series of social, political, and cultural themes that have defined recent historical writing on activism in the postwar period, from the fluidity of the New Left to the influence of transnationalism to the legacies of the long sixties. At the same time, he also provides a passionate examination of anarchism's contributions to modern political life, a topic that has been constantly underappreciated or misunderstood. In the end, *No Regrets* tells a fascinating story about Vancouver's radical past that will be of interest to academics, activists, and the general public alike.

*Cold Case Vancouver: The City's Most Baffling Unsolved Murders*

Eve Lazarus

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2015.  
184 pp. \$21.95 paper.

BONNIE REILLY SCHMIDT  
*Vancouver*

EVE LAZARUS's fascination with Vancouver's history continues with her latest book, *Cold Case Vancouver: The City's Most Baffling Unsolved Murders*. Crime buffs and readers interested in true crime literature or in understanding how police investigate serious crime will find the book a satisfying read. Lazarus examines nineteen of the city's most troubling unsolved murders, which are arranged chronologically in the book, beginning with the murder of Jenny Conroy in 1944 and ending with the murder of Vivien Morzuch in 2000. Although most of

the cases may be unfamiliar to today's readers, they were sensational events that shook the city when they occurred.

Lazarus relies on a number of sources, in addition to media accounts, to create a more in-depth telling of each murder, including vital statistics records, obituaries, autopsy reports, and police files (10). She also relies on oral history interviews with friends (110, 135, 138) and family members (66, 128) of the victims, some of whom were the last people to see them alive. Although some of the memories shared with Lazarus are seventy years old, the trauma of losing a loved one to a violent death was evident in much of the interview material quoted in the text.

These interviews are the strength of the book for the simple reason that they humanize the victims. Rather than "cold cases," the victims are presented as people with productive and promising lives that included family and friends who loved them and missed them long after they were gone. Lazarus notes in her introduction that, even though the victims are "invisible, forgotten by everyone" decades later, she felt it was important to tell the "stories of their lives" as well as their deaths (11).

Lazarus also interviewed retired police officers, and their narratives demonstrate that solving crime is sometimes the result of good luck rather than skill. This was true for the only murder in the book that was successfully solved (Chapter 19). Luck played an important role in solving the murder of Vivien Morzuch after a fingerprint analyst in Ottawa partially matched a thumbprint from the murder scene to the fingerprints of a suspect in an unrelated crime. The chance analysis led to a chain of events that resulted in the successful conviction of the murderer seven years later (167).

Some readers may be astounded by the techniques used, and the oversights

and assumptions made, by the police when investigating crime in the previous century. Before scientific advances in the preservation of evidence, and before DNA technology, evidence was often lost, destroyed, thrown out, or compromised at the scene. Assumptions about race, class, gender, and sexual orientation also influenced how the police conducted their investigations and how the media reported on the crimes. Lazarus does not shy away from examining the role these assumptions played. We can only speculate about whether the outcomes for the murders of an unwed mother (22), a Métis child (42), and a homosexual (57) may have been different if socially constructed assumptions about the victims had not been a factor in how many people understood the murders.

To her credit, Lazarus ends the book with an appeal to the public for more information about these unsolved cases, no matter how old or how insignificant the information may seem. In doing this, she seeks closure for the families and justice for those who lost their lives during the commission of some of Vancouver's most infamous crimes.

