

BOOK REVIEWS

*The Name of War:
King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*

Jill Lepore

New York: Knopf, 1999. 337 pp. Illus., maps. \$42 cloth.

By Christopher Hannibal Paci
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To question the carnivalesque mood is a graceless role ... But the alternative is to participate in the postmodern carnival without understanding its rules, implications, origins or consequences ... understand the rules governing the exchange between the modern West, the postmodern West, and the versions of the primitive they have created or endorsed ... to make impossible innocent reenactments of the dramas of us and them that have been staged and restaged in the modern West's encounters with primitive Others.

Marianna Torgovnick
*Gone Primitive: Savage
Intellects, Modern Lives*
(1990, 41)

I PUT OFF READING Jill Lepore's much acclaimed *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity*, even though I had heard it was well written, which it is. I was afraid that this would be an "innocent reenactment." Lepore, in her telling of 'Indian wars,' is turning blood into ink and delving into the rules that governed this exchange. It is a study of King Philip's (Metacom's) War, fought by Wampanoag,

Nipmuck, Pocumtuks, Narragansetts, and Abenaki Algonquians against New Englanders allied with Pequot, Mohegan, and Mohawks. The war was triggered in 1675 after three Wampanoag men were hung for the death of John Sassamon. Metacom was killed in 1676, and there were a number of deaths on both sides, along with loss of property. Lepore's writing reflects a new school of revisionist history, and, characteristically, it reads well as literature.

What made me hesitate to read this book was its topic: war. However, spring was beginning to take hold along the Fraser River, so I felt I was ready. Given the war waging in Kosovo and the peace treaty making in British Columbia, *The Name of War* is relevant and can tell us something about our postmodern condition. It is "a story about war, and how people write about it" (ix). Lepore's retelling of the conflicts between Algonquians and New Englanders, through analysis of published accounts and literary documents created by New Englanders (the story being recast, for instance, in the forms of theatre and monuments), is about more than war stories. It is also about the negotiations of colonization, the resulting uneven clash of cultures, uncertain com-

petition between new/old/hybrid, and fears released by transmuting identities. The bloody and wordy events carry forward and reverberate. "Wounds and words – the injuries and their interpretations cannot be separated, the acts of war generate acts of narration, and that both types of acts are often joined in a common purpose: defining the geographical, political, cultural, and sometimes racial and national boundaries between people (x).

But what does American history have to say to our postmodern identities this side of the Rockies? There is a lingering myth that British Columbia coastal history and identity did not begin until after 1750 (with the Russians) or after 1793 (with Captain Vancouver) and that the Interior was not discovered until after Simon Fraser's party charted it in 1806. If this is erasure then it is attributable, perhaps, to a history without ears for First Nations orality. Native history has been silenced by an erected "western stage front" that presents an idyllic and romantic past and that is privileged by a history defined almost exclusively through colonial filters. One aspect of BC identity is war, but what do we know of war in British Columbia? Compared to what has been written concerning the armed conflicts in eastern Canada, such as the Iroquois and Huron wars (now made famous by the movie *Black Robe*), and Métis warfare at Red River and Batoche, little has been written on what occurred in British Columbia. Father Adrian Gabriel Morice (in *Historical Essays on British Columbia*, ed. J. Friesen and H.K. Ralston, 1976, 9) wrote that at Chinlac (*Chunlac*), at the confluence of the Stuart and Nechako Rivers, in 1745 the Chilcotin raided the Lower Carrier camp. Khadintel (*Canadiendell*), chief at

Chunlac, avenged the attacks by Khalhpan (*Khalhban*). War stories tell much about a people. A secondary effect of the treaty process in British Columbia is compiling documentation that shows that traditional land use was based equally on access to rich resources and on war.

Lepore's subject is post-contact cross-cultural conflicts:

The colonists' dilemma between peacefully degenerating into barbarians or fighting like savages: wage the war, and win it, by whatever means necessary, and then write about it, to win it again. The first would be a victory of wounds, the second a victory of words. Even if they inflicted on the Indians as much cruelty as the Spanish had, New Englanders could distance themselves from that cruelty in the words they used to write about it, the same way the English had when writing about the Irish. (11)

If the roots of war creep somewhere between justice and tyranny, then its fruits fall somewhere between history and myth. *The Name of War* is about a specific war, demarcated by time and space, but it is also more than that because it is a retelling of the roots of colonial wars and American identity. The face of war remains human. A slightly critical gaze into the eyes of the past reveals our own eyes. The voice of war holds the same resonance over 300 years later. Lepore's point is that the language of war is constantly shifting, as the similarities/differences of aggressors and victims are negotiated. According to Lepore, "words are at the center of the encounter between the Old World and the New, between the European 'self' and the Native American 'other'" (xiv). The

security of American identity faltered amidst the colonizing English (more civilized than the Spanish), the English who were afraid of becoming savage (i.e., becoming Indian), the formation of an American identity that took into account an Indian past, and an American identity that was a product of the melting pot.

This skillfully structured war of words is set in four parts. In the first part of the book, Lepore exposes the language of war, focusing on the dominant methodological practices of linguistics and documents. The cultural roots, tensions, and literary conventions of war are attacked. Writings about Philip's war flourished in the eight years after 1675 (twenty-one published accounts, not one of which was Algonquian). Resistance has produced alternative versions of the war.

In part two, Philip's war is examined as mostly English misinterpretations of Algonquians. As well as Lepore's explanations for Algonquian defences against incursions of colonialism, I would posit that Algonquians were equally provoked by English materialism and stinginess. The war is explained through various combinations of religion, politics, and language, and it begs the unanswered question: was this a holy war? Read and you can be the judge.

Part three introduces bondage into the discussion of war. To the already diverse collection of source materials is added the captivity narrative. What it meant to be "captivated" by Algonquians depended on gender and race. Transfixed by war are, among other things, social categories and boundaries; for instance, "praying Indians" became "preying Indians." Both English and Algonquian paranoia treated such cultural mediators as Algonquians who could read and write English as bridges

to be burned, prisoners to be enslaved. Interestingly, Englishmen who could read and write Algonquian were not treated this way, perhaps because their social status was not suspect.

The final part of the book throws back the veils of war to reveal issues regarding memory, reminding readers that battles, victories, and defeats are not simply products of a moment in time but continue to resonate in each re-telling. War stories are recast for/by conquest cultures. Stories, like objects of war, are worn to adorn and denigrate.

If Algonquians have the rich oral tradition of King Philip, then Lepore has not tapped more than a pedestrian view of how they saw things. Reading Lepore with the blue sky in Hope (city of peace), British Columbia, gave me the strength to seek some meaning in this history for here and now. Overall, the writing in this book wavers between history and prose, though it is not as extreme as what Linda Hutcheon, in *The Politics of Postmodernism* (1989), defines as historiographic metafiction (e.g., Rudy Wiebe's *The Temptations of Big Bear* [1973]). An interesting rhetorical device used by Lepore is repetition. She tells a story, for instance about the captivity and return of Mary Rowlandson and the amnesty of James Printer, from several different perspectives. This repetition serves to reinforce her arguments from multiple perspectives, which avoids becoming too much of an annoyance. While Philip's War is placed into a larger legal context, with a sketch of the international legal debates of de Las Casas and Sepúlveda, North American politics are unaccounted for. Reading New England history could have been made stronger, for instance, by at least referencing what was happening in New France, which would have been readily available to Lepore in the *Jesuit Relations*.

With impressive endnotes, *The Name of War and the Origins of American*

Identity is well worth reading. The subject matter is both relevant and interesting.

The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7

Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council with Walter Hildebrandt,
Sarah Carter, and Dorothy First Rider

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press,
1996. 408 pp. Illus, maps. \$19.95 paper.

By Kenichi Matsui

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IN 1991, THE TREATY 7 TRIBAL Council of southern Alberta began extensively collecting elders' oral accounts concerning their ancestors' "true spirit and original intent" in signing the 1877 agreement. Adding interviews of elders collected in the 1970s, this significant effort enabled *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7* to provide the voices of nearly ninety elders from the Blood Tribe and the Peigan, Siksika (Blackfoot), Stoney, and Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee) Nations. The elders of these First Nations have passed on the memories of the treaty-making process to their people for more than a century. Now they have decided to publicize their voices for the education of their youths and non-Indian people. The elders and the tribal council believe that the elders' accounts should be an important part of our understanding of treaty-making history in Canada.

In the book, the elders' voices are fragmented according to topics, but they all persistently indicate that their ancestors never meant to surrender their land by signing Treaty 7. The elders contend that it was a sacred alliance of peace with the government

of Canada and other First Nations peoples. The Blackfoot call Treaty 7 *istsist aohkotspi*, translated in this book as "the time when we made a sacred alliance" (4). The Native leaders who signed the treaty believed that their people would benefit politically and economically from making peace because it would secure their physical, cultural, and spiritual survival after the disappearance of the buffalo. It would also bring alternative ways of life with new farming technology, medical care, and education. They initially welcomed the newcomers, being willing to share the land for harvesting crops. However, as Red Crow, a prominent leader at the treaty negotiation, stated clearly to government commissioners in 1877, the land was not for sale because "it was put there by the Creator for the Indians' benefit and use" (114).

The testimony of the elders also indicates that poor communication led the First Nations and the government to interpret the treaty differently. The problems translators had in attempting to explain the Western legal concept of land surrender made it more difficult for First Nations peoples to comprehend what treaty commis-

sioners said to them. For example, they did not understand the concept of "cede" or "surrender," nor did they understand the idea of measuring land by the square mile. In addition, the commissioners did not deal with oral culture properly when they asked the tribal leaders to sign the treaty. According to the elders' recollections, the commissioners had already written X's on the treaty document and asked the elders simply to touch the pen to them to acknowledge the signature. After signing the treaty, the practice of favouritism by Indian agents resulted in the unequal treatment of Native people with regard to the distribution of government aid as well as to White ranchers further encroaching upon reserve land. Today the elders still bitterly and vividly recall these experiences.

The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7 serves its original intent well, giving readers a First Nations perspective on the treaty-making process. Chapters in Parts 2 and 3 also provide scholarly interpretations of the treaty. The problem with these

chapters, however, is that they include many redundancies and fail to use important historical documents. In addition, Chapters 4 and 5, which analyze the effect of Treaty 7, should have examined the impact of implementing the Indian Act, the Dominion Lands Act, 1872; the North-West Territories Act, 1886; and the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, 1930. This would have been especially helpful to readers because some elders mention that the conflicts between the treaty and these acts affected the lives of the Treaty 7 Nations. The North-West Territories Act and the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement, for example, had a grave impact on the rights of the Treaty 7 Nations. They are currently challenging these acts in court. In spite of these problems, this book makes readers aware of the importance of listening to First Nations voices in order to gain a more balanced understanding of the history of Indian/non-Indian relations in Canada and the origins of current legal disputes.

On the North Trail: The Treaty 8 Diary of O.C. Edwards

David Leonard and Beverly Whalen, editors

Edmonton: Historical Society of Alberta, 1998. 122 pp.

Illus., maps. \$19.95 paper

By Melinda Marie Jetté
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IN THE SUMMER OF 1900, the federal government sent a third commission to the District of Athabaska to secure additional treaty adhesions and scrip arrangements under the provisions of Treaty 8. Headed

by James Ansdell Macrae, inspector of Indian agencies, the commission of 1900 also included Dr. Oliver Cromwell Edwards. *On the North Trail* is O.C. Edwards' diary of the commission's travels in the Athabaska

country. Here published for the first time, Edwards' diary is the only existing detailed account of the expedition. Editors David Leonard and Beverly Whalen note that *On the North Trail* is comparable to Charles Mair's diary of the 1899 Half-Breed Commission, which was published in 1908 under the title *Through the MacKenzie Basin*. If Edwards lacks some of Mair's literary flair, the doctor does provide the particulars on peoples, places, and conditions not recorded by Mair.

Leonard and Whalen have done their best to remain faithful to the spirit of the original manuscript, which is housed at the Glenbow-Alberta Museum and Archives. In the brief but informative introduction to the diary, the editors place the document in its historical context, provide an overview of the journal, and introduce readers to the main protagonist, Dr. O.C. Edwards (1850-1915). The inclusion of Dr. Edwards in the 1900 party stemmed from the government's traditional treaty responsibility to provide medical care for Aboriginal peoples. Edwards was a native of Ottawa, a member of a wealthy liberal family, and husband to the well-known feminist Henrietta Muir Edwards. In 1900 he was fifty years old and had spent several long periods working in private practice at Qu'Appelle and Regina as well as in the service of the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) in the Treaty 4 region.

In the diary, Edwards devotes considerable space to descriptions of the daily grind of travelling. Edwards comments on socio-economic realities, especially regarding the shift from a barter system to a cash economy that accompanied the Hudson's Bay Company's loss of its trade monopoly and the penetration of industrial

capitalism into northwestern Alberta. He also remarks on the daily life and work patterns of the local inhabitants. Throughout, Edwards evinces the patronizing racial attitudes of an Anglo-Canadian civil servant. What is perhaps most striking is the limited information in the diary as to discussions with Native and Métis peoples about treaty and scrip agreements, which raises the question of how much communication actually took place between Macrae and local communities.

Drawing on a wealth of knowledge of the Peace River Country, Leonard and Whalen have produced a readable 120-page volume that will be of interest to professional historians as well as to the general public. The published text includes detailed footnotes on the local history of the Athabaska region and the numerous personalities O.C. Edwards met in his travels. For readers and researchers wishing to supplement their knowledge of the region, Leonard and Whalen also provide a series of useful bibliographic citations.

Another notable strength of this published diary is the editors' decision to combine the textual and the visual. By including a large selection of photographs taken by Edwards during the expedition, Leonard and Whalen complement Edwards' commentary on arduous overland travel, local personalities, and socio-economic conditions. The photographs include landscape scenes, snapshots of life on the trail, and individual portraits, some of which are drawn from the Glenbow archival collections. Many of the pictures also represent Native and Métis people (especially women) who are far less prominent in his narrative.

If the editors' attention to detailed historical and photographic research

is laudable, their lack of attention to geography should be noted. *On the North Trail* contains five maps, all of which apparently date from the period. These maps are either too small, making them difficult to decipher, or they are of questionable value to the reader. A modern, high-quality map showing the commission's route would

have provided a better geographical perspective on Edwards' narrative. Nevertheless, this is but a minor critique given the overall quality of the editing and presentation of the document, which makes an important contribution to the history of north-western Alberta.

Researching the Indian Land Question in BC: An Introduction to Research Strategies and Archival Research for Band Researchers

Leigh Ogston, editor

Vancouver: Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, 1998. N.p. Illus. (500-342 Water St., Vancouver, v6B 1B6)

By Ken Favrholt

Secwepemc Museum and Archives, Kamloops

ALTHOUGH DIRECTED AT BAND researchers, this recent publication is of general interest and use to anyone studying First Nations history, land claims, or related topics. The editor claims this work is just a starting point, but it is much more than that. There are a few other publications of a similar nature, but *Researching the Indian Land Question in BC*, produced by the resource staff of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), is likely the most comprehensive and readable book of its kind for both novices and experienced researchers. Actually a manual, the book is well laid out in twenty-six discrete chapters on various themes around the general topic of Indian land research, which is further divided into many subsections. A selection of illustrations highlights different sections.

This resource takes for granted a fair knowledge of the history of British Columbia as it relates to First Nations, but each chapter is helpful, containing relevant definitions, lists of documents and useful Web sites, and chronologies of significant dates relating to different topics, thus providing hooks into specific areas of research. Chapter 1 defines archival research and how to begin to research, including how to make contact with sources of information. Chapter 2 provides an alphabetical survey of the major repositories for research materials from the band level to tribal council offices to archives, libraries, and museums, including foreign (mainly American) repositories. Unfortunately, a few notable sources, such as the British Library, are missing. Addresses for bands need to be obtained elsewhere (the British Columbia Ministry of Aboriginal

Affairs directory is a good companion book to have). Chapter 3 provides a great deal of general history as well as an in-depth description of the historical events that have resulted in documents. Sources listed include publications that have stood the test of time (and provide the basic historical background one should have before conducting further research). Chapter 4 describes research materials, including, to name a few, annual reports, colonial correspondence, gazettes and government files, the Hudson's Bay Company records, Indian Reserve Commission materials, photographs and pre-emption records, and the well-known RG 10 (DIA Record Group at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada). Chapter 5, on land use and occupancy (commonly known as traditional use studies in British Columbia), provides strategic and planning considerations for this type of research. Chapter 6 describes oral history and how it is used as evidence. As a result of the *Delgamuuk'w* case, oral history has attained a legal status that has made this area even more important than it was in the past. Chapter 7 is about mapping and describes both different survey systems used in British Columbia and where maps are found. Maps can be difficult for the beginning researcher to comprehend and interpret, but this chapter offers a fair overview of the process. Chapter 8 deals with archaeological research, including gaining access to the records of the provincial archaeology branch and such relevant legislation as the Heritage Conservation Act. Chapter 9 covers anthropological research and provides a long list of anthropological journals, revealing the breadth of this field. Chapter 10 covers

hunting and trapping records, while Chapter 11 deals with genealogy (family history) – an increasingly important area of research relating to issues of status. Chapter 12 offers an introduction to legal research and resources, emphasizing issues of Aboriginal title.

The later chapters are short and concise. Chapter 13 deals with settlement and village sites not included in reserves; Chapter 14 discusses graveyards and sacred sites, a very interesting area that has not been fully researched. Subsequent chapters deal with surrenders and sales resource extraction, rights-of-way, cutoffs, fishing, the Douglas (pre-Confederation) reserves, certificates of possession, water rights, accretions, commonages, government reserves, and treaty land entitlement. As the treaty process in British Columbia unfolds (or doesn't), every aspect of Aboriginal land use takes on significance.

On the whole, this book is comprehensive and well presented. Here and there the text and Appendix A (a timeline of events affecting the Indian peoples of British Columbia) are slightly flawed by typos (but nothing too distracting). Appendix B lists all the documents available at the UBCC Resource Centre. The book also contains a glossary of terms used in lands research, an index of abbreviations, and a general index by section number. The cirlox binding and lack of pagination suggests that some pages could be revised. Undoubtedly, there will be subsequent additions that will allow for the addition of more materials, updates, and corrections. In the meantime, this is the most accessible book on the subject and a must for researchers of the Indian land question in British Columbia.

Plateau

Deward E. Walker, Jr., editor

Volume 12 of *Handbook of North American Indians*

Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998. 791 pp. Illus., maps. US\$61 cloth.

By Wendy Wickwire
University of Victoria

IN 1965, THE SMITHSONIAN Institution launched a proposal for a twenty-volume *Handbook of North American Indians* under the direction of anthropologist William C. Sturtevant. This was an ambitious project intended to present an "encyclopedic summary of what is known about the prehistory, history, and cultures of the aboriginal peoples of North America north of the urban civilizations of central Mexico" (xiii). Last year, it released Volume 12 in the series, *Plateau*. According to its editor, Deward E. Walker, Jr., Volume 12 was a long time in the making (iv). He first began accepting draft submissions from invited authors in May 1972, just over a year after the first planning session for this volume held in Reno, Nevada, in March 1971. With a team of editors, he then spent nine years, from 1990 to 1997, moulding this volume to its current form – forty-three essays by forty-one authors, totalling 790 pages (iv).

The core of Volume 12 is a series of nineteen summary overviews of individual plateau cultures. Each overview is similar in style, design, and length, and follows roughly the same list of topical subheads – "environment," "territory," "origins," "culture" (which is further subdivided into subsistence, technology, clothing and adornment, social and political organization, kin-

ship, life cycle, and religion), "history," "synonymy," and "sources." Contributors, according to Walker, were told explicitly to "avoid the present tense, where possible" (xv), which accounts for the prevalence of past tense throughout, along with statements such as: "the following cultural description is ... intended to describe the culture as of the mid-nineteenth century" (284). Only in the "history" sections were authors given some liberty to cover current issues. Most adhered closely to this formula. Indeed some, such as David H. French and Kathrine S. French ("Wasco, Wishram and Cascades"), took this to an extreme, including only one paragraph on recent historical change (374). Others, for example, Helen Schuster ("Yakima and Neighbouring Groups"), included a more substantial "history" chapter, perhaps to counter the effect of such an editorial convention. The bibliographic summaries at the end of each cultural overview provide a state-of-the-art historical/ethnographic guide to the entire plateau region. There is no better reference tool for this large region under a single cover.

"Synonymy" is one of the more interesting topics covered in the cultural summaries. Walker describes "synonymy" as a description of the various names applied to the Indigenous cultural groups. Volume 12 offers some

excellent historical, linguistic, and ethnographic data on this topic for each plateau group. As outsiders (traders, travellers, missionaries, and others) encountered various plateau peoples and their neighbours, they often had difficulty pronouncing their names. Volume 12 explains the origin of such terms as "Thompson," "Pend d'Oreille," "Nez Percé," "Flathead," and "Colville."

It is curious, however, given their interest in synonymy, that the editors and authors of Volume 12 opted for foreign, often anglicized, terms over Indigenous names. David Wyatt, for example, used the term "Thompson" even though he knew that this term had been replaced locally by the term "Nlaka'pamux." Marianne Boelscher similarly used the term "Shuswap" throughout her essay, even though she knew that the people about whom she wrote preferred to be called "Secwepemc."

In addition to these nineteen individual cultural overviews are chapters on a variety of special topics, ranging from archaeology, demography, religious movements, music, and mythology to basketry, ethnobiology, rock art, trade networks, and fishing. Several of these, for example, Robert Boyd's "Demographic History Until 1990," and Deward Walker's and Helen Schuster's "Religious Movements," offer a refreshing break from the historical focus of the volume. Others, such as "Ethnobiology and Subsistence," by Eugene Hunn, Nancy Turner, and David French, are rich with specialized ethnographic detail. "Mythology," by Rodney Frey and Dell Hymes, offers an intimate study of plateau storytelling traditions, including a detailed analysis of a single Kalispel myth.

Although Volume 12 is a "must-have" for anyone interested in Indigenous

North America, it has one serious flaw. It ignores entirely the post-modernist turn in the social sciences. Over the past fifteen years, critical theorists such as James Clifford and George Marcus (*Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, 1984), Johannes Fabian (*Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, 1983), Edward Said (*Orientalism*, 1978), and others have systematically deconstructed the central tenets of social scientific research – participant/observation, data collecting, and cultural description. At the core of their critique is salvage ethnography, the assumption that "the other society is weak and *needs* to be represented by an outsider (and that what matters in its life is its past, not present or future)" (Clifford and Marcus, 113). Clifford noted some years ago that "few anthropologists today would embrace the object of ethnography in the terms in which it was enunciated in Franz Boas's time, as a last-chance rescue operation" (113). And yet, Volume 12, released in 1998 by one of North America's leading anthropological research centres, does just this. It is salvage ethnography written in the classic realist style; that is, "an author-proclaimed description and something of an explanation for certain specific, bounded, observed (or nearly observed) cultural practices" (John Van Maanen, *Tales of the Field*, 1988, 45). In contrast to most recent works of anthropology, there are no Indigenous authors represented in this volume; there is no questioning of the authority of its textual material; and there is no experimentation with different styles of textual presentation. That any anthropological work today, but especially one of the stature of the Smithsonian's Volume 12, can ignore an intellectual movement as pervasive as the post-

modernism of the 1980s and 1990s is somewhat surprising. One explanation is that Volume 12 experienced a time-warp. Written material was dutifully submitted in the 1970s, after which it was put on hold until given the green light for publication some time in 1990. If this is the scenario, then it is

not surprising that it exudes a 1970s, rather than a 1990s, feel.

Despite this shortcoming, Volume 12, *Plateau*, is an important work. It is richly illustrated with a range of maps, photographs, sketches, and drawings, many of which have not appeared elsewhere.

The Potlatch Papers: A Colonial Case History

Christopher Bracken

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. 276 pp.
Illus., maps. US\$16.95 paper.

Hamatsa: The Enigma of Cannibalism on the Pacific Northwest Coast

Jim McDowell

Vancouver: Ronsdale, 1997. 299 pp. Illus. \$17.95 paper.

By Margery Fee
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GIVING A GIFT is always a tricky proposition; we all know the perils of the redundant gift, the too expensive or too cheap gift, the gift we really wanted ourselves. Giving is a site of social anxiety: if the gifts given to us by commercial enterprises are called "free gifts," then what are the other kind – those given by friends and relatives – called? In what way are they not free, since a gift, by definition, is given without expectation of repayment? Yet we know better, for the people we give gifts to, in fact, are those who give gifts to us. If we give in expectation of return, then, strictly speaking, our gift is not a gift but part of a social economy. Perhaps the "pure gift" does not exist

at all? Christopher Bracken examines the clash between European concepts of the gift and those of the First Nations of the west coast of British Columbia – a clash that marked the conquest and colonial oppression of the area.

Accounts of Aboriginal gift-giving practices on the west coast of British Columbia influenced European thought. The Chinook jargon word, "potlatch," which derived from the Nuu-chah-nulth word for gift, was used by Europeans on the coast as a name for their construction of Aboriginal ceremonies in which blankets, food, clothing, and other items were given away to confirm status. The potlatch entered European discourses about the gift, which centred on the impossible

distinction between the gift and economic exchange. Thus the potlatch became the textual creation of European anxiety about European practices, Bracken argues. *The Potlatch Papers* is both a detailed account of the textual archive surrounding the potlatch in British Columbia and an account of its theoretical resonances and implications. For example, he discusses how Franz Boas's accounts of the Kwakiutl (now the Kwakwaka'wakw) were picked up by Marcel Mauss in his *Essai sur le don*, later discussed by Jacques Derrida, who also draws in Hegel and Heidegger. For Boas, the potlatch, represented by missionaries and government agents as an act of waste, was in fact an accounting system: "In all his undertakings the Indian relies on the help of his friends. He promises to pay them for this help at a later date ... The Indian has no system of writing, and therefore, in order to give security to the transaction, it is performed publicly" (cited 140). Derrida expands upon the notion that the potlatch is a form of writing, since what was given in front of witnesses at one feast would be remembered and returned at a later one.

Bracken pays particular attention to the ambiguity of the laws that helped to construct the potlatch and then proscribed it. Both Chief Justice Sir Matthew Begbie of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and First Nations defendants pointed out that the definitions of the forbidden "potlatch" were unclear. "Until a defendant knows what those forbidden Acts are, how can he say whether he has committed them or not?" wrote Begbie, who further added that he had heard the origin of the potlatch attributed to "white purveyors of blankets and clothes" (93-4). What was forbidden was unclear in part because the European concept of the

gift was unclear. Was what was wrong with the potlatch, its "waste" or the fact that it represented an economic system that rivalled the colonial one?

Not only did the government try to suppress what it called the potlatch, it also tried to suppress dances that were (in its view) associated with the potlatch (as it had banned the sun and the thirst dances on the Prairies). These dances were given a variety of names: the Kwakwaka'wakw dance was called hamatsa, or "cannibal dance." The European discourse of cannibalism arose with Columbus and was sustained by anthropology as a way of both distinguishing Europeans and justifying their colonial atrocities. Although scholarly debates about cannibalism centre on the issue of proving or disproving that in some cultures it was a regular and condoned practice, lately scholars have turned the debate in another direction. Whether cannibalism "exists" is less relevant than the ways the discourse of cannibalism has been so consistently deployed to draw the line between civilized and barbaric, European and Aboriginal, us and the cannibals.

Boas, in his *The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians* (1897), describes the hamatsa dance; Bracken's detailed analysis shows how the description moves back and forth between stating that the dance contained acts of cannibalism (eating of corpses, biting of spectators, and self-mutilation) and that it only represented it. Bracken strategically situates quotations in his book's margins from Boas's contemporary letters and diaries, which recount the latter's quest for human remains in the area, particularly skulls: "It is most unpleasant work to steal bones from a grave, but what is the use someone has to do it" (6 June 1888, 176). The most

telling quotation is this one, dated 1 December 1894: "The Hamatsa danced towards the new Q'omino'qa, who was covered all over with blood ... Unfortunately George [Hunt] was not here, so I did not know what was going on – especially when the new Q'omino'qa danced with skulls in her hand. The Hamatsa danced ahead of her, and after a while took the skulls out of her hand and put them down after he had licked them and eaten [something like maggots?] The people were afraid to let me see this." So the one time Boas supposedly witnessed cannibalism, he says that he "did not know what was going on."

This is the passage that Ralph Maud highlights in his article "Did Franz Boas Witness an Act of Cannibalism?" (*Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 22 [1986]: 45-8). He concludes that "although cannibalism was certainly mimed by Kwakiutl dancers, no eating of human flesh was witnessed by Boas" (47), and he notes that "in his definitive arrangement of his Kwakiutl materials before he died in 1942, Boas removed all the pages of the *Social Organization* volume that had provided Ruth Benedict with authority for her statements on Kwakiutl cannibalism in *Patterns of Culture*" (46). (It seems odd that neither Bracken nor Jim McDowell cites this article, which was sitting in the UBC library when I went looking for it.)

In his book, McDowell comes to the conclusion that the hamatsa was an example of "ritual cannibalism." He quotes Robin Fisher, writing in 1982: "Clearly the Nootka did engage in ritual cannibalism for dramatic effect. Arm biting and the display of hands and skulls of slain enemies were all part of Nootka ceremonial. But this does not mean that human flesh was actually devoured" (126). What stops me in my

tracks here is this: if ritual cannibalism does not involve the eating of human flesh, then why is the Christian mass not also called ritual cannibalism? Surely cannibalism in the sense most people understand the word means the actual eating of real human flesh, and so if what is going on in these dances does not, then we are not dealing with cannibalism at all. William Arens, in *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (1979), argues that cannibalism as a widespread and culturally accepted practice did not exist except in the overheated imaginations of Europeans looking for ways to justify the slaughter and colonization of New World peoples. He comments in a later article, "Rethinking Anthropophagy" (in *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, ed. Francis Barker et al., 1998): "To my mind the demotion of a particular people from the ranks of gustatory to ritual cannibals has very little effect on the popular imagination perpetually stoked by anthropological discourse" (45). Certainly McDowell's book is intended to capitalize on the popular fascination with the topic: in large letters on the back cover is the question "Did cannibalism exist on the Pacific Northwest Coast?" The answer is further down the page: "McDowell ... finds convincing evidence of the importance of ritual cannibalism among Pacific Northwest Coast Natives." Yet Boas is the major source, and apart from the one dance discussed above, all of the accounts of the hamatsa cited by Boas are second-hand, including those of his major informant and assistant, the part-Tlingit, part-Scottish George Hunt. McDowell quotes Edward Curtis's comments on Hunt's centrality to accounts of cannibalism on the west coast: "there is grave doubt whether cannibalism ever existed in British Columbia ... Of the Kwakiutl men who

can be induced to discuss the subject, all except one [George Hunt, who was not, in fact, Kwakiutl] say that substitution has been invariably practiced in modern times, adding, however, that 'long ago' human flesh was eaten." McDowell says that "Curtis tried to have it both ways in featuring the native ethnographer's gruesome stories" and then himself goes on to have it both ways by quoting the same gruesome stories. This yes-they-did-no-they-didn't kind of account is part of the tradition itself, and it consolidates rather than destroys the impression that the Aboriginal peoples of the past were, at worst, cannibalistic savages and, at best, given to highly unpleasant and unhygienic theatrical practices involving dug-up corpses. McDowell will say in one sentence that "none of these [European] men and women ever witnessed actual acts of humans being eaten" and then continue that "most of them wrote about the subject long after such behaviour had been restricted to seldom-held, highly ritualized ceremonies which were never fully understood by most native people" (147). That is, no one saw it, but "such behaviour" implicitly must have existed if it later had to be "restricted."

McDowell wraps up with an account of the religious principles behind the hamatsa dance, commenting confusingly that "Kwakiutl cannibalism did not represent the kind of gastronomic custom that may have existed among certain aboriginal societies in Africa or the South Sea Islands. On the contrary, the eating of human flesh was abhorrent to all Northwest Coast Indians. It was precisely this loathing that made the gruesome rite all the more powerful" (234). This passage is again typical, throwing out *en passant* the accusation of cannibalism against other cultures, while hinting at "gruesome

rites": but if cannibalism is only "pre-tending" to eat human flesh, then what is so gruesome? More gruesome than popular action movies or video games? More gruesome than Kosovo? And what about the gruesome fascination of anthropologists and film makers with cannibalism? Why is cannibalism always about "them" and not about "us"? The last part of the book contains a New Age-style appeal to the reader to come to understand and share the religious principles that underlie the hamatsa ritual: "we must return to the mythic voice of primitive experience." I am not so sure that we need a new religion, however, since I was initiated into ritual cannibalism – in McDowell's and Fisher's terms – and practised it for six years as part of a religion that attempted to teach its members to contend with evil, often represented as a bestial figure devouring the dead. Many of my contemporary Euro-Americans, as well as those who actively participated in the suppression of the potlatch and the hamatsa, were also initiates.

McDowell concludes by citing favourably all those who have pointed to the damage done by the European discourse of cannibalism, and he says, "I have gone beyond recapitulating the historical record to probe the ideological, psychological, and spiritual sources of the cannibalistic rituals that still form a central aspect of some remarkable cultures on the Pacific Northwest Coast" (263). So "they" are still cannibals, and we, presumably, are not. He decries the discourse while using it. Although McDowell has engaged in extensive research, bringing together a large number of photographs of the hamatsa (theatrically staged by Edward Curtis) and usefully working through the relevant textual accounts, the book is a highly problematic

example of a discourse that has served since contact to distinguish Euro-Americans from the constructed "savage" at the expense of real First Nations peoples. Bracken's book is at

the other pole, a sophisticated theoretical engagement that attempts to counter a shameful (and obviously ongoing) Canadian colonial discourse.

*A Story as Sharp as a Knife:
The Classical Haida Mythtellers and Their World*

Robert Bringhurst

Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1999. 527 pp. Illus., maps. \$45 cloth.

By Joel Martineau
University of British Columbia

IN 1900 FRANZ BOAS hired John Swanton, a young linguist fresh from Harvard, and sent him to the Northwest Coast, his salary of \$50 per month to be paid by the Bureau of American Ethnology, his expenses by the American Museum of Natural History. Boas instructed Swanton to investigate the Haida system of heraldic crests, Haida ceremonial life, the use and significance of masks, personal and family guardian spirits, and rules governing intermarriage with the neighbouring Native nations. He then listed a number of artifacts, ranging from housepoles to spoons, that he wanted Swanton to buy for the Museum. His letter of instructions made scant mention of oral literature.

Swanton (1873-1958) crossed to Haida Gwaii on 25 September 1900. He rented quarters near the mission village at Skidegate, hired as his tutor, guide, and assistant a bilingual Haida named Henry Moody, and promptly began recording Haida oral stories. Swanton and Moody sought out the Haida mythtellers who had survived the smallpox ravishes of the nineteenth

century, and day after day transcribed their stories. The storyteller would speak to Moody, who would "listen to the poem and repeat it sentence by sentence in a loud, clear, slow voice, proving to the poet he had heard each word and giving Swanton time to write it down" (32). The storyteller would speak, a sentence or two at a time, Moody would repeat, and Swanton would write, hour after hour, day after day. For some nine months Swanton recorded the works of such Haida oral poets as Ghandl (c.1851-c.1920) from the West Coast, Skaay (c.1827-c.1905) from Skedans, and Kingagwaaw (c.1846-c.1920) and Haayas (c.1835-c.1905) from the North Coast. Interspersed among the recording sessions were weeks during which Swanton worked over the texts with Moody. At the end of June 1901, Swanton sailed north to visit Alaskan Haida villages, before returning east to Washington and his duties with the Bureau of American Ethnology. In effect, Swanton had ignored Boas's instructions in order to pursue his own interests in oral literature.

While a few of Swanton's transcriptions and translations of the Haida tales were published in due course, most laid fallow until the 1980s, when another young linguist began studying the Haida language. Robert Bringhurst's journey into Haida language, literature, and art produced two outstanding contemporary texts – *The Raven Steals the Light* (1984; co-authored with Bill Reid) and *The Black Canoe: Bill Reid and the Spirit of Haida Gwaii* (1991; in collaboration with photographer Ulli Steltzer) – even as it led him into the archives in search of Swanton's transcriptions. *A Story as Sharp as a Knife* offers occasional glimpses of Bringhurst tracking Swanton's manuscripts, but its main purposes are to situate and contextualize the cultural moments that produced the stories, and to plead that contemporary readers should regard the stories as classical treasures. Both concerns hinge on Bringhurst's fervent argument that the largest and most complex works of classical Haida literature merit the respect typically accorded the foundational literary works of western cultures. The question raised in the following passage is at the heart of *A Story as Sharp as a Knife*:

Why Ghandl of the Qayah
Llaanas of Qaysun has not also
been adopted with full honours
into the polylingual canon of
North American literary history
I do not know. He seems to me a

great deal more accomplished –
and therefore far more worthy of
celebration as a literary ancestor
– than any other Canadian poet
or novelist who was writing in
English or French during his
time. In fact I know of no one
writing in any language, any-
where in North America, toward
the end of the nineteenth cen-
tury, who uses words with greater
sensitivity and skill. (66-7)

Of course Bringhurst's question is rhetorical – he knows that the canon of North American literary history is anything but *polylingual*. Throughout the text he both shares his passion for Haida literature and polemically attacks its disregard. The result is a highly charged literary history of the moments in Haida culture that produced the literature, plus a critique of our contemporary western culture, that has heretofore ignored that literature.

A Story as Sharp as a Knife includes nearly 400 lines of classical Haida myths in the original Haida, and some 4000 lines translated by Bringhurst into English. A jacket blurb states that this book will alter our understanding of the phrase "Canadian culture." I agree. Two final notes: a volume of translations is intended as a sequel to this text; and, the price of \$45 for the cloth-bound edition seems eminently fair.

*You Are Asked to Witness:
The Stó:lō in Canada's Pacific Coast History*

Keith Thor Carlson, editor

Chilliwack: Sto:lo Heritage Trust, 1997. 208 pp. Illus., maps. \$26.95 paper

By IYESELWET te Cheam (E. Denise Douglas)
The Cheam Nation and University of British Columbia

KEITH CARLSON has gathered works of both professionals and of the Stó:lō to compile what will likely be perceived by many readers to be *the* written text of Stó:lō history – a creation of the Stó:lō people themselves. Carlson uses the original language of the Stó:lō (Halq'emeylem) as much as possible and presents a commendable account of historical events. He forfeits his voice to that of the Stó:lō people in various places.

The work recounts “Canada’s Pacific Coast History,” focusing on the Stó:lō, whose traditional territory extends the entire periphery of the Fraser River, north to Spuzzum, across the breadth of southern Vancouver Island, and into the United States as far south as Bellingham, Washington. Since the book’s perspective is on Canadian history, the living Stó:lō relationship with people in the United States is almost lost. Unfortunately, Carlson also all but missed Stó:lō women’s issues and the devastation caused by the Indian Act, which was not redressed in such legislation as Bill C-31, intended to permit Indigenous women so deprived to regain status.

This is an interpretive work, an outsider’s look into the Stó:lō (the People of the River) world. The book does not address the effects of factionalism on the construction of a documented history, which could have political implications for the Stó:lō in the

future. Political motives underpin some of the contents, which may be offensive to those Stó:lō people who are not represented. This is evident in the choice of Stó:lō contributors as well as in the contemporary photographs, which, by their presentation, seem to etch the spotlighted politicians into history, draping them with an already archival look. The two contributors of Stó:lō origin seem to present insider accounts. However, their work is interpretive as well. In the Introduction (2-26), Siyemchess does not speak to the part of Stó:lō history that he knows, and he admits this throughout the edited interview. Unfortunately, the researchers and their subject have differing objectives. The researchers were interested in fishing issues, yet they interviewed an informant who did not fish. This informant was aware of the practices of slavery and the salt trade, yet these were evidently not his own family stories. His family was knowledgeable about the farming industry during the turn of the century, and he could probably have better contributed to this gap in Canadian history. Albert “Sonny” McHalsie starts his contribution by echoing what he learned from anthropological and archeological works. For many years he has interviewed elders, but his work remains interpretive.

In Chapter 4, Carlson makes a common statement, which is not validated. He is not alone in this mistake.

He asserts that “the Xwelitem arrived in Stó:lō territory and started taking possession of Stó:lō and resources” (54). Such an assertion could have implications for land claims. The Xwelitem in fact started excluding each other, but there is no documentation in Stó:lō (or any other) records of Stó:lō land and resources being ceded. The Stó:lō people, from historical times to the present, resist the appropriation of their land and resources, to which they still assert title, as is evident in Carlson’s own documentation (as well as in the recent news). The centrepiece photograph (75-6) provides a graphic example of recognition of title and rights from the Indigenous perspective.

Overall, I commend Carlson for his presentation, especially his chronicle of smallpox and his presentation of Cheam’s history. He has compiled his work meticulously and thoroughly, although he still measures Stó:lō history as a response to colonialism, thus echoing European values. He cites Stó:lō history as though it were relevant only to the past and speaks of Stó:lō people as though they were objects of the past. Perhaps, with the continued participation of the Stó:lō Nation, he will be able to assist in defining the Stó:lō people as a living part of – as participating subjects in – Canada’s future history and to view Canada as part of Stó:lō history.

*“Boston Men” on the Northwest Coast:
The American Maritime Fur Trade, 1788-1844*

Mary Malloy

Kingston, Ontario, and Fairbanks, Alaska: Limestone, 1998.
232 pp. US\$28 cloth.

By Jim Delgado

Vancouver Maritime Museum

THE MARITIME FUR TRADE of the Northwest Coast has been the subject of a number of works in both the United States and Canada over the last century. Recent studies include James R. Gibson’s *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods* (1992), Richard Somerset Mackie’s *Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific, 1793-1843* (1997), and *Fur Traders from New England: The Boston Men in the North Pacific, 1787-1800* (1997), edited by Briton C. Busch and Barry M. Gough, which presents one of the first

histories of the trade, written by mariner William Dane Phelps just a few decades after the events he recorded.

Mary Malloy’s *“Boston Men”* is a focused, detailed study that examines the nature of American involvement in the trade. It builds on a number of earlier works, integrating new scholarship, a detailed examination of a number of original ship’s logs and journals, and an anthropological perspective on the nature of American shipboard society, Native societies, and their interactions. The maritime fur trade was characterized as dangerous

and violent in American popular culture of the nineteenth century; Malloy assesses this perception and finds that it unfairly colours the real nature of the trade as a mercantile venture plagued more by an uncertain market for trade goods among the Native peoples than by vessel seizure and attack.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part offers a historiographical review of the literature in the introduction, "In the Wake of the Boston Men," which is followed by Chapters 1 and 2, "Boston Trade on the Northwest Coast" and "Shipboard Society and Northwest Coast Indian Society," respectively. In Chapter 2, Malloy's long association with the maritime world (as a scholar, educator, and museum professional) enables her to provide the reader with an understanding of the nuances and realities of shipboard life, routine, discipline, and technology. She shows how these things influenced the sailors, their officers, and the people with whom they traded.

The second part of the book offers an encyclopaedic listing of American vessels engaged in the trade and a gazetteer of Native villages, landmarks, and trade centres. There are a few minor errors, such as the assertion that the Hudson's Bay Company established Fort Taku in 1811, fourteen years before it established any presence on the Coast. But these are quibbles and do not interfere with the value of the work. The second part, due to its sheer page count (63-204), dominates the book. It represents significant research and a considerable contribution to the historiography of the maritime fur trade, building on F.W. Howay's landmark *A List of Fur Trading Vessels in the Maritime Fur Trade, 1785-1825*, edited by Richard A. Pierce and republished by Limestone Press in 1973.

Malloy's insights, and the encyclopaedic nature of the book, make "Boston Men" a worthy addition to the literature and a must for the scholar's library.

Fraser Gold 1858!
The Founding of British Columbia

Netta Sterne

Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1998.
187 pp. Illus., maps. US\$19.95 paper.

By Daniel P. Marshall
University of British Columbia

AT LONG LAST a book has been written about the most cataclysmic event ever to have occurred in British Columbia's history – the Fraser River gold rush and the massive invasion of non-Native miners

(in excess of 30,000) into the traditional lands of First Nations peoples. As a descendant of Cornish miners who joined in the 1858 rush, I have always found it puzzling that the Fraser rush has received so little attention, con-

sidering that it led to the formation of a Crown colony on Canada's Pacific coast. What's even more perplexing, perhaps, is that we have waited for an American university press to publish this history, written by a journalist and former resident of Edinburgh who now makes her home in Vancouver. The two should be congratulated for recognizing the great importance of this event in the larger history of the Pacific Slope region. As is so often the case in British Columbia, it is new arrivals to our province, like Netta Sterne, who have seen what we ourselves have missed.

And yet, after reading *Fraser Gold 1858!* I can't help thinking that Sterne's book would have been improved immeasurably had she become more acquainted with the academic community in British Columbia. Sterne's manuscript, reviewed by an American professor of history, contains a number of factual errors that might easily have been spotted by others more familiar with the province's history. Certainly, too, there is a growing academic discourse on this side of the 49th parallel that could have been consulted, *BC Studies* being just one example.

Sterne's story is in the tradition of history writing that seeks to celebrate our colonial past by emphasizing European males to the exclusion of such forgotten groups as women, Asians, and First Nations peoples. Sterne's central question, one that has occupied all previous historians from H.H. Bancroft to Margaret Ormsby and Barry Gough, is: "How ... in the face of the gold rush 'invasion,' was British law to be established" (ix). Though Sterne conducted research in archival repositories of British Columbia, Washington, California, and Britain, a quick glance at the Select Bibliography suggests that a

number of key sources and institutions were not consulted. By far, published newspaper accounts, parliamentary papers, and colonial despatches constitute the majority of her primary source material, while unpublished letters, diaries, or latter-day reminiscences of "some who were there" were not utilized. Sterne's description of Governor James Douglas as "a man of impressive stature, great dignity, and legendary courage" (6) suggests the oftentimes pro-British portrayal of the Fraser River rush that has been the hallmark of histories on the subject written to date. The fact that most miners communicated with people, places, and the press south of the international divide means that the paper trail of those who were here is not to be found in British-oriented publications but in archives to the south. Sterne states, for instance, that "it would be interesting to know how the wealth gathered by the Indian miners affected their future." (74) Had she examined the voluminous collection of primary sources collected by Bancroft and deposited at the University of California at Berkeley, as opposed to the slim offerings of the California History Society and the California State Library, the answer, in large part, would have been discovered. And though the British Library was visited, the much more significant collections of the Public Record Office, Kew Gardens, were not.

First Nations peoples were the discoverers of gold in British Columbia, as noted by T.A. Rickard (*BC Historical Quarterly* 2:1), whose ground-breaking work was not consulted by the author. According to Rickard: "The discoveries of gold on the mainland, like the one made on Moresby Island [Queen Charlottes], must be credited to the Indians; it was they, and not any

canny Scot or enterprising American, that first found gold on the Thompson and Fraser Rivers, or first proceeded to gather it for the purposes of trade" (9). The wealth collected by First Nations benefited them greatly until their future was dramatically and deleteriously affected by the massive invasion of European and Euro-American miners who dispossessed them of their land and gold (Marshall, *Native Studies Review* 11:1).

If Sterne had cast her research net farther, or if she had given the California newspapers a more thorough reading, she would have discovered that Native and non-Native miners collided during the "Fraser River War," in which Native villages were torched and large numbers of First Nations people killed by military-like miners' militias in search of Native gold. Nowhere in Sterne's book, beyond the occasional transcriptions of Governor James Douglas's warnings to Britain of potential cataclysm, can the adverse effects of the gold rush on Native peoples be found. This is not surprising, perhaps, as *Fraser Gold 1858!* is a celebration of our colonial past – a self-justifying tradition made up of words that, 140 years later, continue to effectively whitewash an event that broke the back of full-scale Native resistance and precipitated the formation of Indian reserves in mainland British Columbia.

Sterne hoped to let "much of the story unfold through the words of some who were there at the time," during "one of the great stories of the century" (xi). It is indeed a great story, but, unfortunately, the words she has used are not those of British Columbia's First Nations. This, undoubtedly, must be the core reason that academics have not thus far written the history of the Fraser River gold rush, for to do so must be to overturn one of the great founding myths of Canada's westernmost province. Nevertheless, with so little written about this extraordinary event, Sterne's book offers a suitable primer for those interested in learning the basic chronology of the gold rush. With Bancroft, Ormsby, and others now out of print, Sterne's work will complement the general details of the rush provided by such historians as Jean Barman, George Woodcock, and so on.

As California continues to "celebrate" the 150th anniversary of its rush with a host of new revisionist publications by historians such as J.S. Holliday, Paula Mitchell Marks, and Malcolm Rohrbough, Canadian academics will follow suit with their own reassessment of the gold rushes of British Columbia. With the publication of Netta Sterne's *Fraser Gold 1858!* a significant base map has been provided that will point many readers towards useful clues that invite further research and discussion. For this, Sterne is to be congratulated.

*Beyond the City Limits:
Rural History in British Columbia.*

R.W. Sandwell, editor

Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999. 293 pp. Illus., maps. \$27.95 paper.

By Margaret Conrad
Acadia University

A BOOK ON RURAL British Columbia written thirty years ago would have been very different from this one. At best, it would have focused on European settlement and resource development outside of Vancouver and Victoria, and chronicled the displacement of Natives in the province within the framework of urbanization, industrialization, and progress. These essays, grouped under the headings of power, land, and gender, benefit from a generation of work in social history and a postmodern scepticism that calls into question any and all assumptions. They also testify to another happy historiographical development in recent years: the return of the narrative or at least lucid prose. While the rural sometimes gets lost in the dazzling array of topics and methodological approaches represented here, this book is often fun to read and serves as a delightful sampler of what happened “beyond the city limits” in British Columbia.

In her introduction, Ruth Sandwell surveys recent scholarly developments in the field of rural history; explores its relationship to local history, Aboriginal history, and approaches to the land; and acknowledges the contribution of educational history to the understanding of rural British Columbia. Anticipating criticism of the slippery definition of “rural” informing this volume – the inclusion of Kamloops, Williams Lake, and Prince George – Sandwell suggests

that we are still dealing with most of the territory outside of Victoria and Vancouver. Sandwell argues that the category is a useful one because it offers an alternative point of entry on British Columbia’s past; provides a different angle of vision on class, race, and gender; and ultimately brings into focus a world where things are sometimes done differently.

One thing is certain: the new methodological approaches employed in this volume disrupt the “seamless web of history” – and nowhere more so than in the section dealing with power relations. Thus, while John Lutz analyzes the process by which the Lekwammen of southern Vancouver Island were unsettled and reconstructed as “Songhees” by Euro-Canadians, Bruce Stadfeld takes Lutz to task for employing an approach that discounts Native agency, highlighting the point that Natives in British Columbia see their ancestors as resilient heroes of power struggles rather than as passive victims. Even that sturdy staple of Canadian history, the tariff, yields new insights when viewed from a rural West Coast perspective. In his examination of the tariff question from 1871 to 1874, Daniel Marshall reveals that farmers in British Columbia were, rather untypically in the larger Canadian context, strong protectionists and sufficiently powerful – agriculture was the second largest employer in the province at this time – to shape party politics around the

issue. Brian Low's deconstruction of the processes involved in producing *Lessons in Living*, a National Film Board project about revitalizing rural communities through cooperative effort (shot in Lantzville in 1944), shows that it was really a carefully orchestrated propaganda effort designed to create an expert-led society in which small communities and rural schooling were endangered species.

The "land," like "power," is broadly defined in this volume, and it includes animals and insects as well as homesteads and cattle ranges. In her detailed examination of the land records for Salt Spring Island between 1859 and 1891, Ruth Sandwell reveals that a significant proportion of settlers were more interested in the advantages offered by deferred payment in the pre-emption process than in the improvement and purchase of their property. This finding points to the importance of exploring the social values of late nineteenth-century settlers, which is a major focus of Ken Favrholt's study of the transition from ranching to farming and back to ranching in the dry-belt area around Kamloops from 1860 to 1960. He concludes that profit accumulation was only one of many variables – attitudes towards the land, technological change, public policy, and personal background being others – which motivated homesteaders. In his engaging discussion of cougars and the men and women who hunted them, Richard Mackie documents not only a significant chapter in the rural human history of British Columbia – by the turn of the twentieth century many rural districts had a resident cougar hunter – but also the impact of changing land-use patterns on the size of the cougar population. David Dendy explores the – largely futile – efforts of orchardists to eradicate the codling moth, which migrated to British Columbia

along with people in the late 1800s. Arguing that the persistence of the codling moth proves that humans are anything but masters of creation, he makes a timely plea for historians to see people as part of, rather than separate from, the natural environment.

Five essays explore gender and rural society. Drawing upon an impressive array of sources, Jean Barman brings into view the surprisingly large number of "invisible" Aboriginal women and their mixed-race daughters who participated in the resettlement process. Barman finds that mixed-race families were often the first settlers in rural areas of British Columbia and that they shared a demographic profile with their White neighbours. In tracking the fate of children of mixed-race families, Barman notes that sons tended to be marginalized in the public world of paid labour, while daughters, hidden in the household, were often complicit in rendering themselves invisible. Less hidden but, until recently, little studied, the bachelor society of the BC backwoods in the mid-nineteenth century is subject to a sophisticated analysis by Adele Perry, who focuses on the ways in which it ran counter to the patriarchal, middle-class assumptions about masculinity. In his examination of Kamloops and its outlying agricultural areas in the late nineteenth century, John Belshaw discovers significant differences in household patterns between town and country and uses the courtship of Annie McQueen, detailed in letters to her mother, to highlight his findings. Fascinating personal letters between a prostitute and her pimp permits David Peterson del Mar to provide the context for a 1940 Prince George court case relating to prostitution in a small town setting, undermining any notions of innocence and virtue associated with rural life. Finally, Tony Arruda's discussion, based

on interviews, of job prospects among young people growing up in the rapidly expanding community of Williams Lake between 1945 and 1975 reveals a gendered work experience similar to that found elsewhere in the industrialized world: young men had their pick of jobs in millwork, logging, truck-driving, and ranching and often abandoned school to earn money, while young women, even in the baby-boom generation, were confined primarily to work in part-time and service jobs.

The essays published here range too widely to enable one to draw hard conclusions about the history of rural life in British Columbia, other than to say that it is a fertile area for further study.

Indeed, most of the essays in this volume draw more upon the insights and methodologies developed in social and environmental history than upon approaches exclusive to rural history. Nevertheless, the findings are revealing, sometimes even surprising, especially with respect to the diversity of Native experiences and the relationship of people to the land. If subsequent research efforts "beyond the city limits" are as well executed as are those depicted in this sampling – the fact that many of the contributors are doctoral students or recent graduates bodes well – then the history of British Columbia and Canada will be the richer for it.

*Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada
from the Great War to the Age of Television*

Neil Sutherland

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997. 327 pp. Illus. \$21.95 paper.

By André Turmel
Université Laval

THE FIRST CHAPTER of *Growing Up* opens up with a quotation from novelist Gabrielle Roy:

The place to which you go back to listen to the wind you heard in your childhood – that is your homeland, which is also the place where you have a grave to tend. Though I choose to live in Québec partly because of the love for it which my mother passed on to me, now it is my turn to come to Manitoba to tend her grave. And to listen to the wind of my childhood." (3)

This quotation probably summarizes best the intentions and the project of the author as well as the tone of the book: to listen to the winds of childhood. Neil Sutherland's well known and recognized first book, *Children in English Canadian Society*, described the origins and development of the child-centered agenda of the reformers at the turn of the century, which explained the implementation of a set of social policies to cope with the problems confronting children in the context of industrialization and urbanization. *Growing Up* has an objective that differs considerably from the first:

it revolves around the story of the lives of children told from the children's point of view. This is what Sutherland means by 'listening to the winds of childhood': studying childhood from the children's point of view by giving them the possibility to speak.

The most interesting and stimulating aspect of the book is that children are here not studied from an adult-centered perspective or from the policies that adults think are in the child's best interests, but from their own point of view as far as the researcher can seize it in their discourse. This is not so common in the vast field of the socio-historical research on childhood. Neil Sutherland deserves public acknowledgment from the scholarly community for carrying on this project to its end. And the winds of childhood are blowing all through the book. They are emotionally charged memories. The fact that these memories could be either positive or negative appears to be less important than the phenomenon itself: children store memories of what they think are unique events and cherish them over the whole of their lives. These memories concern almost all aspects of children's lives except infancy for obvious reasons. Again what appears to be unique is the emotion that sustains and runs through these memories. The memories (and the book) are structured around certain classical themes of childhood's memories: family, friends and school.

There are children and their families, sometimes frontier families:

'We were like all primitive people and those in frontier places. learning almost everything by working with our parents. ... We learned by watching, helping, and doing. We found out that there is a skill in about everything

... even using a spade or a pitchfork'. (163) 'I really appreciated that cooperative spirit of doing something together. I really liked the family togetherness' (138)

Children and work:

'I was so happy I could have jumped for joy ... the ability to work and do a job well was what it took to be a man! ... I was now doing a man's job. I was now worth something'. 'fishing on my own during the summer holidays of 1936, when I was thirteen years old. I fished with an old boat of my father's, gillnetting on the stretch of river near our house ... I'm trying to think back on how I felt at the time. Part of the feeling was that I was now - A Man. It was pretty hard work but you had to prove that you were able to do something like that to be accepted by your peers, those who were a bit older than you'. (139) 'We used to see the other kids go by, and really hated our father for the way he kept us from ever playing with them'. (138)

Children and special occasions including Christmas and birthday rituals:

'Once I went out with Dad and on the way home we stopped at a restaurant. Dad bought me a glass of milk and a piece of raisin pie. It was the best I have ever eaten. I was never able to recapture the flavour of it'. (168) 'We went on the farm truck to Chilliwack and took the inter-urban to town. We shopped at the department store, and then went to a show with live entertainment between features. We

stayed overnight with some of Mom's relatives. On Sunday, we went to Stanley Park. My brother and I talked about the trip for years afterward'. (175)

Children and school:

'Some kids couldn't attend school regularly; they had to stay at home for work'. 'I did not attend school during threshing time'. (144) 'Getting the strap was to us the same as going to the gallows. You didn't just get the strap, you were sentenced to it.' (210) 'I cannot afford all the designer clothes that are worn by my fellow classmates. We shop at Value Village and those clothes are used and sometimes stained and ripped, and that makes me feel like dirt.' (264)

Children, foster home and domestic work:

About a 'foster sister' in a home: 'She had an awful life, with real chores, hard work, My father never spoke to her and wouldn't even look at her.' (135)

The author also introduces the concept of culture of childhood, which is something delicate to use because of the high polyvalence of the notion in the social sciences. He gets around the difficulty by avoiding giving a conceptual and abstract definition and rather gives a strong empirical description of it:

Most of the institutions in which children spent their lives ... had as their principal goal the socializing of the young ... At the same time, however, children had to learn to be children and to become members of both the

almost timeless world of childhood and their own brief generation within it. At its simplest level, this meant learning to *do* certain things." (223)

How do children become children? How is a little human being constructed into a western and Canadian child? The author proposes to visualize the culture of childhood as a series of concentric circles with the child's family at the center and the community as the outer ring. A child's entry into this culture happens when he first establishes a relationship with another child or group of children. Thus the key role played by siblings, friends, peers and neighbors in that culture: the importance of play and game, of best or special friend, of youth organizations (scouts, sports etc.). Finally this culture has much to do with the ways children experienced their childhood, how they positioned themselves in their family, school, and neighborhood.

Sutherland's purpose is not the single and exhaustive description of the culture of childhood from the point of view of children. He rather tries to outline and put into light the schema and repeated scripts of children's daily life: recurrent events and routines. Two characteristics of these scripts must be emphasized: first, children live mostly in situations that are highly structured; second, people share those scripts, they can't be individual. Scripts are usually situational – family life, school, neighborhood activity, etc. – within which personal scripts can take place: the way that a certain child behaves with siblings or walks from home to school, etc. This means that people remember with reasonable accuracy the scripts of their childhood. But how?

This leads me to the methodological question raised by this book. This perspective of the child, developed and analyzed in the book, does not come directly from children's discourse, but rather from memories and historical recollections of adults talking about their own childhood. The data come from over 200 interviews carried through the Canadian Childhood History Project at UBC, a certain number of autobiographies, and other related material. The question that I want to raise is: what is the status of these historical recollections in a context where we know from an epistemological point of view that adult memories are not an objective description of the reality of their childhood but a social construction.

The problem that arises from this 'perspective of the child' is precisely that it is a historical reconstruction from an adult point of view and standpoint. How can we put forward that an adult whose childhood happened in 1930 and is interviewed in 1990 – sixty years later – about his childhood experience could discursively express

the 'perspective of the child'? Is the problem mainly a question of accuracy of memory? What is then the status of childhood memory in the constitution of selfhood, specially in late adulthood? From an epistemological standpoint, is it possible to reach a child's perspective once one is firmly anchored in adulthood? In accordance with G.H. Mead, I shall raise the question that a historical reconstruction is always an account of the past from some person's present. What does that mean from an analytical point of view?

I am not sure that I have the answer to these questions. I think that they ought to be risen because those problems need further thinking. The preceding remarks do not diminish in any way the remarkable qualities of Sutherland's book. It is on the contrary a tribute to the tough questions raised by this research and the very creative way that the author stands up to them. Above all, the winds of childhood are blowing all through the book and this in itself is worth reading this monumental work.

Environmental Management on North America's Borders

Richard Kiy and John D. Wirth, editors

College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1998.
306 pp. US\$19.95 paper.

By Larry Pynn, *Vancouver Sun*

WHEN A TOILET FLUSHES, when a slick of oil oozes from a ship's hull, or when a dark cloud wafts from an industrial smokestack, it happens with little sense of geographic direction. Pollutants unleashed into the environment

are known to travel far afield, breaching international borders and ultimately taxing the resolution of more than one nation to clean them up.

With that thinking in mind, *Environmental Management on North America's Borders* is a collection of ten

case studies examining the various ways in which Canada, the United States, and Mexico work cooperatively – or at cross-purposes, as is often the case – on common environmental problems. As well as shedding light on issues such as the maquiladoras industrial zones along the Mexican border, hazardous-waste sites in Texas, and the development of Quebec's hydroelectricity for export to the United States, the book features two chapters that focus on British Columbia's environmental relationship with Washington State.

The first chapter is written by Jamie Alley, a director of fisheries for the province who was instrumental in developing the British Columbia-Washington Environmental Cooperation Council in 1992 to tackle mutual problems, such as air and water quality, flood control, and the introduction of exotic marine species. Alley does an excellent job of outlining the history of this unique bureaucracy, which, while lacking any real power or major source of funding, seeks to resolve issues along cooperative, voluntary lines between province and state – not on a formal nation-to-nation basis.

As part of his presentation, Alley specifically elaborates on progress the council has made in three areas – marine water quality, regional air management, and Columbia River water quality. But he is not as forthcoming about the lesser successes. For example, despite improved river forecasting, the flood risk on Washington's Nooksack River essentially remains as great today as it did in 1990, when it inundated Abbotsford's Sumas Prairie. And despite countless meetings to resolve Washington's concerns over BC farmers polluting the Sumas-Abbotsford Aquifer, nitrate levels

continue to rise. Alley also devotes too little attention to the way in which politics affects the council. Perhaps that's because politics derailed the council's work only during the latter stages of his writing, or perhaps it is because there is a limit to which we can reasonably expect a bureaucrat to criticize his political masters. I refer to the suspension of council meetings for more than two years, ending October 1998, as a result of former premier Glen Clark's fishing dispute with Washington State, resulting from the collapse of the Canada-US Pacific Salmon Treaty.

The other British Columbia chapter is written by R. Anthony Hodge, a teacher of environment and management at Royal Roads University in Victoria, and Paul R. West, director of the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria. Hodge and West compare how Canada and the United States jointly manage the Great Lakes system versus the inland waters of British Columbia's Strait of Georgia and Washington's Puget Sound. While serious, long-standing pollution problems in the Great Lakes have given rise to a much more formalized, transboundary management structure, British Columbia and Washington have nothing to be smug about. The Cascadia region's burgeoning population is generating water pollution in the form of human sewage, vehicle emissions, wetland destruction, and overfishing. Yet the authors still conclude there is time to get it right, to create a model of sustainability that could serve countries around the world.

But political commitment remains the missing link, as events continue to show. The Canadian government last December committed \$22 million in new funding over five years to the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative,

a program designed to address the region's growing water and air pollution problems. In return, the province pledged all the good will in the world but not an additional nickel – a decision that underscores the vulnerability of the region's environment to political resolve. Furthermore, as recently as last June, Ottawa completed an embarrassing end run around

the BC government to sign a new Pacific salmon agreement with the Americans. As Hodge and West argue, only through greater collaboration among all sides – including our provincial and federal governments – and perhaps a shift to more formal transboundary institutions can the ecological integrity of the region be assured “now and in the future.”