

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### *Music of the Alaska-Klondike Gold Rush: Songs and History*

Jean A. Murray

Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1999.  
440 pp. Illus., music, compact disk. us\$35.95 paper.

By Michelle Mulder  
*University of British Columbia*

**A**CAREFULLY AND EXTENSIVELY researched work, *Music of the Alaska-Klondike Gold Rush* provides a musical and lyrical depiction of goldmining settlements, their culture and concerns. Jean Murray's introduction explores the history of the gold rush, comparing the hopes of miners before they left home with the general disillusionment of those in the mining settlements for some time. Murray asserts that music held a prized place in the lonely, often monotonous lives of the miners. Her compilation evidences the wide range of music common in the camps, providing examples of bar-room choruses, fiddle solos, and melancholy ballads such as "Billy Pike of Klondike." Murray introduces each piece individually, citing her sources, as well as contemporary commentary seen in diaries or songbooks of the time. Often, Murray also includes biographical and anecdotal information about characters strongly associated with each piece. Maps, illustrations, and the book's accompanying thirty-five minute CD provide a sense of each piece's original place in the Alaska-Klondike gold rush.

The book's preface states Murray's hope that *Music of the Alaska-Klondike Gold Rush* will be "used and enjoyed"

by both "the music lover and the history buff" (x, xiii). As such, the book is a success. It does indeed offer a wealth of potential entertainment and food for thought, conveniently organised and practically indexed. Prospective academic purchasers should note, however, that this work is not intended primarily for scholars. Its documentation is extensive enough to provide a helpful base for scholarly work, yet Murray openly admits that selection of music for the compilation was at times based on personal preference (x). Moreover, she does not engage in interpretive commentary about individual songs. She does occasionally step in to change a song's diction when she feels that it includes "gratuitous racial slurs that were an unthinking part of the milieu." (For example, in "The Cat Came Back," she changes the term "nigger" to "fella" [xiii].) Her basis for determining what is and is not a slur is unclear, as she herself freely refers to "Eskimo" rather than "Inuit" (54) and does not comment on the degrading depictions of women pervasive throughout the songs.

*Music of the Alaska-Klondike Gold Rush* is highly useful to those interested in a comprehensive survey of music of the time. For those who love sing-along songs, Murray's book is well worth perusal.

*American Indians in the Marketplace:  
Persistence and Innovation among the Menominees  
and Metlakatlangs, 1870-1920*

Brian C. Hosmer

Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999.  
309 pp. Illus., maps. US\$35 cloth.

By Margaret Seguin Anderson  
*University of Northern British Columbia*

**A**MERICAN INDIANS in the *Marketplace* compares two interesting case studies of how Aboriginal communities engaged with the emerging market economies of their regions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These case studies involve, respectively, the Menominees (Wisconsin) and the Metlakatla Tsimshian (Alaska). Brian Hosmer presents detailed analyses of how these two communities sought to participate in economic development through the marketplace and to temper the effects of the market economy on their cultural values. He argues that they were not simply active participants in the emerging market economies of their regions but that, along with other Aboriginal communities,

they understood that market capitalism encouraged and rewarded individualistic, entrepreneurial values, along with modes of behavior that tended to separate persons from their community. Perceiving these influences as corrosive to fundamental values that preserved, sometimes even renewed, community and identity, some Indians, Menominees and Tsimshians in this study, explored means to conform economic change to their needs. (xi)

Hosmer's approach is grounded in world systems theory as developed in Immanuel Wallerstein's *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (1974) and adapted to American Indian history by Richard White in *Roots of Dependency* (1983). Through a detailed analysis of changes that took place over fifty years in these two communities, Hosmer demonstrates the usefulness of this approach to understanding the active agency of Aboriginal communities in the interplay of economic and cultural change and the persistence of cultural values.

Hosmer takes communities as his unit of focus, examining the ways in which market enterprises were developed and shaped to community purposes. Readers will find some similarities to the approach taken in Sarah Carter's study of Aboriginal ranching in the Prairies (*Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* [1990]). Furthermore, Hosmer's focus on communities rather than on individuals complements the approach taken by Rolf Knight in *Indians at Work* (1978). Knight's arguments about the significance of Aboriginal labour in building the economy of British Columbia focused on the contributions of Aboriginal people as

workers but did not explore the role of Aboriginal communities in shaping economic participation to meet their own ends.

Readers of *BC Studies* will be most interested in the detailed discussion of the economic history of Metlakatla, which includes a twenty-page chapter on the Tsimshians of British Columbia (including Gitksan and Nisga'a communities). Hosmer has cited many of the available published and archival sources and presented a competent synthesis, although specialists will have some quibbles with it. For instance, Hosmer states that Blackfish and Raven were the original and pri-

mary clans among the Gitk'a'ta (116). In fact they were Blackfish and Eagle, as stated in what appears to be his primary source on Tsimshian culture, Jay Miller's *Tsimshian Culture: A Light through the Ages* (1999, 56). There are also some orthographic errors with regard to the use of Tsimshian terms ("walp" or "waab," not "waalb"; "Gitga'ata" or "Gitk'a'ata," not "Gitk'a'ta" [116]). Though readers should treat Hosmer's discussion of Tsimshian ethnology with some caution, even specialists will find that the history of the economic enterprises that he has studied provides some new material and an interesting synthesis.

*Haa Aaní, Our Land:  
Tlingit and Haida Land Rights and Use*

Walter R. Goldschmidt and Theodore H. Haas  
Thomas F. Thornton, editor

Seattle: University of Washington Press and Juneau: Sealaska Heritage  
Foundation, 1999. 219 pp. Illus., maps. US\$30 paper.

By Charles R. Menzies  
*University of British Columbia*

THESE ARE A SIGNIFICANT body of anthropological work languishing in the no man's land of the unpublished report. Available to the general public briefly, if at all, these reports disappear quickly and quietly into the depths of waiting archives. Sometimes they may have a life beyond the initial aims and objectives of the agency that commissioned the report. "Possessory Rights of the Natives of Southeastern Alaska," originally commissioned by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1946 and written by Walter Goldschmidt

and Theodore Haas, is one such report. Its purpose was to determine Tlingit and Haida land rights in southeast Alaska in anticipation of the nationwide hearings of the Indian Land Claims Commission and the impending statehood of Alaska (xxiii). However, it long outlived its initial purpose. As editor Thomas Thornton explains, the report came to be regarded by the Tlingit and Haida as a "remarkably useful study [that] was almost always the starting point for further research [into questions of] customary and traditional uses" (xiii). That the report

has been co-published by Sealaska Heritage Foundation with the University of Washington Press speaks to the regard with which it is held by contemporary Tlingit and Haida communities as a useful anthropological work.

*Haa Aani* is an important document that has significance for First Nations in British Columbia and all those with an interest in Tlingit and Haida relations to their land and resources. This is so in two particular ways. First, the original document itself is an exemplary example of how to research and write a report concerning Aboriginal land rights and use along the Northwest Coast. Second, and perhaps even more important, the report is an example of how anthropology as a discipline and a methodology can be employed by and on behalf of First Peoples. I will expand this point below, but first allow me a few words on the actual contents of *Haa Aani*.

The republished report contains an introduction by Thornton, a reflective essay by Goldschmidt (one of the original researchers), and the complete transcripts of the original testimony of the elders and community leaders interviewed in 1946. Thornton's introduction effectively situates the significance of the report for the Tlingit and Haida. He provides an important historical context to the report that carefully and concisely describes the legal framework within which the Alaskan Native Claims movement evolved. Goldschmidt's personal reminiscence of the research experience and his "relationships with and feelings about the community of Alaskan Indians, mostly Tlingit, who accepted and trusted [the research team] with their knowledge" (xxiii) is of particular interest to anthropologists, especially applied anthropologists. Working

with the lawyer Theodore Haas and Tlingit researcher Joseph Kahklen, they embarked on a whirlwind tour of Tlingit and Haida villages in southeast Alaska. The entire report, from research to final draft, was completed within three months. "It is a source of surprise to me," Goldschmidt comments, "that we managed as well as we did, and of great pride that the Report is seen fifty years later as of such value that its republication is sponsored by the Tlingit people themselves" (xxv).

As an academic positioned between life as a social anthropologist and family ties to the very people being chronicled, I found the transcripts of the elders' and community knowledge holders' interviews especially powerful. In particular, the words of the elders from Tongass Island, a small island just across the BC/Alaska border, took me back to memories of my childhood. I was born and raised in Prince Rupert, barely a half day's boat trip south of Tongass Island, and I grew up listening to stories about my family's history and how my great-grandmother and her family left the village on Tongass Island in the late 1800s during the US Army occupation of the island. I hear the echoes of my own family's history in the words of the elders. Their words lend meaning and context to the stories I grew up with in ways the report, with its narrow focus on resource use and proprietary rights, never can.

As in many cases in British Columbia's recent history, the research agenda behind the original Goldschmidt and Haas report was driven by outside legal requirements, not direct community needs. In 1940s Alaska, the drive towards statehood and the encroachment of non-Aboriginal settlers were adversely affecting Tlingit and Haida use of their traditional territories. In British

Columbia similar issues are driving the contemporary indigenous research agenda, in which First Nations are required to demonstrate that they exist as an indigenous people and then document the extent of their land base as it existed prior to European contact. The result is that key concerns relating to meeting real needs pertaining to local well-being are often pushed aside as bands and tribal offices are forced to defend their land and territory in Canadian courts.

The question of who drives the research agenda also raises an important and uneasy question about the role of anthropologists in First Nations communities. It is not unusual to hear First Nations people talk about anthropology as a process of cultural theft and anthropologists as the thieves who steal in under the cover of friendliness only to depart, never returning, with stories and knowledge they then exploit to the detriment of the community. *Haa Aani*, however, is an important example of what anthropologists more often contribute to First Nations communities: reports, articles, books, and manuscripts that are useful, informative, and carefully thought out. In British Columbia for example, nearly every major court case concerning Aboriginal rights and title that has been heard has involved one or more anthropologists hired by a First Nation to prepare an “expert” witness report.

Anthropologists are among the first to argue that the misplaced standards of the Euro-American legal system inappropriately require an “expert” to say what should rightfully be said – if it should be said at all – by elders and other community-based knowledge holders. Yet this has been the colonial paradox. In order for First Nations to assert their claims before the courts, it has been necessary to hire outside

experts such as anthropologists and historians to validate and translate for the court what community members already know.

Despite the important role anthropologists have played in support of Aboriginal rights and claims, they are rarely part of the power structure that shapes the everyday lives of First Nations peoples. They are, however, people who return, year in and year out (as funding and personal commitments to family and work allow), to the communities with whom they have worked. It is long past time to recognize that the source of colonialism and the exploitation of First Peoples is neither anthropology nor anthropologists. Yes, the discipline emerged out of the expansion of capitalism and the European-based colonialism of the late 1800s. Yes, there are individuals who are insensitive and self-serving. However, to continue to target anthropologists, as some commentators do, merely shifts the spotlight of critical examination away from the real offenders. The real thieves arrive with briefcases and contracts, they promise economic benefits, jobs, and community centres in exchange for timber, fish, minerals, water rights, or places to dump toxic waste and garbage. These people are rarely interested in the lives of First Nations, except in so far as this knowledge may improve corporate profit margins.

Anthropology is not simply part of a Western metanarrative responsible for destroying indigenous societies. In fact, anthropology is a by-product of the interaction between Europeans and First Nations, and it is at least as useful to First Nations as computers, back-hoes, or modern fishing boats. Anthropology is one more tool that, in particular circumstances, can be put to good use by and on behalf of First

Nations. The publication of *Haa Aani* should remind us that anthropologists can be important allies in the struggle for self-determination and decolonialization.

First Peoples in the Americas have repeatedly been forced to assert ownership of the land, to stand up and say: *Haa Aani*, this is our land. Even when the newcomers do not listen, elders

and community leaders continue to stand up and repeat: this is our land, we were born here, and our grandparents and their grandparents before us were born here, back to before the time Raven brought light to the people. *Haa Aani* is a document that should be read and pondered by all those concerned for the rights of First Peoples.

*Those Who Fell from the Sky:  
A History of the Cowichan People*

Daniel P. Marshall

Duncan: Cultural and Educational Centre, Cowichan Tribes,  
1999. 194 pp. Illus., map. \$29.95 paper.

By Terry Glavin

*Editor, Transmontaine Books*

THIS IS NOT a work of independent scholarship. It was undertaken by a graduate student in history, but it is a commissioned work that was vetted by a group of Cowichan elders, a "history book committee," and senior tribal officials. It is the Cowichans' authorized, approved, and "official" version of history. It does not pretend to be otherwise, and it is a useful and valuable work, in spite of these things and because of them.

Originally intended as a book for Cowichan youth, *Those Who Fell from the Sky* evolved into a book specifically intended to educate the general public about the Cowichan peoples, their history, and the ways the Cowichans have met the challenge arising from long-standing trespasses upon Aboriginal title in British Columbia. The Cowichan tribes' contemporary re-

sponse to that challenge is their participation in the British Columbia Treaty Process as well as in public education efforts, of which this book is a part.

*Those Who Fell from the Sky* presents a version of the Cowichans' oral traditions that follows a single narrative line of the sort that tends to lose the nuances and the vitality of the original stories. Still, the contribution made by "official" histories such as these, as long as they are understood to be mainly descriptions of stories rather than the stories themselves, should not be underestimated. *Those Who Fell from the Sky* allows the Cowichan peoples to present the history of their "land claims" on their own terms. This should be of broad interest, if only because it was the failure of the Crown and the Cowichan peoples to conclude a treaty in the 1860s that marked the

beginning of British Columbia's "Indian land question." But more important, and precisely because it is an authorized history, it is a formal invitation to settler communities to see the landscape around them in ways normally reserved to the Cowichan peoples.

Throughout British Columbia, tribal groups are routinely confounded by internal debates that hinge on arguments about whether it does more harm than good to allow the general public to comprehend specific features of the landscape in ways that are revealed in oral histories. The Cowichan elders clearly decided that more good than harm can come of such knowledge. The result is a sort of public map of the Cowichan territory, one that encourages non-Aboriginal people to understand and respect the significance of certain landmarks and features of that territory. Vancouver Island communities that have sprung up in and around the Cowichan Valley cannot help but be enriched by *Those Who Fell from the Sky* and brought closer to the Cowichan peoples through a new appreciation of the landscape.

There are problems with *Those Who Fell from the Sky*. Fully eight pages are given over to a story of dubious veracity, reprinted from Anne Cameron's *Daughters of Copper Woman*, apparently because the story involves the Cowichan. The term "sovereignty" is used throughout where "Aboriginal title" would have been accurate and uncontroversial. Also, the book con-

cludes with a meditation upon the isolation of the Cowichan Valley's settler cultures from the Cowichan communities in their midst, juxtaposing the Clemclemuluts longhouse with the nearby South Cowichan Lawn Tennis Club to make the case that "segregation ... is still a feature of the Cowichan Valley today." If segregation persists, then it is doubtful that the tennis club, any more than the longhouse, is evidence of it.

Still, *Those Who Fell from the Sky* contributes to a deeper understanding of the need for reconciliation between British Columbia's settler cultures and Aboriginal cultures. It does much to explain why the law demands a reconciliation between Crown sovereignty and Aboriginal title in British Columbia. It also hints at a different sort of history – one in which Native and settler communities have struggled to live together, as neighbours, in spite of everything. In the Cowichan Valley, the first White settlers were no less fervent than were the Cowichan peoples in their faith that the "land question" would, ultimately, be resolved amicably and fairly. This faith persists, after all these years, and it reveals a shared history British Columbians can look back upon without shame. It is a tradition carried by Daniel P. Marshall himself, the nominal author of *Those Who Fell from the Sky*, whose own great-great-great-uncle built the first road from Somenos to Maple Bay in 1864. Histories like these we desperately need.

*“Keeping the Lakes’ Way”: Reburial and the  
Re-creation of a Moral World among an Invisible People*

Paula Pryce

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

203 pp. Illus., maps. \$17.95 paper.

By Randy Bouchard and Dorothy Kennedy

*British Columbia Indian Language Project, Victoria*

THE SINIXT (*sngaytskstx*), or Lakes people, an Aboriginal group of the Arrow Lakes region, were deemed “extinct” by the federal and provincial governments almost fifty years ago. This remains an unresolved chapter in the history of British Columbia’s First Nations. Like the author of this volume, we became intrigued by the question of why there are no Sinixt Indian reserves in British Columbia. The issue first came to our attention when a Sinixt elder from the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington State walked into our office in 1972 seeking information about his people’s history in British Columbia. Our personal voyage of discovery, which led us to dozens of archives throughout Canada and the United States, resulted in a lengthy and well-distributed report (*Lakes Indian Ethnography and History*) that we compiled on the subject in 1985 (on behalf of the British Columbia Heritage Conservation Branch), following a more general study (*Indian Land Use and Occupancy in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake Area of Washington State*) that we produced in 1984 on behalf of the Colville Confederated Tribes and the United States Bureau of Reclamation.

Paula Pryce spends the first three chapters of *Keeping the Lakes Way* revisiting the questions we addressed

in 1985. Although these chapters rely heavily upon the facts documented in our reports, Pryce nevertheless deviates from our analysis of Sinixt history when she hypothesizes that the isolated Slocan and Arrow Lakes provided a refuge where the Sinixt could live in peace in the mid-nineteenth century, away from the Plateau Indian wars of the 1850s, and that they had a “latent presence” north of the border until near the twentieth century. Pryce’s thesis (8) is complete conjecture. She does not present a single piece of evidence to support it.

If Pryce’s argument retains any plausibility, then it is only because there is very little documentation pertaining to this area between the 1840s and 1850s that could either prove or disprove her thesis. However, what is available does *not* support her position. Father De Smet’s 1842-8 map, for example, notes a Sinixt settlement on the west side of Upper Arrow Lake, which he noted as consisting of twenty families. This was the only settlement he recorded in traditional Sinixt territory. The map also indicates that De Smet had only a vague knowledge of the Slocan area, despite his discussions with his Sinixt converts. If large numbers of Sinixt were in the Slocan at this time, then De Smet would have obtained this information from his enthusiastic Sinixt



congregation and sought them out. The widely respected chief of the Lakes became a staunch Roman Catholic in the 1840s and surely would not have concealed from De Smet the existence of significant numbers of unbaptized members of his tribe.

By the early 1860s, an increasing number of miners, government officials, explorers, and trail builders were in the Arrow Lakes region. Some of them came across encampments of Sinixt people but received no information that significant numbers of Sinixt, or anyone else, were holed away in this region. Our reports cite several authoritative ethnohistoric references to the fact that the Sinixt people had largely migrated south. Pryce has chosen either to not refer to them or else to minimize their implications.

The irony is that, even given Pryce's obvious agenda, her concoction of an alternative history depicting the Sinixt as occupying their territories for longer than they did is entirely *unnecessary* to establishing a land claim. The documented evidence indicates that, while most of the Sinixt had relocated their winter villages into American territory by the 1870s, Sinixt people still continued to come north into their traditional territory each year, particularly to hunt and harvest berries. The fact that they continued to claim broad rights to land in the Arrow Lakes and elsewhere in the 1880s and 1890s is well documented. A few Sinixt people may have wintered regularly in the north, and additional small numbers (particularly a Sinixt family who were well known around Castlegar) appear to have wintered south of the border most years but to have spent much of the rest of the year in Canadian territory. If Pryce's intent was to show that the Sinixt traditionally lived in and used the Arrow Lakes region until

the early twentieth century, then she could have done so by sticking to the facts. It is the careful, critical, and comprehensive analysis of the ethnohistoric, ethnographic, and linguistic facts – not the construction of an alternative theory – that supports Sinixt claims to the Arrow Lakes and Slocan areas.

The *one* new ethnohistoric addition Pryce offers to supplement our research is, in fact, an error and, thus, merits examination. Although she acknowledges she has no linguistic training, Pryce concludes on pages 17–8 and in Appendix 1 that “*Chatth-noo-nick*” is a “plausible rendering” of Sinixt, and she suggests that Aaron Arrowsmith's 1814 map, which contains this term, is the first transcription of the name of these Aboriginal people. The first part of the term appears in the Spokane/Kalispel/Flathead word for “lake” but not in the language of the Sinixt people. This is significant, for it helps confirm Arrowsmith's error. Pryce (17) cites Barbara Belyea's (1994, xii) *Columbia Journals* as the authority for her statement that information on the 1814 Arrowsmith map “came largely from David Thompson,” thus implying that *Chatth-noo-nick* may have been included in the information from Thompson. But the word *Chatth-noo-nick* appears nowhere on David Thompson's 1813–4 map, and Belyea herself comments that “Arrowsmith may have obtained this information not from Thompson but from Joseph Howse, whose map of the upper Columbia, drawn in 1812, is now lost.” (295–7). Thus it is not correct to suggest that the information on the 1814 Arrowsmith map came from Thompson. In fact, the information came from several sources. The 1814 map identifies a large lake west of Flatbow (Kootenay) Lake as “*Chatth-*

*noo-nick* or Ear-bobs L.” However, Alexander Henry makes references to the “Kullyspell or Earbob” Indians, both in his 1810-1 journal and also in a vocabulary of “Flat Head.” The reference is clearly to the Kalispel, or Pend d’Oreille, who were frequently perceived as one people in the early 1800s. The “Ear-bobs” became known more commonly by the French term “pend’oreilles,” which translates as “ear-drops,” or “ear-bobs,” hence the tribal designation “Pend d’Oreille.” *Chatth-noo-nick*, thus, is not the name for the Arrow Lakes, and it is certainly not another transcription for “Sinixt.” The cartographer, Arrowsmith, simply made a mistake, and Pryce follows suit. Moreover, Arrowsmith’s 1818 map corrects his 1814 map’s error by removing the words “*Chatth-noo-nick* or Ear-bobs L.” from the Arrow Lakes.

In summarizing Sinixt ethnography, Pryce gets into further trouble: the following few examples are illustrative but, unfortunately, by no means exhaustive. Twice she misquotes archaeologist Gordon Mohs’s citation of W.W. Elmendorf and states that “the Sinixt are a matrilineal people who generally followed an endogamous matrilocal marriage pattern” and that “well into the nineteenth century, polygyny was relatively common” (26). First, Mohs notes that Elmendorf recorded that the Lakes had preferential matrilocal residency patterns but made no reference at all to the Lakes being a matrilineal society. “Matrilocal” and “matrilineal” are not synonyms. Second, Mohs, citing Elmendorf, does not say that polygyny was “relatively common.” He says: “there was also a tendency towards monogamy, although polygyny was not uncommon,” which has a rather different emphasis. In other places (30), the ambiguity that Pryce attributes to the ethnographic

data is manufactured by her re-arrangement of the record.

Pryce’s entire analysis seems to serve only to reinforce her false thesis that sloppy ethnographers and stiff-necked bureaucrats cross-pollinated to erase the Sinixt people from the historical map. It is her view that “anthropologists have made a greater contribution to the obscurity than to the knowledge of the Sinixt” (7-8). She proceeds to say that “much of the more comprehensive writing on this subject has been left to moulder unpublished” (8) and that, consequently, anthropologists are responsible for governments’ lack of knowledge and, ultimately, their decisions. On page 22 she is more direct, noting: “At least part of this confusion has arisen as a result of sporadic and patchy ethnographic fieldwork among Arrow Lakes people. No major work or comprehensive ethnography has been written on the Sinixt. However, James Teit, Verne Ray, William Elmendorf, Randy Bouchard, and Dorothy Kennedy have done limited fieldwork, the latter three without publishing their results.”

Pryce’s summary both inaccurately denigrates the existing anthropological literature on the Sinixt and *greatly overstates* her role in drawing together the “dispersed references” that she claims to present. While the existing literature on the Sinixt is limited, much of it is of high quality, including the work of James Teit (1930), Verne Ray (1936), and W.W. Elmendorf (1935-6). If the anthropological literature had no impact on government policy makers who did not read it, then this is hardly the fault of the ethnographers involved.

Pryce’s contention that we and the late Bill Elmendorf undertook only “limited” ethnographic fieldwork and that this work was “sporadic and

patchy" are, in our opinion, inaccurate and unfair. Elmendorf undertook ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork among the Sinixt in September 1935 and August-September 1936. The source of Elmendorf's Lakes information was a woman who was born in the mid-1860s, more than thirty years before the birth dates of the oldest Sinixt people we interviewed in the 1970s and 1980s. Consequently, Elmendorf was able to obtain information that was no longer known to the people we interviewed, although the Sinixt elders with whom we conducted extensive field interviews between 1975 and 1985 were recognized as the most traditionally knowledgeable people available. As a result of these interviews we produced the two book-length studies Pryce relied upon (as well as an ethnobotanical monograph and several articles). Perhaps Pryce believes that a written work has to be published in order to be comprehensive.

Pryce's thesis in the second half of *Keeping the Lake Ways* is that the Sinixt's "social memory" of the area is accompanied by "ideas of prophecy, destruction, and resurrection" (10, 98) that have motivated their concerns about repatriation and reburial of

skeletal remains. After presenting a review of the more common sources on the Prophet Dance movement, Pryce extends the discussion with a summary of Fentress and Wickham's (1992) social memory thesis, followed by Bakhtin's (1981) ideas on chronotopes. Chapter 5 then applies these concepts to what Pryce observed and heard during her visits to the Sinixt people's Vallican encampment. Though Pryce finds that a relationship with the Prophet Dance is indirect, persisting only in a "discursive field," she argues more convincingly that Vallican serves as a "space where time and people come together" (112); that is, as a chronotope. Despite the severe limitations of Pryce's book, this approach makes a significant contribution.

Some say you can judge a book by its cover. The back cover of *Keeping the Lakes Way* displays an 1861 photograph of Sinyakwateen depot. But it is *not* located "near Hudson's Bay Company Fort Shepherd," as the caption states, nor is the term a rendering of "Sinixt," as Pryce states on page 150; rather, Sinyakwateen depot was located about seventy-five miles to the southeast, in Kalispel territory, where the Pend d'Oreille River flows out from Lake Pend d'Oreille.

*Out of the Mist:  
Treasures of the Nuu-chah-nulth Chiefs*

Martha Black

Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1999.  
159 pp. Illus., maps. \$36.95 paper.

By Ki-ke-in (Ron Hamilton)  
*Emin*

**O**UT OF THE MIST, the official catalogue for the Royal British Columbia Museum travelling show of the same name, is a large-format picture book. Profusely illustrated with no less than 256 photographs, this is an immediately impressive and enjoyable publication to look at. There are 205 coloured photographs and fifty-one historical black-and-white images. Aside from record shots of the artefacts, there are two groups of coloured photographs found here. Near the front of the catalogue are seventeen small, refreshingly informal portraits of Nuu-chah-nulth Ha'wiih (hereditary chiefs) (36-8). Near the back of the book are eighteen shots of Nuu-chah-nulth people at the opening ceremonies for the show in Victoria (136-40). The portraits are a respectful and tacit acknowledgment of our traditional system of government. The images of people speaking, singing, dancing, and just being at the opening clearly capture some of the joy, excitement, and gravity we feel when we open up our treasure chests and reconnect with our ancestors through the display and use of our *tuupaatis* – our crest objects.

Our *tuupaatis*: screens, curtains, talking sticks, boxes, whaler's hats, headdresses, dance-ropes, masks, drums, rattles – these are the very heart and soul of this exhibition and this catalogue. Given this, and the

seminal nature and overarching importance of these types of artefacts to Nuu-chah-nulth ceremonial activity today, the record shots of individual objects are a major disappointment. Only three historic and two contemporary pieces are given full-page status (1, 2, 98, and 18, 133). The cover and many pages feature a single object but clutter the image with titles, patches of text, or both (45, 70, 82). A clear title page for each section would have been a nice touch. I find the manipulation of the mask image on the cover (certainly the oldest piece from the show most referenced by Nuu-chah-nulth carvers today) both ugly and disrespectful. Page 33 provides another example of the book's poor layout. With image and text on a single leaf, there is more empty space than used space here. The image of "The Whaler's Dream" could have been considerably larger; as it is, it is almost a throwaway.

Most of the black-and-white images the author utilizes in *Out of the Mist* were made during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century from large-format glass negatives. These photographs feature views of old Nuu-chah-nulth villages, with their characteristic big houses scattered along our west coast (8, 21, 26, 65, 158). A few others capture distinguished

individuals from our past dressed to meet or entertain the public (58, 64, 107, 142). Such images reach across the years and draw us back in time; they captivate us and speak eloquently of the dignity and pride of our immediate forebears. Three black-and-white photographs depict Nuu-chah-nulth women weaving baskets, and there is a single shot of a carver working on a model pole (118, 124, 125, and 108). I enjoy these photographs because they show some of the people who made some of the older objects in this catalogue.

The advertising blurb on the back cover of the volume claims that “this book is more than a catalogue ... Martha Black places the objects in context with the culture and history of these west-coast people.” This is an overstatement, as only 152 of the 218 items in the exhibit are illustrated in the book. Having seen the show a half dozen times, I would appreciate seeing more of the pieces included. As well, for almost two decades now, students of Northwest Coast art and history have been accustomed to exhibition catalogues with considerable contextual material. For example: Bill Holm’s *Smoky-Top: The Art of Willie Seaweed* (1983), Doreen Jensen and Polly Sargent’s *Robes of Power: Totem Poles on Cloth* (1986), Robin K. Wright’s *A Time for Gathering: Native Heritage in Washington State* (1991), and Steven Brown’s *The Spirit Within: Northwest Coast Native Art from the John Hauberg Collection* (1995). There is no new scholarship in Black’s work, only new material surveyed briefly.

Sadly, only two of the many photographs used in this book are noteworthy because of their potlatch settings. There is a beautiful historic shot of a graceful Nuu-chah-nulth canoe, with ten paddlers still aboard,

being carried aloft in official welcome by a crew of Tla-o-qui-aht (41). The shot of Queen Mary, wife of Tla-o-qui-aht chief Wickaninnish, in a potlatch house might have helped contextualize some of the Tla-o-qui-aht material in the show had it been placed in proximity to it. However, the shot appears in the pronunciation appendix at the back of the book (149). It is worth noting that Nuu-chah-nulth photographers have taken countless photographs during Nuu-chah-nulth feasts and potlatches from about 1930 onward. A selection of these would have enriched this catalogue immeasurably.

In contrast to the rich array of photographs in *Out of the Mist*, Black, as the curator of this important exhibit of material culture and as the author of this catalogue, seems to have little to say. She quotes various Nuu-chah-nulth people at length and throughout the book, but her own lack of expertise in matters Nuu-chah-nulth is all too evident. She has not provided even a simple essay to introduce the distinct character of Nuu-chah-nulth mythology, history, beliefs, politics, or ceremony and ritual. Perhaps she is wise to keep her observations and comments to a minimum.

In her preface, the author declares the museum show chronicled in this book to be the “first-ever exhibit of Nuu-chah-nulth arts and culture” (13). This statement is as bold as it is ignorant. Nuu-chah-nulth peoples have used great paintings and carvings, beautiful robes, strong songs and dances, eloquent speakers, and a broad range of ceremonies to proclaim our place and our authority along the west coast of this island since time immemorial. We have been exhibiting our culture to Europeans since 1778, when Captain Cook first visited our

shores and attended a potlatch. Witness the Nuu-chah-nulth woman pictured weaving at the 1904 World's Fair. She was part of a group who went to demonstrate various traditional skills and to entertain the public (125). Witness the Tla-o-qui-aht Ha'wiih ranged in front of Wickaninnish's curtain in 1928 (58). They were greeting Lieutenant-Governor Lord Willingdon in Tofino. Witness the truckload of Nuu-chah-nulth men and women decked out in their crest masks and headdresses for the Alberni Dominion Day parade in 1929 (142). They are trying to make a point: "We are still here. In spite of all that you've done to wipe us off the face of this earth, we are still here." Black

has chosen to use these images, but she has missed much of the very culture and history the book claims to offer.

Not since John Sendey's *The Nootkan Indian: A Pictorial* (1977) has a single publication featured so many images of Nuu-chah-nulth people. That long-out-of-print work is a collection of early illustrations and photographs interspersed with quotes from Captain Cook's journals. Furthermore, no other trade publication has quoted Nuu-chah-nulth people so profusely. Despite its weaknesses, readers of *BC Studies*, students of anthropology and history, Nuu-chah-nulth people, and many others may want to add this book to their libraries.

*Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique:  
Manufactured by Joseph Dufour et Cie 1804-05  
after a Design by Jean-Gabriel Charvet*

Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales and  
National Gallery of Australia, 2000

Distributed in North America by University of Washington Press.  
48 pp. Illus. US\$18.95 paper.

Roderick J. Barman  
*University of British Columbia*

THE VISITOR to the Honolulu Academy of Arts, housed in the former Cooke family mansion, will encounter a myriad of objects to charm the senses and to stimulate the intellect. In a dark corner, shielded from natural light, stands what is perhaps the most striking and unusual exhibit – a set of twenty panels, or strips, of wallpaper dating from the start of the nineteenth century. What fascinates are the scenes on the wallpaper. They represent a

panoramic view, in an open-air setting, of different Native peoples of the Pacific Islands and coasts. The scenes begin on the left, where a group of people wearing conical hats and long capes is engaged in drying fish hung from strings. The visitor from British Columbia at once exclaims: "Nootka Sound!" and that remark justifies this review of *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* in *BC Studies*.

The wallpaper was produced in 1805 by Joseph Dufour et Cie (a firm located

in Maçon, France), and it was first displayed at a manufacturing exhibition in Paris in 1806. The paper sold briskly, and examples in situ, attached to their original walls, survive in France, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, and the United States. The wallpaper's popularity is entirely explicable. The twenty panels, composed of woodcuts hand-painted with gouache, possess considerable aesthetic appeal. The individual scenes are deftly drawn and, viewed as a whole, possess balance and integrity. The diversity of the peoples and landscapes, the absence of the constant repetition that characterizes most wallpaper, and the delicacy of the colouring combine to delight the eye.

Attractive as it is aesthetically, the wallpaper is no less interesting in terms of its iconography. Employing what was still, in 1806, the innovative device of the panorama, Jean-Gabriel Charvet, the designer, presented views of peoples recently revealed to the European world. In composing his figures, Charvet drew heavily on the illustrations published in the several narratives of Captain Cook's voyages. This provenance, and the inclusion in the background of Panel 9 of a distant view of Cook's death in Hawaii, explain why the wallpaper has at times been termed *Les Voyages du Capitaine Cook*.

While the designs bear witness to the profound influence of Cook's voyages on the European mindset, they cannot be termed copies. Charvet's imagery derives not from what Weber, Samuel, and others recorded on paper (drawings later engraved) but, rather, from the vision of the "Noble Savage" so favoured by the Enlightenment. The figures portrayed dwell in a beneficent Nature, live in harmony with it, and clothe and feed themselves with its products. The few images not in

accord with this view are banished either to the background (as with Cook's death) or to the outer edges of the panels. This interpretation of the panels' iconography, patent from the content, is amply confirmed by the text of the pamphlet issued by the manufacturer as a key to the figures and as a guide to hanging the paper. "The figures arranged on each strip of this decoration are not only remarkable for their costumes, but interesting for the forms of their employment and, at times, admirable for their customs" (32).

The wallpaper was designed, the pamphlet proclaimed, so that "the studious man reading the history of the voyages or the specific accounts of the explorers used in these decorations, might think himself, by casting his eyes around him, in the presence of the depicted people" (33). In fact, the iconography was intended to encircle "the studious man" with images of the "other" – a world possessing the simplicity and the harmony Europe so sorely lacked. The images have little to do with the peoples of the Pacific Islands; instead, they reflect what Charvet and others wanted Europe to be. In dress, looks, and posture, the three female dancers from Tahiti appearing on Panel 5 have nothing to do with that island. They are upper-class French ladies, wearing Empire-style dress and performing a Neo-Classical dance at an amateur production in Paris. Their ultimate inspiration is the Three Graces.

*Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* proves once again, if proof were needed, that what we see is largely controlled by our existing state of mind, by our preconceptions. The "other" depicted by Charvet, and sold to the well-to-do by Joseph Dufour et Cie, is benign, even admiring; but this is not so in

every instance. The pamphlet makes plain why the “inhabitants of Nootka” (34) are relegated to the very left margin of the design on Panel 1. “They are not well built and have ill-proportioned bodies. ... Their ugly faces do not appear in their natural colour being daubed with ochre and oil ... They are serious and phlegmatic but also cruel and vindictive. They eat their vanquished enemies and trade the feet, hands, skulls and other parts of the body which cannot be consumed” (34). While admiration of indigenous peoples did not prevent (and even stimulated) colonization, contempt for them justified conquest and exploitation. In the case of British Columbia,

the attitude of *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* was one factor preparing the way for a bitter experience.

The University of Washington Press is to be congratulated on agreeing to distribute this study, jointly produced by the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the National Gallery of Australia (both of which own full sets of the wallpaper), in North America. While intended for an Australian audience, and while they are a bit disjointed, the contents of *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* amply reward careful study. Above all this work makes widely available an important artefact that is otherwise little known and difficult to see.

*Almost a Hero: The Voyages of John Meares, R.N.,  
to China, Hawaii and the Northwest Coast*

J. Richard Nokes

Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1998.  
217 pp. Illus., maps. \$29.95 paper.

By Bruce M. Watson  
*Vancouver Community College*

**T**O CONTEMPORARY Frances Hornby Barkley, British mariner John Meares was a thief who had stolen and used her husband’s maps; to George Dixon, Meares contradicted and misrepresented the facts, and to Robert Haswell he was a liar. Opinions of Meares by traditional maritime fur trade historians such as F. W. Howay, W. Kaye Lamb, and even Captain John Walbran, who examined the Barkley dairies, tend to agree with Meares’ contemporaries. To J. Richard Nokes, however, John Meares was a

man “of courage, energy and vision” who “deserves better” than the place in history that historians have accorded him. Nokes, a navy veteran and longtime *Oregonian* editor, sets about to throw new light on Meares in his book, *Almost a Hero*.

Nokes re-evaluates Meares through the use of narrative coupled with an examination of the criticisms. With the deft hand of an experienced editor, Nokes mines and amply endnotes the traditional and sometimes contradictory sources (Meares, George Dixon, Nathaniel Portlock, William Douglas,



and others) to create a clear free-flowing reader-friendly story. After briefly introducing the little known early life of Meares, Nokes begins his narrative in 1786 when the British mariner first came to the Northwest Coast on the ill-fated snow *Nootka* and ends it with the settlement of the Nootka Affair. A short "Afterward" sews up the rest of his life and brings to light a knighthood bestowed on Meares by the British Crown. On the way, Nokes dedicates considerable space to the Hawaiians, Kauai chief Kiana and the Barkley servant Winee, and broadens the content to include mention of the diversity of the crews, often overlooked by traditional historians. Periodic inserts entitled for example, "Nautical Terms," "The Sea Otter," "Macao and Canton" as well as contemporary maps and lithographs help enrich the understanding of the narrative. As well, an appendix which includes an examination of Mrs. Barkley's accusations, followed by a short document section which ranges from the 17 September 1778 "Passing Certificate for Commission of John Meares" to his last will and testament helps flesh out a John Meares beyond the person who plied the Northwest Coast.

Nokes forces a re-evaluation of the role of Meares by juxtaposing his accomplishments achieved always under difficult conditions, against traditional arguments held against him. Nokes shows that Meares pulled off many firsts at least from a Euro-Centric point of view. Although he missed finding the mouth of the Columbia as one of

the first non-Native explorers in the area, Meares was the first non-Native to found a fur trading "empire" in the region. He was the first to attempt to carry timbers (which he had to jettison during a storm) from the area thus creating an industry first. He was the first to carry Chinese to Hawaii and use East Indians (Lascars) as crew members, etc. Although Meares was only a pawn in the process, his "Memorial to Parliament" helped change the European imperial power structure in the area. Nokes' careful examination of the arguments against Meares does blunt some of the criticism leveled against him concerning his years on the coast. On the other hand, some may feel Nokes doesn't go the full distance to dispel the reputation perpetrated by his detractors as the records of the time imply that he angered practically everyone he met.

*Almost a Hero* is a good read for a student of Northwest Coast maritime fur trade history for it simplifies a very complex series of events which took place on the Northwest coast in the early years of contact when the maritime fur trade was in its infancy. Whether or not it exonerates Meares from the criticisms leveled against him is debatable. However, given the fuller account of his life, Meares comes across as more complex than the villain and the scoundrel which emerge from the records. As this is one of the first books to focus entirely on the life of Meares, rather than being addended to other events, scholars shouldn't pass this one by.

*Outpost: John McLoughlin and the Far Northwest*

Dorothy Nafus Morrison

Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1999.

641 pp. Illus., maps. US\$45 cloth.

By Morag McLachlan

*Vancouver*

**I**N 1957 THE STATE LEGISLATURE of Oregon conferred the title "Father of Oregon" on John McLoughlin. Statues have been erected in his honour, his home has been preserved, his portrait has been painted, and many places carry his name. He has become in many respects a mythical figure.

In 1824 McLoughlin arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River to take charge of the commercial interests of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been granted the sole British trading rights to the area west of the Rockies between 54'40" and 42'N. During the long and fractious process of defining the boundary between the expanding United States of America and British territory, this area was held in joint occupancy. This condition obtained until the border was finally settled in 1846, a much longer period than was originally intended when the agreement was reached in 1818.

As Americans ventured into the territory, McLoughlin gave those in need assistance rather than following the Hudson's Bay Company policy of discouraging settlement and vigorously opposing all competition. When McLoughlin failed to implement policies to Governor George Simpson's satisfaction, he was forced out of the Company, became an American citizen, and attempted to establish his own business. On a frontier where no rule of law yet existed, some greedy Americans

persuaded Congress to enact legislation that deprived McLoughlin of most of his holdings. Many of the accounts written about Oregon's early history have been a mea culpa for this shabby treatment and, in the process, Hudson's Bay Company policies have been vilified.

In this study, Dorothy Nafus Morrison has taken advantage of the wealth of material available to reveal the known facts about McLoughlin's life, from his early family history to his post-humous awards. She provides background information that places him in his own time and place. Although the book is a heavy tome, the print is clear and readable, and all references are confined to an appendix and identified by page number. The large collection of interesting pictures and illustrations make it evident that this work was not produced in haste. Morrison corrects many of the exaggerated accounts that fed the myth, but even though she cites incidents that reveal poor leadership, her portrayal of McLoughlin is, on the whole, warm and sympathetic. She sees him as a tragic hero who "shows courage and skill but is destroyed by implacable fate, by his virtues, and by his own character flaws" (xix).

Simpson's decision to replace McLoughlin was made easier because one of the members of the triumvirate that took control was James Douglas, a man of undoubted ability. When Douglas became governor of the

colonies of Vancouver Island and mainland British Columbia, he was fiercely resented by many of the settlers who remained after the gold rush. He faced a much more difficult situation than had McLoughlin. Although historians have restored his reputation, he has not received the acclaim accorded McLoughlin. The smouldering resentment among Americans against the

British as an outcome of the American Revolution and the War of 1812 made a hero of a man who was rejected by a British company and betrayed by rogue Americans. Douglas, striving to maintain British control on a volatile frontier, was perceived to be autocratic by settlers from Upper Canada, who had very recently achieved responsible government.

*Ranald MacDonald: Pacific Rim Adventurer*

Jo Ann Roe

Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1997.  
256 pp. Ilus., map. \$28.95 paper.

*The City of Yes*

Peter Oliva

Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1999. 336 pp. \$21.99 paper.

By Jean Wilson  
*UBC Press*

**I**F YOU ARE a fur trade aficionado, especially of Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) lore and lives, you will have heard of Ranald MacDonald. His life, by any measure, was adventurous and his legacy long-lasting, and references to him crop up in many HBC and Pacific Northwest histories. The first son of HBC clerk Archibald McDonald (his children adopted the "Mac" spelling) and Koale'zoa, daughter of the Chinook leader Concomly, Ranald lived a long life (1824-94) during which he spent time as a child and young man at Ft. George and Ft. Vancouver in the Columbia District as well as at Red River in Rupert's Land and St. Thomas, Upper Canada.

Between 1848 and 1858 he wandered the world as an ordinary seaman and as a whaler, visiting ports in Britain, Europe, Africa, the United States, Hawaii, and Asia. He also lived for a year in Japan and in Australia before returning to North America to participate in the Cariboo gold rush and the Vancouver Island Exploring Expedition (VIEE 1864), and to settle into the roadhouse business and then ranching near Ft. Colville, where he died.

It is MacDonald's experience in Japan that is perhaps most noteworthy and that is the focus of Jo Ann Roe's biography and a parallel theme to the main narrative in Peter Oliva's novel.

Roe is a travel and history writer based in Bellingham. Her biography is somewhat disjointed and occasionally simplistic or inaccurate, but it is also a fascinating reconstruction of a remarkable life. Her enthusiasm and fascination with her subject are evident, and she succeeds in describing Ranald MacDonald's full history.

In a life of many adventures, probably MacDonald's greatest was to be the first known White foreigner to gain entry into Japan and to survive as well as to leave a mark. He entered by faking shipwreck off the Hokkaido coast of northern Japan in 1848, being rescued by Japanese villagers and then, subsequently, being interned by high-ranking officials. MacDonald had been fascinated by Japan since he was a boy and had heard of three Japanese sailors shipwrecked off the Olympic Peninsula, imprisoned by Natives, and later released by HBC officials. MacDonald became determined, despite the risks, to see this "forbidden" country. During the year he spent as a relatively comfortable prisoner, MacDonald taught English. The men he taught were later instrumental in effecting treaty negotiations between Commodore Matthew Perry and Japanese officials in 1854.

My frustrations with Roe's biography have to do with a rather cavalier approach to justification for statements made and some obvious inaccuracies – for example, E. Herbert Norman was *not* an American historian, he was a Canadian diplomat who also wrote one of the most important books about Japan subsequent to his posting there (*Japan's Emergence as a Modern State* [1940]); Toronto did not, as far as I can determine, ever have a newspaper called "the Toronto Press"; and surely the statement that "slaves of coastal Indians lived a miserable life, indeed" is something of a gross generalization,

as are other statements about Northwest Coast Aboriginal peoples.

My greatest frustration with Roe's book is its idiosyncratic organization and lack of documentation. I fully appreciate that *Ranald MacDonald* is intended primarily for a general audience, and that is commendable, but readers would have been better served by a proper bibliography than by only an unkeyed list of references pertaining to each chapter at the back of the book. There are few notes, so on the whole it is difficult to determine what the sources are for most of Roe's observations, though much of her material obviously is based on MacDonald's story as written up by his friend Malcolm McLeod between the 1860s and 1890s. As well, chapters are often short (the first chapter is a mere four pages) and would have been better combined, and there is a disconcerting disjuncture in the narrative about half way through the book when Roe abandons MacDonald in Canada in order to insert two chapters about the completion of Perry's mission. They're interesting, but the Perry story could have been condensed, even summarized, in a note.

Peter Oliva, who is a well established Alberta writer and owner of the Calgary bookstore Pages on Kensington, obviously became as fascinated by MacDonald's story as did Roe (*The City of Yes* was shortlisted for the Giller Prize). Although Ranald MacDonald is not the focus of Oliva's story, his life provides an interesting parallel to the anonymous narrator's, he being a young Albertan hired to teach English in contemporary Japan. While there he learns of MacDonald's adventure and success in teaching men who became well established translators. The novel gets its title from the ancient name for Hokkaido – Yesso –

and from a poem by Yevgeny Yevtushenko:

I am like a train  
rushing for many years now  
between the city of Yes  
and the city of No.

"Yes" was also the name of the VIEE's last camp on Vancouver Island, MacDonald's journal of the trip being the only one to mention this fact.

Oliva's narrator is as curious to learn more about the alien Japanese culture as was Ranald MacDonald, and when he learns about MacDonald and his experience in the country almost 200 years earlier, he is struck by the parallels in their encounters with the Japanese. MacDonald's experience becomes a metaphor for the narrator's own search to become more than just "an outside person – an apparition made real" (57) and for Japan itself to become more than "an affectionate prison" (287). He is trying, instead, to become part of the world

he has adopted, even if only for the term of a one-year teaching contract. His life as an English teacher, his interaction with other teachers and students, his portrayal of Santa Claus and other attempts to portray North American customs, his whimsical tending of a colony of praying mantises, his sexual relationship with the charismatic Hiroko – all these experiences are interspersed with lyrical descriptions of MacDonald's experiences.

Reading these two books in tandem is yet another parallel complementing those in *The City of Yes*. It was particularly interesting to read first the biography and then the novel. Peter Oliva dextrously weaves fact and fiction; Jo Ann Roe assiduously presents all the facts of MacDonald's life, from which Oliva so successfully draws. There is certainly still room for a scholarly version of MacDonald's life, but in the meantime *Ranald MacDonald: Pacific Rim Adventurer* and *The City of Yes* bring this attractive and venturesome man vividly to life.

### *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*

Elizabeth Furniss

Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999. 237 pp. \$29.95 paper.

By Jo-Anne Fiske

*University of Northern British Columbia*

**I**MAGES OF PIONEERS figure largely in the identity of central British Columbia communities. Tales of extraordinary self-reliance, unparalleled feats of courage, personal sacrifice, and enviable economic success saturate local histories and community celebrations

and mark a pioneer era as both heroic and the foundation of a stable and meaningful rural culture. In *Burden of History*, Furniss unravels the underlying assumptions and symbols of these narratives, conceived as "the frontier myth," in order to demonstrate how

this historical discourse has come to shape, and be shaped by, contemporary racialized politics in the central Interior community of Williams Lake. Contemporary political culture, she asserts, is rooted in a “frontier cultural complex”; thematic analysis of the frontier myth “reveal[s] how deeply imprinted it is by Canada’s colonial legacy.” Furniss seeks to offer “a worthwhile and interesting critique of our own society” that will reveal the nature of racial tensions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (primarily Euro-Canadian) residents of this hinterland city. She argues the assumptions of frontier culture work to displace and marginalize the First Nations of the region – the Carrier, Secwepemc, and Tsilhqot’in – and to affect the daily lives of all the residents of the region, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

The “frontier” is characterized not as a place or historic point but, rather, as a sensibility of difference that is distinctive from urban culture both in its pioneer history and in its contemporary culture, which Furniss marks, *inter alia*, by a preference for driving pickup trucks rather than cars, veneration of the “self-made man,” working-class values, and right-wing populism. The frontier myth is a selected historical discourse, a manifestation of colonial culture that, in turn, is marked by “intense energy devoted to contemporary Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations either through the assignation of difference ... or through the denial of difference.”

While the frontier myth is shown to be highly flexible, it is sufficiently cohesive to be capable of containing contrary historic accounts and perceptions and, thus, is able to sustain an enduring narrative of racial superiority and a taken for granted historic benevolence towards a vulnerable race.

The frontier myth of benevolence frames both (1) the historic Euro-Canadian conquest of Aboriginal peoples and lands and (2) contemporary opposition to Aboriginal rights and treaty settlements as being in the best interests of the colonized peoples. Intertwined with a consciousness of pioneer sacrifice, hard work, and a faith in evolutionary principles of progress, which justifies a sense of Euro-Canadian entitlement and inheritance, perceptions of Canadian benevolence allow an overt anti-Aboriginal stance to be voiced as a defence of a democratic equality that is to be achieved through assimilation and the rule of individual rights over collective rights.

Furniss develops her argument in stages: She opens with a critique of the “landscape” of public history and identifies prominent racial stereotypes and cultural values in secondary school history texts and popular histories. She then moves to a discussion of how ordinary life and political discourses of the Cariboo-Chilcotin region, within which Williams Lake is located, reinforce and are reinforced by the dominant historic narratives of the frontier. Through interview data and anecdotal description, Furniss illuminates the ways in which “commonsense” racism emerges in daily living. Public meetings held by the Reform Party to debate the merits of the current BC Treaty process are presented to further illustrate the complexities of racialization and its foundation in the frontier myth. Political discourses that view conquest as natural, she argues, reduce history to the “axiom of ‘survival of the fittest’ and rationalizes arguments that Aboriginal peoples themselves are responsible for their economic dependency, social problems, and marginalization.

Finally, Furniss turns to cultural spectacle, the Williams Lake Stampede,

to illustrate the popular enactment of the frontier myth as a historic hybrid of the American myth of "regeneration through violence" and the Canadian myth of benevolence. Aboriginal peoples take up paradoxical positions in this spectacle as they seek to represent themselves as culturally unique, often by strategically deploying symbols that have accumulated the moral stigma of cultural stereotypes under the gaze of colonialism. Symbolic representations of "Indianness" through Indian Princess pageants, colourful parade floats, and cultural sites at the stampede grounds complement the struggles embodied in the "strategic equivalences" rhetoric of First Nations leaders. Through this rhetoric they make common claim to mainstream values while showing how the dominant society has either ignored this commonality or has failed to uphold the social values of democracy and equality.

However, as the political manoeuvres of the Reform Party's opposition to Aboriginal rights treaties attests, racist discourses of benevolence and assimilation are by no means restricted to the local politics of the economic and geographical hinterland; rather, benevolent paternalism imbues national myths of social progress and Canadian identity. The thematics of the frontier myth prevail in urban racist discourses just as they do in rural racist discourses.

Examples are commonplace in judicial history (Justice McEachern's specious reference to a "vast wilderness" is perhaps the most commonly cited instance), in national political discourse, and in the resource industries, with the corporate elite and the "working man" both speaking against "race" privileges while extolling the virtues of individualism and the "self-made man." Symbols and performances of the frontier cultural complex are powerful because they resonate with, rather than oppose (or differ from), a national sensibility of benevolence, progress, and "equality." While Furniss does not ignore this, she does underplay it and, in consequence, tends to overstate the differences of rural and urban racial identity formation. What I hear said in Williams Lake and other hinterland communities regarding racial relations and Aboriginal rights, I also hear in urban/suburban private and public spaces. The ubiquity of the myth of conquest by benevolence empowers the political manoeuvres of the hinterland. This aside, *The Burden of History* is compelling reading. Its ethnographic insight into racial tensions and national politics provides an important contribution to our understanding of life in a hinterland community and to our efforts to theorize the origins and consequences of settler society.

*Power and Place in the North American West*

Richard White and John M. Findlay, editors

Seattle and London: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest  
 in association with University of Washington Press, 1999.  
 312 pp. Maps. US\$19.95 paper

By Robert A.J. McDonald  
*McGill University and  
 University of British Columbia*

THE PUBLICATION in 1987 of Patricia Limerick's *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* was a benchmark in the writing of the history of the American West. Rejecting the influence of Frederic Jackson Turner, Limerick asserted boldly that the old emphasis on the uniquely American "process" by which the west was settled must give way to a new emphasis on the west as a "place," a place that should be studied in its own right and within a broadly comparative context. Writing what became known as the "new western history," she and others proceeded to explore a variety of neglected themes such as gender, racism, ethnic relations, and the environment. For Limerick the new approach, explored from a western perspective, suggested not a narrative of triumphant nation building but a "contest for property and profit ... accompanied by a contest for cultural dominance" (27). At the heart of western American history was a "legacy of conquest."

*Power and Place in the North American West* is a product of this new enthusiasm for the study of western American history. Originating as papers delivered at a symposium hosted by the Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest at the University of Washington in November 1994, this book emerged five years later as an

anthology of eleven essays loosely connected by the conference theme of exploring "the power of some places over others" (ix). The volume brings together work by some of the finest young scholars in the American West field, and it is edited by two of the field's leaders, Richard White, who has written the definitive general history of the American West, and John Findlay, the author of *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940* (1992).

In the Introduction to *Power and Place* the editors attempt to identify the contribution that the various chapters make to our understanding of power, but the eclectic range of meanings that are accorded the concept of power throughout the collection precludes easy generalization. In addition, while the editors note that several authors draw upon theoretical contributions by Michel Foucault and Anthony Giddens to the study of power, such theoretical influence is limited. Indeed, theories of power are employed much less creatively in this volume than they are by Tina Loo, Cole Harris, and Bruce Stadfeld, all of whom write in the field of British Columbia studies.

The volume is more effective when its analytical focus is on place. In "Violence, Justice, and State Power in the New Mexican Borderlands, 1780-



1850," for example, James Brooks suggests that a borderlands political economy "organized around the seizure and exchange of human lives and livestock between New Mexicans and neighboring Indians" (24) dominated greater New Mexico for more than a century and a half. It ended when the American military and free-labour capitalism arrived. Place, Brooks suggests, is crucial to an understanding of the violent and competitive nature of this multiethnic borderland exchange economy. In another piece, William Deverell and Douglas Flamming give a new reading to an old subject when they explore the racial dynamics of boosterism in Los Angeles in the period to 1930. While promotional narratives about the city "often shared a language common to all western boosterism," they argue, "black and white boosters offered markedly different interpretations of Los Angeles and the American West" (118).

The strongest cluster of essays falls within the category of "Environment and the Economy." Hal Rothman studies tourist development at Sun Valley, Idaho, where the Union Pacific Railway Company opened a resort hotel in 1936. Sun Valley redefined itself in the 1960s when a new form of ski resort (based on seasonal homes) emerged. The study explores how tourism can transform meaning attached to space and concludes that, while "many locals become materially better off as a result of the tourist industry ... the benefits are often negated by the changed perceptions of themselves and their community" (198). By exploring timber management in Washington State's Gifford Pinchot National Forest (GPNF), Paul Hirt seeks to explain "the dramatic decline of timber harvesting of the national forests of the Northwest in the 1990s."

He takes as his starting point Judge Dwyer's 1991 decision to nearly halt timber sales from the GPNF until a credible plan was put forward to protect the spotted owl. Hirt proceeds to present a compelling case that the real cause of the shutdown was not the court decision about the spotted owl but, rather, the liquidation of the forest during a forty-year "conquest" – a period during which economic thinking, and "the grandly optimistic assumptions by scientists and technicians regarding their ability to control nature in order to maximize productivity," prevailed (207). While the spotted owl litigation may have brought down the house of cards, Hirt concludes, the industry was "destined to collapse on its own in due course" (224).

Finally, the essay by Joseph Taylor III presents a compelling analysis of the spatial relations of power in the management of the Oregon salmon fishery in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In doing so, it offers the book's most sophisticated exploration of the relationship between power and place. Taylor suggests that Oregonians fragmented naturally integrated water systems into parts that were exploited by competing segments of the salmon industry. Fishing and cannery interests in a highly overcapitalized industry responded to the rush for spoils by attempting "to claim and regulate the spaces of rival interests" and bolster the declining fish stocks by embracing the panacea of hatcheries (234). The "spatialized politics of the salmon fishery" and the resulting fragmentation of nature predestined the collapse of yet another major resource extractive industry in the American Northwest.

There is much in *Power and Place* to inform British Columbians, particularly

those with an interest in issues of racism and the construction of racial identities, the history of tourism, the role of the state, and environmental history. The essays centre on the parts of the American West of most interest to British Columbians – the Northwest and the Pacific Coast. And one essay is specifically about British Columbia: John Lutz's study of the "Importance of Place" in the social construction of race. The volume offers a useful introduction to the work of a number of relatively new scholars who, in the last few years, have published major studies in the history of the American West. These authors include James Brooks (*Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands, 1660-1880*);

Chris Friday (*Organizing Asian American Labor: The Pacific Coast Canned-Salmon Industry, 1870-1942*); Hal Rothman (*Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West*); Paul Hirt (*A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests Since the Second World War*); and Joseph E. Taylor III (*Making Salmon: An Environmental History of the Northwest Fisheries Crisis*). Only one essay in *Power and Place* focuses on gender, a curious fact given its importance as one of the categories of analysis that defines the "new western history" as "new." This is, nonetheless, an important book that merits the attention of readers interested in thinking about British Columbia's past from a comparative perspective.

*Women Who Made the News:  
Female Journalists in Canada, 1880-1945*

Marjory Lang

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.  
371 pp. Illus. \$32.95 cloth.

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**T**HIS LIVELY, intelligent history of Canada's women journalists is a pleasure to read; it is packed with fascinating information and provocative speculation. While few press histories acknowledge their significance, media women have been powerful influences, "integrally involved in defining normative roles for Canadian women – and not only for anglophone middle-class women like themselves but also ... for working class and immigrant women who looked to the

media for cues as they too were swept into the mainstream of consumer culture" (7). While the scribbling sisterhood occasionally laboured as journalists and editors earlier, the late nineteenth-century press's turn to commercial advertising and female consumers created unprecedented opportunity. Pioneers, often well educated, single, Canadian-born refugees from their sex's limited employment options, encountered active resistance even as they contributed to newspaper

profitability. Created in 1904, the Canadian Women's Press Club (CWPC) (the Media Club of Canada, 1971-93) invoked the strong sense of community and commitment to women's advance that typified so many journalists. Its "strong sense of making history" (20) served it well, especially in the lifetime of the suffrage generation. Today it has served Marjory Lang and other Canadians well by allowing the telling of an extraordinary story of initiative and dedication.

Chapter 1, which sets forth the significance and the demographics of female journalists, is followed by eight chapters and an epilogue. Chapter 2 introduces key figures among the thirty-five "women editors, reporters, and journalists" reported in the 1891 census (29). While many were help-mates to other family members, other such "new women," like the globe-trotting Sara Jeannette Duncan, struck out on their own, attracting both envy and criticism for their supposed deviation from respectability. Anxious for larger markets, newspapers reluctantly embraced and meagrely repaid new recruits. A mix of British and, more often, American influences, Canadian papers and magazines soon recognized the sales potential of strong female columnists. Their popularity did not, however, ensure a decent income for most women writers, who regularly cherished ambitions as novelists and poets.

Chapter 3 considers the CWPC and its "quest for professional status" (65). The first nationally organized women's press club in the world, its intention was to have well educated female professionals serve the public good. Such sentiments reflected the feminist sympathies of many of its early members. Indeed, the CWPC provided key actors, including Nellie McClung, to

the suffrage struggle. Later generations of presswomen were hard put to maintain that early ardour, which, like the quest for professional status, faltered in the post-suffrage decades. Unionization offered another route to community and power, but employer opposition and their own mixed feelings kept women a minor force in Canada's newspaper industry.

Chapter 4 employs a lifecycle approach to charting the "patchwork quilt" of domestic and paid work that journalists, like working women in general, sought to maintain. A model of professionalism founded in male experience, albeit often a highly romanticized version, did not readily serve women. Married women had particular difficulties, regularly condemned by male colleagues, and sometimes by their single sisters, for "double-dipping." While a certain number of women, like Cora Hind of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, created lives of influence and comfort, more grew old with few financial resources. Not surprisingly, as Chapter 5 tells us, many journalists made their careers writing for "women's sections." Often dismissed by critics suspicious of female and popular enthusiasms, these pages exhibited an unprecedented interest in female lives, both domestic and public. Sometimes feminist, especially in the early days, they supplied critical opportunities for paid employment. As Chapter 6 suggests, these sections regularly tackled the changing roles of women. Experts in everything from beauty to child psychology, women such as Kate Aitken coached readers on the critical consumption of modern information and products. Such advice helped bankroll newspapers.

Chapter 7 recalls the history of the often vilified society section. Influential in the establishment of social rank,

these pages provided many writers' bread and butter. They also inspired nausea among those who recognized pretension even while they celebrated or, more occasionally (as with Madge Macbeth), lampooned it. Not surprisingly many pioneers, as Chapter 8 suggests, turned with relief to recording and contributing to the reform efforts of turn-of-the-century women's clubs such as the National Council of Women. For a few, their enthusiasm proved a springboard to elective office; but, as feminist inspiration dissipated, the club world lost much of its reason for existing and so, too, its interest for thoughtful presswomen. For those committed to social change, no ready alternative to the support provided by activist women's associations emerged. Elsewhere discrimination remained the order of the day, as may be seen in Chapter 9's description of the continuing barriers in the conventional male specialties of "war, politics, economics and finance, and general reporting" (249). While some, like Genevieve Lipsett-Skinner, challenged such haughty male preserves as the

Parliamentary Press Gallery, they had few successors.

As Lang's Epilogue makes only too clear, the fate of the CWPC mirrored the fate of presswomen. Once the activist heart of Canada's female journalists, its beat slowed as ambitious young women rejected older same-sex communities. In the course of their search for equality, however, they also lost an earlier generation's history of struggle. Only with the renewal of feminism at the end of the twentieth century would Canada's female journalists begin to recover and appreciate their predecessors. Only one regret marred my appreciation of this volume: E. Pauline Johnson, the Mohawk-English Canadian writer, was a member of the scribbling sisterhood but she does not appear in this volume. That omission cost Lang an important opportunity to consider how race politics shaped the writers who sought to influence the ways that other Canadians lived. In every other way, *Women Who Make the News* provides a crucial reminder of how much we lose when our history is not remembered.