BOOK REVIEWS

Unmarked: Landscapes along Highway 16
Sarah de Leeuw

Edmonton: NeWest Press, 2004.
118 pp. $19.95 paper.

JOCELYN SMITH
University of British Columbia

In 1982 SARAH DE LEEUW's father put on a suit and tie – "a rare sight," (1) de Leeuw writes – and then left for the airport. He returned on the evening of the third day to tell his family that he had at last found a job. The journey to this new job would take the family away from Duncan, beyond Prince George and Burns Lake, beyond Terrace and Prince Rupert, across the Hecate Strait to Port Clements. For eight-year-old de Leeuw, this journey, "three days travel and two nights sleep away from the people I have left behind," (9) is a journey to a place on the edge of nothingness.

Unmarked: Landscapes along Highway 16 is de Leeuw's account of her life on that edge of nothingness and her journey back along Highway 16, through Juskatla, Kitimat, Kitwanga, Rosswood, the Nass Valley, through childhood and young adulthood. Each of the sixteen chapters is a beautifully crafted essay, loosely connected with the others but able to stand alone, on the complexities and sadness – there is little happiness in this book – of life in the settlements through which de Leeuw's journey pulls her. De Leeuw draws her characters and their sorrow and anger with deft, economical strokes: "They auctioned off Jeskatla, piece by piece ... I remember clearly the look of Leaha's father. Sportsmen Unfiltered cigarette cradled gently between fingers, sitting legs apart, elbows on knees, on the hood of his gold Cadillac. A stunned look of resignation, the same look I had always imagined might flash across a faller's face the instant he cut into a widow maker, those terrible trees who in such a long split second rip out to take a man down" (20). Writing of her years in Kitimat, she sums up an entire adolescence with just a handful of well-chosen phrases: "The steep corner around the bridge where your brother had his first and last car accident ... where you passed, over and over, vowing each time was your last, each time to move away. Far away. Far away from endless Friday nights of bootlegging booze from the manager of the restaurant where you worked, leaving after long shifts, hair thick with the fatty scent of cheese and pizza dough, cheap wine and parents who take their children to the one and only family restaurant, exhaling their cigarette smoke over their kids' heads and directly into your green and white uniform. Any goddamn place that isn't here, even if it's just over there, is far enough for you. It's away" (48).

But the main presence in *Unmarked* is the landscape of northern British Columbia, and de Leeuw's evocation of that landscape is the greatest achievement in this wonderful book. Whether she is describing "the Zoo" at Cranberry Junction or the hills that surround Prince George or the beaches of Tlell, de Leeuw writes with a compassion and insight that reveal an extraordinary and subtle talent. She served recently as the research coordinator for the University of Northern British Columbia's task force on the effects of substance abuse on children, and is currently working on a PhD in cultural geography at Queen's University. The question that must be asked is whether she will continue to write creative nonfiction. *Unmarked: Landscapes along Highway 16* is a remarkable book, and to sustain its momentum in future writings will be a challenge. There is no reason to think that de Leeuw cannot meet that challenge, but even if she never writes another word of creative nonfiction, she has already produced an outstanding testament to lives lived in northern British Columbia.

Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada

Edited by W.H. New

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002. 1,347 pp. $75.00 cloth.

Richard J. Lane
Malaspina University College

The task appears straightforward – in this case, to read W.H. New's monumental *Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada* for information on BC writing. There is, usefully, an entry on British Columbia (unsigned, meaning "written by New"): it gives pertinent historical, political, and social information, and then lists some significant writers. The list does not claim to be exhaustive, but there are seventy-one names in the entry, and that is a great deal more than some people might expect to see. Of course there are some names missing, but – here goes, into the labyrinth – that does not mean that the names do not appear elsewhere.

A minor popular fiction writer with whom I am familiar, Bertrand William Sinclair, does not appear in the list, but he is in the encyclopedia: "Novelist; b Edinburgh 9 Jan 1881, d Pender Harbour, BC, 20 Oct 1972" the entry (written by James Doyle) tells me; further: "His 12 novels are tales of adventure featuring cowboys, prospectors, and fishermen, celebrating individualism while criticizing monopoly capitalism. His best work is *Poor Man's Rock* (1920), an attack on the corporations controlling the Pacific salmon fishery, within a romantic plot of a war veteran who by his personal and commercial decency wins economic success and the heroine's love" (1,048). "Enough already," I can hear the reader of this review saying. By what criteria does Sinclair warrant so much space in the encyclopedia or in this review? But there's the rub: by what criteria should he (or any other "minor" author) be either marginalized or left out? Sinclair appears, for example, in some recent critical work: Dagmar Novak's *Dubious Glory: The Two World Wars and the Canadian Novel* (2000), Laurie Ricou's *The Arbutus/Madrone Files: Reading the Pacific Northwest* (2002), and in an important essay by Lindsey McMaster, "The Urban Working Girl in Turn-of-the-Century Canadian Fiction" (2002; see Lane 2002 and 2004). Another BC writer not on the list is the Kwantlen First Nation dramatist and poet Joseph A. Dandurand; however, he can be tracked down, via the supplementary index, to the entry on First Nations literature (written by Lally Grauer): "The poems of Joseph A. Dandurand (Kwantlen) in *looking into the eyes of my forgotten dreams* (1998) convey intense feeling in a spare, meditative form" (373). Should these two authors – one a popular fiction "genre" writer of the past, the other a vibrant, up-and-coming author of the present day – be on the periphery of the *Encyclopedia*? I need another entry, on Region, Regionalism (written by Laurie Ricou) to answer that question: "Differing typologies of, and critical approaches to literary regionalism suggest some of the ways place and identity interrelate" (948). Four entries so far, to track down and perhaps makes sense of the placement of just two BC authors.

Perhaps it is time to turn to that list of seventy-one authors:

> Caroline Adderson, Jeannette Armstrong, Irene Baird, Nick Bantock, Robin Blaser, George Bowering, Robert Bringhurst, Anne Cameron, Emily Carr, George Clutesi, Douglas Coupland, Jeff Derksen, Bill Deverell, Brian Fawcett, William Gibson, Allerdale Grainger, Stephen Guppy, Roderick Haig-Brown, Robert Harlow, Christie Harris, Robert Heidbreder, Jack Hodgins, Mark Anthony Jarman, John Jewitt, Pauline Johnson, Surjeet Kalsey, Lionel Kearns, Joy Kogawa, Betty Lambert, Sky Lee, Sing Lim, Dorothy Livesay, Malcolm Lowry, Pat Lowther, Lee Maracle, Daphne Marlatt, Bill McConnell, George McWhirter, Susan Musgrave, William New, Eric Nicol, Frederick Niven, Lucy Ng, Howard O'Hagan, P.K. Page, Morris Panych, Bill Reid, Harold Rheinisch, Harry Robinson, Carmen Rodriguez, Linda Rogers, Jane Rule, Robin Skelton, Paul St. Pierre, Ron Smith, Sharon Thesen, Audrey Thomas, Peter Trower, Michael Turner, Guillermo Verdecchia, David Watmough, Sheila Watson, Phyllis Webb, Howard White, Ethel Wilson, Carol Windley, Jim Wong-Chu, George Woodcock, L.R. Wright, J. Michael Yates, and Paul Yee (155)

In the *Encyclopedia* all of the above surnames are capitalized, indicating a separate entry; one small oddity is that the entry for Vancouver poet Sharon Thesen appears to have gone astray. Thesen, who was born in 1946, moved to British Columbia in 1952; winner of the Pat Lowther Memorial Award for *A Pair of Scissors* (2000), Thesen has published books of poetry and anthologies, and edits the *Capilano Review*. Many of the authors in the list are discussed elsewhere in the *Encyclopedia*; for example, Christie Harris is also mentioned in the lengthy Awards and Literary Prizes entry (written by R.G. Siemens), the Book Design and Illustration entry (written by Richard Cavell), the Children's Literature in English entry (written by Adrienne Kertzer), her author entry (Christie Harris, unsigned), and finally the Ireland entry (written by John Moffatt). Not all of the BC authors get such extensive coverage, from so many different critics, but the many different contexts and perspectives work overall to form a rich palimpsest.

Other related entries are of use to the BC researcher, for example the entry on Archives, Manuscripts, and Special Collections (written by Joann McCaig), which mentions the poetry collection at the National Library of Canada (George Bowering, Daphne Marlatt, and Phyllis Webb), as well as holdings on Jack Hodgins and Audrey Thomas; the entry also mentions BC materials held at many Canadian universities as well as the extensive collections at the University of British Columbia (Roderick Haig-Brown, Malcolm Lowry, Eric Nicol, Spider Robinson, Jane Rule, Bertrand Sinclair, Ethel Wilson). Another key entry for scholars of BC writing is the short-but-to-the-point Ecocriticism (written by Laurie Ricou), which defines this particular methodology as the attempt "to integrate the examination of text and language with the science of ecology" (324). Ricou argues that "Canadian literary studies, with their long-standing interest in nature, wilderness, and landscape, might be said to have always been ecocritical. But studies that labelled themselves in that way began to emerge only in the 1990s" (324). The cross-reference to the Nature entry leads one to more cross-referencing: entries on the Animal Story; back to Ecocriticism; over to Landscape, Region, and Science; and then on to Nature Writing, the latter a fascinating entry written by Iain Higgins. Finally, the First Nations literature entry (mentioned above) is essential reading for anyone grappling for the first time with the indigenous writers (and speakers) of British Columbia and Canada.

Inevitably, the question of which BC authors got "left out" entirely becomes an issue; for some reviewers, this is where the critical fun starts (i.e., the critic can get nasty). For this reviewer, considering that the *Encyclopedia* as a whole is a landmark achievement in the criticism of Canadian literature, listing some of these omitted authors is simply a way of encouraging their future inclusion in a second or updated edition. An entry on Joseph A. Dandurand listing all of his books of poetry and plays would be an improvement on his current brief mention (see, for example, his latest poetry collection called *Shake*). An entry on Black BC literature "and orature" (as Wayde Compton puts it) would be wonderful. Admittedly some of the authors in the latter category are hard to track down, but their writings play a significant role in BC literature, for example, Truman Green's *A Credit to Your Race* (1973), which is British Columbia's first black novel (see Compton, 27). The novel, one of a small print-run of 300 copies, is available at the University of British Columbia's Special Collections Division; it has a cover illustration by BC artist and photographer Phyllis Greenwood, whose written and visual work is also available at Special Collections).

Some BC writers are simply omitted due to the cut-off dates involved in the preparation and production of the *Encyclopedia*: as New indicates in the preface, the materials cover the period up to the year 2000. Work in need of future coverage includes Timothy Taylor's *Stanley Park* (2001) and the multimedia production by Stan

Douglas and Michael Turner entitled *Journey into Fear* (2002), although the latter could simply be added to the current entry on Turner (written by Brett Josef Grubisic). Tracking down omitted authors – and contributors to write decent entries on them – is an endless task, and publishers' production schedules, regardless of whether they are for hard-copy or electronic publications, are necessarily a limiting factor. The editor's life becomes far easier once an author has died; living authors have a nasty habit of writing more books.

How *useful* is the *Encyclopedia* for readers in search of BC-related material, especially those who might want to follow up their browsing in more formal ways, such as constructing courses in BC writing? The author entries appear well researched, cover key texts, and provide summary and critical commentary. Examining three entries at random – Jack Hodgins (written by Chris Gittings), Bill Reid (written by Robert Bringhurst), and Sheila Watson (written by George Bowering) – I am struck by the exceptionally high quality of the writing and their informative nature. All three entries inspire the reader to turn to the primary authors/texts being covered, and all three contributors write with an obvious affinity for their subject-matter. For example, Bowering writes with critical distance and a clear sense of enjoyment: "Sheila Watson had unusual knowledge and sophisticated opinions about the entire course of international writings, arts, and philosophy in the 20th century. In a conference address, she could deliver an elaborate extemporized argument that illuminated the connectives in 20th-century thought and art. Thus the puzzlement and disappointment over the most obvious feature of her career – the long silence after *The Double Hook*. (Her devotees reason that as that novel is the high point of Canadian literature, its 116 pages are the equal to any other writer's two dozen volumes)" (1,198).

Combined with the selected "Further reading" (which will obviously also need updating and/or expanding with later editions of the *Encyclopedia*) these author entries are an excellent place to start exploring BC writing. Not all of the entries, however, give such coverage. Disappointingly short entries include the one on Eden Robinson (written by K.G. Stewart) and the slightly longer entry on William Gibson (written by Peter Roman Babiak). Stewart writes a brief summary, but no more, about two very moving and powerful books: Robinson's *Traplines* (1996) and *Monkey Beach* (1997). The books deal with physical and sexual abuse within First Nations communities and within the context of the residential school system; both books rework the traditional Western *Bildungsroman*, and *Monkey Beach* reworks the Canadian gothic (see Andrews 2001; Lane 2003). Robinson also contrasts modern Canadian consumer culture with First Nations ritual and spirituality; she explores premodern and postmodern conceptions of indigenous culture and attempts a mode of writing that does not blandly synthesize the two. The William Gibson entry covers all of the essentials, but it fails, in my opinion, to convey the sheer excitement that his work has generated, especially in the world of new media technologies and postmodernism (see, for example, Ivison's entry in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 251). However, having said this, the *Encyclopedia* does construct a large, complex "virtual entry," or simulacrum, of Gibson, with the inevitable cross-referencing: entries are Awards and Literary

Prizes; British Columbia; Cyberpunk (unsigned); Machines (unsigned); Novel (unsigned); Science Fiction and Fantasy (written by Robert Runté); Technology, Communications, and Canadian Literature (written by Christopher Keep); and Utopia (written by Klay Dyer).

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that the BC authors covered in the *Encyclopedia* are, of course, just one strand in a complex interweaving of writers, subjects, critical concepts, and themes from across the whole of Canada and beyond. New has successfully incorporated the traditional and the canonical with the contemporary and the cutting edge; since BC authors are necessarily placed, and read, within the contexts of their production, the wide scope of the *Encyclopedia* adds to its value as a research tool for studying BC literature. The labyrinthine encyclopedia structure is perfectly suited to the contemporary view of literary texts as intertextual, heterogeneous assemblages.

WORKS CITED AND ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIALS

Andrews, Jennifer. 2001. "Native Canadian Gothic Refigured: Reading Eden Robinson's *Monkey Beach.*" *Essays on Canadian Writing* 73: 1-24.

Compton, Wayde, ed. 2001. *Bluesprint: Black British Columbian Literature and Orature.* Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

Dandurand, Joseph A. 2003. *Shake.* Fort Langley, BC: Skyuks Press.

Douglas, Stan, with screenplay by Douglas and Michael Turner. 2002. *Journey into Fear.* London/Köhn: Serpentine Gallery/Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König.

Green, Truman. 1973. *A Credit to Your Race: A Novel.* Tsawwassen, BC: Simple Thoughts Press.

Ivison, Douglas. 2002. "William Gibson (17 March 1948–)." Pp. 96-107 in *Dictionary of Literary Biography Volume 251: Canadian Fantasy and Science-Fiction Writers*, ed. Douglas Ivison. Farmington Mills, MI: Gale Group.

Lane, Richard J. 2002. "Canada." In *The Year's Work in English Studies*, vol. 81, ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack, 1037-52. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Review of Novak and other relevant B.W. Sinclair materials.)

———. 2003. "Reclaiming Maps and Metaphors: Canadian First Nations and Narratives of Place." In *Beyond the Borders: American Literature and Post-Colonial Theory*, ed. Deborah Madsen, 184-94. London: Pluto.

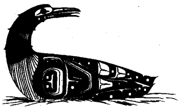
———. 2004. "Canada." In *The Year's Work in English Studies*, vol. 83, ed. William Baker and Kenneth Womack, Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Review of Ricou and McMaster; information concerning *Christie Harris Papers*/archival holdings.)

McMaster, Lindsey. 2002. "The Urban Working Girl in Turn-of-the-Century Canadian Fiction." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 77: 1-25.

Novak, Dagmar. 2000. *Dubious Glory: The Two World Wars and the Canadian Novel.* New York: Peter Lang.

Ricou, Laurie. 2002. *The Arbutus/Madrone Files: Reading the Pacific Northwest.* Edmonton: NeWest.

Taylor, Timothy. 2001. *Stanley Park: A Novel.* Toronto: Alfred A Knopf.



The Old Red Shirt: Pioneer Poets of British Columbia

Yvonne Mearns Klan
Introduction by Peter Trower

Vancouver: Transmontanus/New Star Books, 2004. 110 pp. Illus. $16.00 paper.

W.H. New
University of British Columbia

The title of *The Old Red Shirt* comes from one of the poems that Yvonne Mearns Klan collects in this wonderful book. The poem in question is by Rebecca Gibbs, a black woman who had established a laundry in Barkerville by 1868 and who published poems in the *Cariboo Sentinel.* It tells of a poor miner who brings a threadbare shirt to a laundress to wash and repair – a task that leads her to reflect on the plight of miners, mothers, and the economics of power: "O! traders who wish to do good, / Have pity on men who earn your wealth, / Grudge not the poor miner his food" (47). As with the other sixty-five "pioneer poems" in the collection, Klan less annotates the verse than contextualizes it, introducing each work with a short, lively outline of the historical events that gave rise to it: gold, railway construction, road travel, rural mail delivery, orchard-growing, logging, sealing, the missions, political change. The result is a fascinating glimpse of (primarily) nineteenth-century life in British Columbia – as it was being lived by people doing ordinary work and as it was being written into rhyme and published in local papers throughout the colony/province. *The Old Red Shirt* collects verses that have almost never been reprinted – nor are they claimed here as great. But together for the first time, they tell of a public passion for justice, a love of literary pathos, and a widespread commitment to recording in verse form people's outrage, joy, ironic wit, and conventional sentiment.

A personal note: because I once attended Moberly School in Vancouver (named for the civil servant surveyor – which seemed so much less adventurous to the ten-year-old mind than did the names of neighbouring schools: Tecumseh, Mackenzie, Fleming, Van Horne), I fastened first not on the caribou medicine and paddling songs that begin this collection but, rather, on the poems by and about Walter Moberly. The doggerel explanation of how a pig stole his boot is the stuff of jocular exchange among friends; the vitriol towards Van Horne suggests a livelier politics than the term "civil servant" ever suggested in elementary school history; and Walter's sister Emma's plaintive request for him to return home to England is reminiscent of many a Victorian aesthetic gesture. Walter's holograph addendum to the manuscript of Emma's poem, however, hints at a more complex personality: "A restless spirit, a ceaseless wish / Debars one from a home of bliss" (28) – suggesting that a full biography is in order.

Klan's collection records moments of Yankee presumption on the gold fields ("Soon our banner will be streaming, / Soon the eagle will be screaming, / And the lion – see it cowers, / Hurrah, boys, the river's ours" [24]), tells of explosion and death on the Fraser, and offers poems that criticize some missionaries' practice of whipping Native children. Other poems detail life aboard the emigrant ships, accidents on the wagon roads, the actions of local celebrities, Doukhobor resentment of the Cossacks, and the tribulations of the telegraph trail and local publishing in Rossland. One poem was written on a blazed tree on the overland route to the Klondike ("Damn the journey, Damn the track / Damn the distance there and back. / Damn the sunshine, Damn the weather, / Damn the goldfields altogether" [85]); another, on surveying for the Canadian Pacific Railway, was bizarrely pencilled onto a sanded Cree skull (55).

While some tales here tell about starvation and people's unkindness, there is also humour (a quatrain on the closure of a pub, irony about inflated opinions and expectations, a Scots dialect chorus on the "daftest hour" [42] spent dancing with the hurdy-gurdy girls in Barkerville). The writers, some anonymous, most of them male, include Simon Fraser's son John and C.G.D. Roberts's son Lloyd; most (with the exception of Bertrand Sinclair and A.M. Stephen) are largely unknown. Overall, they use the rhetorical conventions of the time to deal with the land (fragrant cedar, giant pine, fretted shore, lone distant northern land), and they almost invariably rely on rhyme. The poems range in strategy from epitaphs (for a dog, a horse) and a square dance call to vernacular couplets and quatrains that echo Methodist hymns and vaudeville songs. Standing out among them are an unrhymed love poem, written as a "Kite Song" and translated from an anonymous Chinese cannery worker (106), and a passage (reset as a *found poem* called "This Green and Gracious Land") from the prose record of the "girlhood days" of a part-Okanagan woman, Eliza Jane Swalwell: "I have sometimes seen things / sensed something / so serene and beautiful / it left me weak / and weeping / as I sat in the saddle" (70).

Vancouver: A Novel

David Cruise
and Allison Griffiths

Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers,
2003. 753 pp. $37.95 cloth.

LARRY GRANT
Musqueam Indian Band
UBC, First Nations Language Program

AND

ULRICH TEUCHER
University of Saskatchewan

RECENTLY, THERE HAS BEEN a surge in sweeping popular portrayals of Canadian history and its Aboriginal origins, most notably in the CBC production *Canada: A People's History* (2000) but also in the current theatrical Vancouver staging of British Columbia's history in *Storyeum* as well as the presentation of Vancouver's history in David Cruise and Allison Griffiths' *Vancouver: A Novel*. The latter is an imaginative account constructed from the extensive research of historical evidence linking the various histories of the Aboriginal people and immigrant ethnicities that colour Vancouver today.

The action begins at the end of the last ice age, about 16,000 years ago, when Tooke, of African heredity, wanders from Kamchatka into Alaska. He does not know it yet but the green jade beads that he carries provide not only spiritual guidance but also a helpful structure for readers. These beads weave together African, Oriental, and Aboriginal ethnicities and mythologies, appearing and disappearing over the millennia in various of the book's chapters, to be released once again, in the final chapter, from Stanley Park's Siwash

Rock during an earthquake. This main thread organizes the book's narrative, as Tooke's grandchild, Manto, wanders southward from Alaska, braves a flooding Fraser River, and settles in its delta. Fifteen millennia (and a chapter) later, we observe Manto's descendants as their chief forces the current keeper of the green beads, Uunutu, to give his pregnant daughter, Gitsula, away as a bride to visiting Nuu-chah-nulth sailors – without disclosing her condition.

The following chapters trace ever shorter time periods, giving the reader a view into the ethnic mosaic and cultural practices of: a group of Natives who behave quite stereotypically by murdering everybody on one of Juan de Fuca's ships in English Bay (except for the sailor Mindia Estravi); the wily Darrog Wiley, who saves Fort Langley from a zealous priest and certain destruction at the hands of the Natives; the intertwining businesses of the Chinese Soon Chong and the British Warburton Pike, involving steamship lines, opium, and the Chinese mafia; an enterprising Nanak Singh from India, who sets up the first farms in the Fraser Valley; and the adventure-seeking German Konrad von Schaumberg, who ends up dabbling in real estate, a narrative cue for 1960s penny stocks and the father-daughter stock-promoter team of the Dolbys. Finally, with Salish Ellie Nesbitt in today's Vancouver, the novel turns full circle as we find the green beads at Siwash Rock.

The novel portrays, quite realistically, British colonialism and the many European and Asian immigrants who view Vancouver and its surroundings as a land of opportunity, wanting to exploit natural resources, acquire land, speculate, become rich, and retire. The rugged individualism of these immigrant entrepreneurs will likely appeal to the novel's non-Aboriginal audience. Aboriginal readers will appreciate some quite wonderful descriptions of cultural practices, for example, the ingenuity involved in salmon fishing (199). However, the writing also reveals many (Western) misconceptions of Aboriginal culture. Foremost among these, the Salish tribes are portrayed as quite independent and as competing with each other. However, genealogy shows that tribes were (and are) tightly linked through intermarriage and kinship ties. Similarly, terms such as "chief" (e.g., 88) suggest domineering rulership, ignoring the Salish family-based system in which the family that is most beneficial towards the community proffers its "headman" or "headwoman" to negotiate consensus between a tribe's different families without alienating anyone. A tribal headperson could not possibly give away a woman (e.g., Gitsula) from another family, nor would s/he dare to hide Gitsula's pregnancy from the feared Nuu-chah-nulth visitors. One more point: these visitors are said to paddle their eighty-foot-long seagoing canoes with a mere eleven men (104) – at least twenty men would be required just to get such a boat past the Saanich currents, let alone across the Strait.

These misconceptions are just a few of many examples. In addition, the authors appear to draw from historical accounts that are refashioned and fictionalized to fit a Vancouver context (e.g., Mindia Estravi's English Bay murder account is reminiscent of John R. Jewitt's experiences in Nootka Sound as recounted in *White Slaves of Maquinna: Narrative of the Adventures and Suffering of John R. Jewitt* [2000]). For knowledgeable readers, such blurrings of place and action can make the reading interesting and, at the same time, frustrating. It is true that the book is identified as a novel, but since it incorporates a lot of historical details readers may not always remember that it is fictional. This may be a problem for a young Aboriginal readership that, in the (traditional) absence of written Aboriginal histories, might find some Eurocentric representations confusing. Aside from this serious caveat, the book is an entertaining read, providing a running history of Vancouver's dynamic formation and suggesting many millennia of evidence for Aboriginal life in Vancouver.

The Witness Ghost

Tim Bowling

Victoria: Nightwood Editions,
2003. 88 pp. $15.95 paper.

Taking the Names Down from the Hill

Philip Kevin Paul

Madeira Park, BC: Harbour,
2003. 96 pp. $14.95 paper.

House Built of Rain

Russell Thornton

Madeira Park, BC: Harbour,
2003. 88 pp. $16.95 paper.

LAURIE RICOU
University of British Columbia

ALTHOUGH HE HAS LIVED some years now in Edmonton, Tim Bowling continues to be one of the most eloquent interpreters of British Columbia, especially of the river-coast scene and image: the sky wearing a "sodden pea-coat," the "cries" of the coal trains as they "go down to the sea," that glimpse through stubble of the "cock-pheasant's head / ... like a bloodied gaff." Especially in *Low Water Slack* (1995) and the novel *Downriver Drift* (2000), Bowling sings salmon with a resonance rivalling Daphne Marlatt's *Steveston*. *The Witness Ghost* is Bowling's serial elegy for his father, a friendly, sometimes frightened witness to his lifelong work as fisher of the Fraser River. The endlessly moving "dying-as-it's born" salmon provides both depth and mystery to the understanding of a father's commitment. The opening and title poem, a moment-by-moment tracking of an early morning fishing trip, affectionately and gradually reveals the humbling "dictates of your work": the shove on the shoulder bones, the tidal pull of the nets, the staking of a garden with broken hockey sticks.

Russell Thornton's *House Built of Rain* broods, as his title implies, on a one-time British Columbia home that nurtures but hardly comforts or shelters. Mist – Thornton evocatively redefines it as "the rain / ... refining itself" – "thread[s]" through the book. The image is commonplace in the coastal aesthetic. The collection's penultimate poem, "Solstice Mist" (82-3), illustrates a typical set of tautologies contemplating the central paradox of the mist-scape; that is, that outlines and identities are blurred, "inscrutable," but for all their "unknowable"-ness more attractively "brightening ... with / impossible gentleness." "Solstice Mist" hides any precise sense of physical location, while the characters, careless with love as with violence, are identified only as "someone." In other words, Thornton's poetic emphasizes the generalized impression and sensation at the expense of specific images or temporal and spatial details. So too with narrative, as in the deliberately awkward anecdote in "Lonsdale

Quay" (36-7), where "perhaps" is a ruling condition, and description of movements is more "exquisite" than the reverberations of metaphor.

As his title suggests, Philip Kevin Paul at once trusts in and takes responsibility for the mystery of naming. Several of his poems, and those most interesting to me, translate terms from his native Saanich dialect. "Translate" may not be quite the right word because the term may imply some sort of equivalence, while the branching of Paul's lines implies a growing of connections. "Water drinker" may be the literal translation of Ko Ko HLC, apparently Saanich for arbutus (20-3). But Paul's poem teaches us – and hence it is a "BC study" – that speaking the word Ko Ko HLC is singing the song of the stream, which is, after all, shaped by the trees. Paul invites us not just to learn a translation, or to listen to a new word and try to pronounce it, but also to imagine the thoughts that the voice and exchange compound and compress:

> Imagine their thoughts
> when they realized
> every stream has its own song
> from the shape made by the trees
> around it,
> the sound of the water
> turning in the hollow,
> returning to them from
> the leaves. (22)

When it comes to arbutus's cousin in the heather family, the Saanich names themselves compound to find salal: HELI; S'HELI; SOX, HELI, the three parts of the poem "What We Call Life." The three sections of the poem build *alive* and *lively* into *personal belief.* Although the poem honours "the story of my mother's love for salal berries," salal is *not* directly a translation, I assume. "Sox, HELI" does not *mean* salal, but salal shapes love and sweetness and the promise of harvest and "jest." Many of Paul's poems imagine the songs of stream and tree and animal discovered in listening to his new and ancient language. They turn like water in our head; we must keep returning to them.

Clearcut Cause

Steve Anderson

Prince George: Caitlin Press, 2004.
188 pp. $18.95 paper.

MICHAEL PULLMAN EGAN
Washington State University

STRUGGLES OVER THE use of British Columbia's natural resources are a ubiquitous feature of the province's historical landscape. How we should manage our lumber, fisheries, water, and minerals – and who should manage them – mark recurrent debates in the provincial legislature and throughout communities dependent upon these resources for their livelihood. In *Clearcut Cause*, Steve Anderson offers an account of an environmental protest gone wrong. Set just outside Kaslo, British Columbia, snuggled between Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park and Kootenay Lake, Anderson's novel presents both sides of a logging dispute. Local environmentalists – disparagingly called "greenies" by the logger – put up a roadblock in order to prevent the cutting of a stand of trees on the edge of a park along Keen Creek. The standoff, then, becomes a showcase for the disparate positions present in a local environmental dispute. On the one hand, logging contractors and their employees are feeling the pressure of new environmental legislation that has eaten into their profits and so they are desperate to get out the cut. On the other hand, protesters see only further destruction of the environment and are critical of the money-first mentality that drives the logging industry. Anderson offers fair treatment of both perspectives and invites his readers to witness parties on both sides of the debate.

But in his efforts to be even-handed, Anderson falls into a difficult trap. Too much of his story is simplistic to the point that it does little to hold the reader's attention or interest. The characters rarely reach beyond their stereotypes. The loggers are, for the most part, honest, hard-working, blue-collar types who work hard, cuss often, love their children, and just want to do an honest day's work. The environmentalists are a combination of university-educated ecologists and hippies, not terribly organized but resolute nonetheless. A few characters attempt to blur these categories, but they don't succeed. In addition, the dialogue is at times hopelessly contrived. Anderson lets his characters do much of the talking for him, but because none of these characters is particularly complicated, their manufactured dialogue establishes their rationale for behaving the way they do, but it is more informative than it is compassionate. In sum, Anderson does little to provoke his readers' sympathies or passions.

And the story ultimately offers precious little. Rather than letting the stand-off ferment to a complicated crescendo, the novel's climax is abrupt, far-fetched, and predictable, its dénouement even more so. Further, Anderson conveys little sense of the natural landscape that serves as the backdrop to this book. This is beautiful country and it warrants a story, but the wonders of these forests are lost behind Anderson's wooden characters and their mundane chatter.

Framing the West: Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest

Carol J. Williams

Oxford University Press, 2003. 272 pp. Maps, illus. $29.95 paper.

Kim Greenwell
University of Michigan

Photographs occupy a paradoxical place in our historical imagination. As Carol J. Williams notes in the introduction to *Framing the West: Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest*, contemporary historians have primarily employed photographs as illustrations "to embellish an unfurling historical narrative" (7). *Supplements* but rarely *substitutes* for linguistic sources, photographs retain a relatively secondary status within conventional historiography. Yet, whether on their own or as illustrations, photographs wield a formidable signifying power linked, but not reducible, to the captions and texts that often accompany and enframe them. It is a power that we ignore at our peril and that we can best understand by examining photography's complex dynamics of production, circulation, and interpretation. This is the historical task Williams undertakes with sensitivity, skill, and nuance in *Framing the West*.

Offering a unique twist on the all-too-familiar and often romanticized imagery of North America's northwestern "frontier," Williams examines how photography constituted its own form of "frontier" in and through which "the West" was both constructed and contested as an imaginative and material space in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Far from a "benign tool of observation" (4), the camera was an instrument inextricably embedded in the cross-cutting imperatives and ideologies of empire and nation-building projects. Williams deftly compares the way in which codes and conventions in survey, promotional, studio, and ethnographic photographs produced a particular narrative of settlement – "progress" – and the Euro-American encounter with Native Americans.

What makes Williams's analysis so compelling is her attention to the multivocality of this narrative and her care not to reduce all to the monolithic operation of a singular colonial "gaze." Government agents, missionaries, anthropologists, commercial photographers, and indigenous men and women were all actively, if asymmetrically, involved in the production and consumption of photographic images as well as the ongoing process of constructing their meaning. Ultimately, Williams acknowledges that photography "served the goals, interests, and aspirations of those ... who held power" in the colonial context of the Pacific Northwest (31), but she attends carefully to the diverse individuals and groups who competed for this power. The resulting analysis avoids constructing strawmen and offers a truly multidimensional picture of photographic practice at a particular time and place. Discussion of the conflicting agendas of missionaries and anthropologists, for example, sheds light on the seemingly paradoxical representations of Native Americans as both successfully assimilating and tragically "vanishing" in the face of Euro-American expansion. Similarly, Williams notes the individual stamp of commercial photographers, whose portfolios comprise so much of the photographic archive, while continually locating their influence and intentions within a power-laden field shaped not only by hierarchies of race but also by those of gender and class. Throughout, she emphasizes that photography was never merely a reflective expression of colonial relations but, rather, a constitutive medium through which the aspirations and anxieties characterizing such relations were mediated.

It is Williams's attention to the complex intersections of race, gender, and class shaping the photographic frontier that allows her to reread photographs *against* convention, unsettling assumptions regarding Native American women's reasons for religious conversion, disrupting narrowly masculinist narratives of settlement, and perhaps most important, recognizing indigenous peoples as active subjects, not passive objects, in photographic encounters. In offering such a rereading, Williams precisely demonstrates her point that the meaning of photographs is best understood as an ongoing and contested process rather than as a fixed or finished product. This is not to suggest a process in which "anything goes" – far from it. Indeed, the irony Williams uncovers is that it was precisely the coding of certain visual conventions *as* representing Euro-American progress, respectability, and entitlement that made them such potent symbolic resources for appropriation and redeployment by groups and individuals marginalized by their race, gender, and/or class. Williams balances the important recognition of the existence of such strategies of resistance and appropriation with an understanding that their success was by no means guaranteed, and with an examination of the socio-historical conditions within which they variably played out.

It is the book's final chapter, which examines indigenous uses of photography within both historical and contemporary contexts, that perhaps provides Williams's most unique contribution to the scholarship on colonial photography. That Native Americans not only appeared in photographs but also participated, with varying degrees of agency and empowerment, in their production and consumption is a dimension of the photographic frontier too easily and frequently obscured from view. By examining the culturally specific and often innovative uses and interpretations of photography by different indigenous groups and individuals over time, Williams begins filling in this "side" of the picture and pointing the way for future research.

As implied by the active verb of the book's title, framing the West is a dynamic process in which photographs have played, and continue to play, a pivotal role. It is also a process in which contemporary analysts are inevitably imbricated when they re-present and reread historical photographs. Williams's own arguments and analyses are thus part of the very processes she examines; her book *re*frames the West by denaturalizing and disrupting the assumptions embedded in its conventional framings. The point is not to proclaim a final or definitive interpretation of photographic images but, rather, to recognize, as Williams does so effectively, their place in ongoing efforts to picture the past and to imagine possible futures.

The Whaling Indians: Legendary Hunters

Edward Sapir, Morris Swadish, Alexander Thomas, John Thomas, and Frank Williams

Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2004. 432 pp. $45.00 paper.

UMEEK (E.R. ATLEO)
Winnipeg

THE INTENT OF *The Whaling Indians: Legendary Hunters* is to present the "Native point of view" and so that will also be the perspective of this book review. On the surface of things, the method to achieve this intent is straightforward and simple. Sapir, a leading linguist of his day, recorded this ethnography in the Nuu-chah-nulth language. To save time and money, Sapir taught a local Native, Alex Thomas, how to write and record these ethnographies in his own language. Subsequently, the first two volumes were published in 1939 (*Nootka Texts*) and 1955 (*Native Accounts of Nootka Ethnography*). The present volume contains 28 accounts of hunting, 24 of which are about the preparation, pursuit, and capture of whales.

Does the book present the Native point of view? Yes and no. Yes, in that the ethnographic accounts are presented both in the original language as well as in an English translation so that any contemporary speaker, such as me, might check to see if the translation is more or less accurate. While the meaning-sense of a sentence may be captured in translation, the original fluency is often lost, as in the following case. In account number 110, page 191, the sentence “Now the chief who was named Sorehead-[Whale] Hunter was staying home” is translated from “Walyaqil ya: Haw’il?i ?okla: ?l: chqiqmi:k” which literally translates from each Nuu-chah-nulth word as Walyaqil-(Being at home), ya-(there), Haw’l?i-(the one identified as a chief, lord, great personage), ?okla:-(in the sense of *whose name is*), ?l:chqiqmi:k-(creator or maker of sorehead). What is lost in translation here is the immediacy of the action in the original language (i.e. being at home in the ever-present now) as well as the power, implied in the original, found in the name of the chief. It appears from the translation that it is the chief who has the sore head but the suffix *mi:k* in this name clearly indicates the achievement of spiritual power as is illustrated by numerous other names with the same suffix, such as Cha: kwa:siqmik, Ko:hw’isaqmi:k, and Hi: tsswatqmi:k. Each of these names was acquired as a result of demonstrations of spiritual power that allowed each to be successful, or, more to the point, allowed each to become accomplished at some important skill. This is not a small matter. It can be argued that the translation “Hunter” in this name is a mistranslation because the suffix mi:k in a name indicates an achievement, an accomplishment, in the very same way that the prefix “Dr” before a name indicates an accomplishment today. By itself, “Hunter” can apply to one who is either successful or unsuccessful. Nuu-chah-nulth names left no ambiguity as to meaning since a name was always descriptive of reality.

More glaringly, the Native point of view is obscured both in the title and the introduction of the book. The misnomer “Indian” is by now well known. Not well known is the contemporary self-description of the people as Nuu-chah-nulth. The subtitle “Legendary Hunters” does not represent a Native point of view. Any legend, by definition, lacks accurate historical evidence according to Western historical tradition. Since the stories come from an oral tradition they cannot be said, from the Western tradition, to contain accurate evidence. However, from a Native point of view, these stories are not legend but actual historical accounts that have their own rules of evidence found within their own life ways in family storytelling traditions, feasting, potlatching, and demonstrations of spiritual power that are as reliable a way of confirming facts as scientific methodologies. A major rule of evidence or methodology of the Nuu-chah-nulth is ?o:simch, which I have spelled oosumich in my book *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview* (UBC Press, 2004), and translated as “bathing” in this edition but which I have translated as “careful seeking in a fearsome environment” or simply as “vision quest.” Oosumich was common practice known throughout all Nuu-chah-nulth land as an effective means of acquiring knowledge, power, and success in this world. Just as there are ineffective scientific methodologies that do not negate the reliability of sound scientific data so too are there ineffective oosumich methods as pointed out in *The Whaling Indians* but when the oosumich method is done properly then the outcome can, from a Native point of view, be as sound as any scientific finding.

On this same point of ineffectiveness of method and outcome, the Native point of view is misrepresented in the introduction. While the Native point of view is presented in the favourable characterization of the Native translators such as Sa:ya:ch’apis who is described as “unfailingly good-humored and courteous” as well as in the technical explanation of the orthography of the texts, the introduction actually foregrounds an academic point of view that has proven problematic to the Native point of view during the past 500 years. On page xix is the comment that West Coast whaling is "more a matter of prestige than economy" and again on the same page: "Whales were often struck and then lost." Neither of these statements is untrue **but** from a Native point of view it might be said that Whaling is more about the great secret discovery through the method of oosumich that heshookish Tsawalk, everything is one. This worldview is mainly about the great discovery by Son of Raven that the spiritual realm and temporal realm are so intimately related that any kind of life is completely dependent upon the quality of this relationship. The quality of the methodology of oosumich, vision quest, determines the quality of this relationship, whether the whaler and whale can form a relationship as evidenced by the action of the whale when it "hugs" the whaler's canoe. The failure in the methodology of oosumich that results in a whale being lost is not a failure of the methodology but a failure of applying the methodology effectively. This is also true of science – ineffective methodology always produces unreliable results. In the same vein, the emphasis upon losing whales after they are struck is an academic point of view usually employed in a deliberate and derogatory sense when observing another culture that is considered to be inferior.

Overall, this ethnographic account of some of the Nuu-chah-nulth people is an important work, especially if it can be placed within the context of a Nuu-chah-nulth worldview rather than in the context of an academic perspective such as that found in the introduction. What is the rationale for the way of life of the whaler? How did the information for the methodology of oosumich arise? These and other questions are answered in *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview.*

Oregon's Promise: An Interpretive History

David Peterson del Mar

Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2003. 314 pp.
US$19.95 cloth.

RODERICK BARMAN
University of British Columbia

WHY SHOULD *BC Studies* review a history of the State of Oregon, situated in another country and some 300 kilometres to the south? For many reasons. Our province and Oregon lie in a single economic-environmental region, the Pacific Northwest, which has constrained and even directed the development of the two societies. That development has been shaped by constant intrusions from the outside world: human migrations, resource exploitation, new technologies, and capital investment. The intrusions have not been precisely similar between Oregon and British Columbia nor has their impact been identical. The resemblances are nonetheless close, so close as to make sensitivity to these intrusions indispensable in the study of any part of the Pacific Northwest.

Such sensitivity is, of course, a fairly recent development. It has replaced what may be termed the "celebratory" approach, in which the hegemonic social elements perceived the entity in which they live as a unique Eden predestined for their occupation and benefit, something they must preserve unsullied. In Oregon this approach has been tenacious due to a number of powerful "myths," including the pioneers' odyssey along the Oregon Trail, the bounteousness of their reward, the resulting society's homogeneity and cohesion, and its "progressiveness" in its handling of politics and the environment. How captivating, even intoxicating these myths remain for anyone who has grown up with them is evident in this new history of Oregon.

As his introduction shows (2 and 6), the author is conscious of the problems he faces: "mythic history oversimplifies and obscures the past." His text struggles to include and give due weight to elements in Oregon's history previously ignored or suppressed. But, as David del Mar concedes, he writes from within the myths. His ancestors, on his mother's side, came to Oregon in the late nineteenth century, seeking Eden (2-3). The long years it took his family to achieve "Oregon's promise," to use the title's words, makes that achievement the more precious and continued belief in the myths more compelling.

The front cover of the paperback edition symbolizes the book's ambiguities. A photograph of a family of Mexican migrants gathering onions takes up two-thirds of the cover, a picture of Mount Hood one-third. But Mount Hood is placed at the top, in full colour. It rises white and pristine in a cerulean sky from behind green pine trees and a dark blue river. The Mexicans are at the bottom, coloured a muddy orange, which downplays the humanity of the five individuals. In the conflict between the myth and the reality, the front cover asserts, consciously or no, the greater significance of the former.

Oregon's Promise reflects in structure and approach this conflict and the precedence given to myth. As Chapter 1's title "Natives and Newcomers" implies, the indigenous peoples have significance only as a preliminary to and in preparing the way for Oregon's promise. Chapter 2 regrets the elimination of the indigenous inhabitants but essentially views the outcome as inevitable. "It was a transfer, a conquest," the chapter concludes, "that Oregonians have yet to come to terms with" (62). Little or no attempt is made to facilitate this goal. The ensuing 220 pages contain only seven passages (not all substantial) discussing the indigenous peoples. The author's final statement, patently sincere, reveals his reluctance, even incapacity, to demolish the founding myths: "We must confront the fact that white settlers shunted aside and killed the people who had flourished here, an attempted ethnic cleansing that still haunts the state's indigenous peoples – and ought to trouble us all" (280).

The strength of myth is equally apparent from David del Mar's treatment of the external intrusions. Those he sees as challenging Oregon's promise are denigrated, as with the Hudson's Bay Company, portrayed as intent on interfering with Manifest Destiny. Statements such as "Why was Great Britain willing to give up land that its citizens had occupied for the past three decades?" in respect to the 1846 Oregon Treaty come oddly from the pen of a historian who, having taught for several years in this province, should know that British citizens had never "occupied" Oregon in the sense of land ownership. A further weakness in the handling of the intrusions is that they are viewed seriatim, never as a constant factor in Oregon's development. This inability to place the state within a larger context explains the author's incomprehension and even dismay at the recent polarization of the society over issues imported from elsewhere in North America. The author's final plea (281) is for the homogeneity and cohesion that he regards as Oregon's promise and that he believes can be achieved.

Anyone who is looking for a probing, critical view of Oregon's past had, therefore, best pass this work by. But those who want to understand the foundational myths of that state, their continuing allure, and how they shape Oregonians' view of their history will find this a very revealing book. The implications for British Columbia's past are enormous.

Wires in the Wilderness: The Story of the Yukon Telegraph

Bill Miller

Surrey: Heritage House Publishing Company, 2004. 336 pp. Maps., illus. $19.95 paper.

Georgiana Ball
Vancouver, BC

It was with some excitement and a little trepidation that I agreed to review Bill Miller's book. First of all, my father, George Ball, was a Yukon Telegraph Line operator in the early years; and I, being raised along the Stikine River, knew or knew of some of the other characters who worked on the line. Second, I have read a number of articles and books about the North that do not do justice to the events or lives of northerners. I was afraid that I might have to write a somewhat negative review. Fortunately, this is not the case. Bill Miller has produced a comprehensive and well-written account of the history of the Yukon Telegraph Line.

The book begins with the need for the Canadian government to protect its yet undefined borders between Canada and Alaska, and to provide security after the Klondike strike brought hordes of gold-seekers to Yukon in 1897-98. The government did this by stationing North-West Mounted Police, who also served as customs agents, at Canada-Alaska border crossings (provisional boundary agreements were made in 1899) and by deploying 202 officers and soldiers of the Yukon Field Force to maintain order and to provide an official presence in Yukon, where the vast majority of people were American. At the same time, the Canadian government realized that major improvement of the transportation and communication facilities within Yukon, and from there to the outside world, was an absolute necessity.

In 1898-99 the narrow-gauge White Pass and Yukon Railway was built, along with a telegraph line, from Skagway through the White Pass to Bennett City near the BC-Yukon border. Before construction was completed in July 1899, the Privy Council approved the extension of the telegraph line to Dawson City and a spur line to Atlin, British Columbia, where a gold strike had occurred the previous year. These lines were completed in September 1899.

A telegraph message from Dawson City still had to make the boat trip of four to five days from Skagway to Vancouver before it could reach its destination. A land-line from Atlin to where the transcontinental line ended at Quesnel would provide an all-Canadian route. In December 1899 the Department of Public Works decided to extend the line south. This was not to be the comparatively easy construction to Dawson City, which used the Yukon River as its general freighting highway. The southern line would not follow rivers but, rather, go overland, often through mountainous terrain. Still, J.B. Charleson, supervisor of construction of the telegraph line from the beginning, expected to finish the 944-mile (1,519-kilometre) line in 1900. He sent surveyors, line crews, and supplies to Atlin and Quesnel. Supplies were also sent to Hazelton on the Skeena River and to Telegraph Creek on the Stikine. Pack trains of horses/mules carrying the supplies went along with the crews, who also had to build the many stations and refuge cabins. By late fall, after encountering countless pitfalls, the crews had to stop work (the animals were starving because the forage was dead), leaving a 121-mile (195-kilometre) gap between Hazelton and Telegraph Creek. By the fall of 1901 the gap was closed and a branch line to Port Simpson had been built.

Miller's descriptions of the events and people involved in the telegraph line construction are quite thorough. He often uses excerpts from the telegraphers' journals to describe their interesting, and sometimes dangerous, lives. *Wires in the Wilderness* explains how the telegraph line was replaced gradually by wireless telegraphy, and how the Yukon Telegraph Line finally came to an end in 1952.

Many people travelled on the telegraph trail before and after the closing of the line. Some were regular users, like the packers on the pack trains that annually carried supplies to the stations and the large pack trains that went along with hunters and their guides on forty- to ninety-day hunts (Miller does not mention the latter). And then there were the trekkers: men and women, including a murderer and a woman travelling to Siberia, who for many reasons hiked or attempted to travel by motorcycle on the trail. Their compelling stories are recounted in this book.

Miller made a few errors that should be noted. He supposedly quoted me describing how three of the four airplanes the US Army flew to Alaska in 1920 landed on Callbreath's ranch on their return flight, harming the undercarriage of one of the planes (193 n18). The quotation came from Frank H. Ellis (1960, 35) *The Cariboo Digest.* The source for Miller's next paragraph (chap. 12, 193-4 n19) does come from a short account I wrote, which is published in Stan Cohen's (1998, 97-8). *The Alaska Flying Expedition: The US Army's 1920 New York to Nome Flight.* This source is not cited in Chapter 12, note 19. Incidentally, the ranch is ten miles (sixteen kilometres) from Telegraph Creek, not thirty, as Miller wrote; and it was a bonfire on the hill behind the village that notified the pilot that the weather had cleared south of Telegraph Creek so that the plane could take off after having been on the ranch for twenty days.

Unfortunately, Miller (269) uses a sentence in Archie Hunter's (1983, 96) *Northern Traders* as a source of information. This sentence incorrectly states that the fifty US Army Engineers who arrived in Telegraph Creek in 1942 (not 1941) were to go into the Interior to work on construction of the Alaska Highway. That was not their mission. They were to survey and cut out a route to Alaska for a railway, a project that came to naught.

The caption for an archival photograph of tractors on the Dease Road is incorrect (261). The US Army Engineers had nothing to do with improving the road for small-truck traffic; rather, it was the Department of Public Works crew from Telegraph Creek that did the work. They were possibly assisted by General Construction, whose trucks and boats hauled the freight on the Dease Road and Dease Lake/River, and who built Watson Lake Airport. Regardless of these errors, Miller has written a captivating book that fills a large gap in the written history of northwestern Canada.

REFERENCES

Cohen, Stan. 1998. *The Alaska Flying Expedition: The US Army's 1920 New York to Nome Flight.* (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing.)

Ellis, Frank H. 1960. *The Cariboo Digest.*

Hunter, Archie. 1983. *Northern Traders: Cariboo Hair in the Stew.* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press.)

The Nature of Gold: An Environmental History of the Klondike Gold Rush

Kathryn Morse

Seattle: University of Washington
Press, 2003. 304 pp. Illus.
$37.95 cloth.

William R. Morrison
University of Northern British Columbia

THE NATURE OF GOLD is in several ways a path-breaking work since, although there is a large literature on Yukon environment, there has been very little written on the environmental history of the Territory, and the works that have been published, notably *Yukon Wildlife: A Social History* by Robert McCandless (1985), have had a much more conventional approach. McCandless was interested in the subject from a fairly predictable standpoint, but Morse takes a largely different tack. She follows the Klondikers to the west coast, up the inside passage to the north (calling them "rushers" – not the usual nomenclature – where did that word come from?), across the passes, and down the Yukon River to the diggings on the creeks, and then draws theoretical lessons from her narrative. The book's theme is that technology altered and distanced the relationship between miners and their environment; for example, as Morse says in the introduction, it "eliminated the space between the places where pork and beans were produced, and where they were consumed ... made it very easy to forget that pork and beans came from anywhere specific at all" (11). Readers looking for a straightforward account of flora and fauna will be disappointed, for this is not so much a history of the physical world as a philosophical investigation into the relationship between humans and the natural environment.

The descriptions of mining activity and the excellent illustrations are *Nature of Gold*'s greatest strengths, for Morse has a keen eye for detail and has done a great deal of mining herself – in the diaries and other records left by miners. The book is full of instructive and illuminating detail, for which the reader will be grateful. Oddly, though, some important aspects of environmental activity seem to have been overlooked: dredging, for instance, which was a major cause of environmental alteration, is mentioned only twice in passing. However, it is the lessons drawn from these records that give me, at any rate, concern. Morse's technique is to give examples of activities in Yukon that involved the environment and then to draw theoretical conclusions from them; such accounts of activities followed by conclusions are the backbone of *Nature of Gold.* Here is an example, one of many, taken from the beginning of Chapter 4, "The Nature of Gold Mining," where she quotes Bill Hiscock, a miner from New Zealand:

> We got some miles up the Bonanza before we came to any claims being worked. Then we began to see a windlass with a heap of dirt; and gravel being frozen to all depths has to be thawed out, with wood fires, usually put in in the evening and left to burn during night time. In the morning the thawed earth, from 4 to 5 inches to 8 or 90 inches, is hoisted by windlass in a wooden bucket, tipped out and in 20 minutes it is frozen solid again and remains there until the spring comes. (89)

So far, so good. But then Morse goes on to make her point:

> Like the labor of transportation, the labor of mining was an intensely cultural process through which miners carried their industrial economy north, including the commodification so characteristic of Yukon transportation. Like transportation, the actual work of digging gold from the earth also connected miners to nature, to heaps of dirt and gravel, frozen to all depths. Such labor brought miners new knowledge of the natural world and transformed the gold creeks into new places.(89)

On first reading, this passage may seem profound. But then questions arise: what labour is not cultural, and what does "intensely cultural" mean anyway? From elsewhere in the book it seems that transportation was commodified because men had to pay to ride steamboats instead of walking, but was that not true wherever travel was mechanized, as, for instance, in the United States when it became possible to take a train from New York to Chicago? Of course the work of digging gold from the ground connected Yukon miners to nature; just as digging potatoes from the red soil connected Prince Edward Island farmers to nature. What seems at first reading to be a novel interpretation turns out, on further thought, to be rather commonplace.

To take another example: Chapter 6, "The Nature and Culture of Food," quotes a lively description of a festive dinner and then proceeds to draw an environmental lesson from it:

> Meals like these holiday feasts revealed the miners' creative culinary efforts. They also revealed the nature and culture of food during the gold rush. The miners' food, like all food, was natural; it came from nature. Fish-goose stew a-la-Bonanza, moose roast, and moose stew came from local nature, from nearby creeks, rivers, and forests, provided most likely by Native hunters who fueled a steady market ... Such foods forged direct connections to local ecosystems and to local peoples ... most of the miners' food – bacon, beans, flour, sugar, potatoes, canned vegetable and fruit – came across great

> distances from the agricultural empires of North America. (139)

The key sentence in this paragraph is the third one, which indicates that miners' food was like all other food. True, it "forged direct connections to local ecosystems"; that is, it was locally grown or harvested, just as were the carrots grown in market gardens and sold at local markets in every small and medium-sized town in the United States at that time. But it was the same food, so what special point is being made here?

The "new history" that knocked the old political history off its pedestal a generation ago contributed tremendously to our understanding of the past, but *Nature of Gold*, it seems to me, strains too hard and without much success to dig new and deeper understandings of environmental processes from the frozen soil of the Klondike.

REFERENCES

McCandless, Robert. 1985. *Yukon Wildlife: A Social History.* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1985).

L.D.: Mayor Louis Taylor and the Rise of Vancouver

Daniel Francis

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2004. 239 pp. Illus. $21.95 paper.

ROBERT A.J. MCDONALD
University of British Columbia

MANY NORTH AMERICAN cities have had great civic leaders. Fiorello La Guardia, New York's Depression-era mayor, is considered the father of modern New York; Metro chair Fred Gardiner put his distinctive imprint on Toronto in the 1950s; and Jean Drapeau is the larger-than-life mayor who brought a subway system, Expo '67, and the Olympics to Montreal. Where, one might ask, is someone of comparable stature from Vancouver? The question is unfair, of course, because New York, Toronto, and Montreal are bigger than Vancouver and, thus, historically have offered greater opportunity for creative municipal leadership. Nonetheless, the comparison serves to underline the perception that Vancouver's mayors have been an undistinguished lot. Beyond the two recent mayors who moved from municipal to provincial politics (Mike Harcourt and Gordon Campbell), and Gerry McGeer (Vancouver mayor in the mid-1930s), little has been written about our civic leaders and less is known about them. It is this gap in the city's history that Daniel Francis, editor of the highly regarded *Encyclopedia of British Columbia,* has set out to rectify by telling the story of Vancouver's longest-serving mayor, Louis D. Taylor.

Taylor provides plenty of material for a compelling story, and Francis makes the most of it. Taylor's eight terms as mayor, for a total of twelve years in office, spanned three decades of the city's history. Born in Michigan and a resident of Vancouver from the late 1890s, Taylor died in 1946 a lonely and poor old man. Along the way he was elected licence commissioner in 1902 and mayor in 1911, 1915, four times in the mid-to-late 1920s, and twice again in the early 1930s. He also lost electoral battles sixteen times, once for licence commissioner, four times for alderman, and eleven times for mayor. Yet *L.D.* is about more than elections. What made Taylor an important figure in Vancouver's history, Francis tells us convincingly, was his understanding the city's character. The book features lively digressions into city life, including narrative explorations of the prewar boom and collapse, the race riot of 1907, and the plight of the homeless in the 1930s. Family papers recently uncovered in California illuminate hitherto unknown aspects of L.D. Taylor's private life, including the fact that he spent time in jail for embezzlement before coming to Canada and that he lived in a bigamous relationship for eleven months after his second marriage. This new research adds depth to our understanding of Taylor and colour to the author's story. What results is not just a history of politics and city-building but the story of how life on the western edge of the continent allowed immigrants to rebuild their lives out of the mess they had left behind. The author concludes that Taylor "arrived as an accused embezzler on the run from the law. Vancouver gave him the opportunity to remake himself" (202).

Apart from its longevity, L.D. Taylor's political career was marked by his empathy for the "plain people" rather than for the elites of Vancouver, an ideological orientation symbolized by his ever-present red tie. Taylor's enemies accused him of being a socialist, but Francis is correct, I think, in discounting such a notion. He was a populist, a man whose sympathy for working people and support for trade unions and working-class culture and deep commitment to the local community tied him politically to the working- and lower-middle-class areas of the city, especially on the east side. Indeed, it is here that one of the limitations of Francis's "popular" approach to his subject reveals itself. One might argue that Taylor's significance as a historical figure lies less in his role as Vancouver's mayor and more in his place as a representative of the populist impulse that formed a powerful component of the province's political culture in the early years of the twentieth century. At the provincial level this current attracted into political life the likes of former coal miners Tom Uphill from Fernie and Sam Guthrie from Cowichan-Newcastle, and, at the federal level, Vancouver's Henry H. Stevens, a Conservative who had no use for Taylor's relaxed attitudes towards moral issues but whose own anti-elitist tendencies led him to oppose the corporate-friendly policies of his leader in the Conservative government of the early 1930s, Prime Minister R.B. Bennett. By limiting his analytical framework to the City of Vancouver, Francis has, perhaps, left unexplored the broader political context that best explains L.D. Taylor's significance as a political figure in BC history.

Certainly, while Daniel Francis's well-written and informative history of *L.D.* successfully lifts the veil of obscurity from an important figure in Vancouver's civic life and contributes significantly to a fuller understanding of Vancouver history, it is questionable whether we can conclude from the book that Taylor was a great mayor. Francis does not claim that he was, and rightly so, because at times one senses that Taylor was a man who had very little in his life except local politics, and who, in the latter part of his career, kept running for political office mainly because he needed an income. While the author does not see Taylor as "a visionary mayor" (200), he does suggest that Taylor could claim a number of achievements, including his encouragement for the scheme to fill in False Creek east of Main Street; his support for the creation of a town planning commission and the amalgamation of South Vancouver and Point Grey with Vancouver; his assistance in the establishment of Vancouver's airport, the building of the first Second Narrow's Bridge, and the construction of a major new railway hotel (the Hotel Vancouver); and, in the 1920s, his leadership in the creation of a very important new administrative structure for the city, the Greater Vancouver Water District Board. However, we are told little about the politicians and civil servants around Taylor and how he interacted with and influenced them. Such interaction was important to the successful operation of Vancouver's "weak-mayor" form of civic government. That story, indeed most aspects of Vancouver's political history, remain to be told. Daniel Francis's *L.D.* should encourage other writers to begin that task.

Still Ranting: More Rants, Raves and Recollections

Rafe Mair

North Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2003. 256 pp. $19.95 paper.

Rafe: A Memoir

Rafe Mair

Maderia Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2004. 255 pp. $34.95 cloth.

Robert A. Campbell
Capilano College

We learn a lot about Rafe Mair in these two well-written, provocative books. By his own admission he has a large ego, thin skin, and short temper. These features have probably contributed to his volatile personal life (including three marriages), but professionally Mair is a home-grown success story. He began his career as a lawyer, was elected to the British Columbia Legislative Assembly in 1975, and served as a minister in the Social Credit government of Bill Bennett. For the last quarter century, though, he has been a radio talk-show host who regularly conducts interviews with the prominent and the powerful.

I fit into neither of those categories, but I confess at the outset that I appeared on Mr. Mair's radio show in the early 1990s. He was intrigued by my history of government regulation of liquor in British Columbia. I found him quick and charming in a quirky way. It probably helped that we shared similar attitudes towards liquor regulation and that I had acknowledged his regulatory contributions in my book.[1] If I remember correctly, as I walked out of the studio in walked Glen Clark, then still a cabinet minister in Mike Harcourt's New Democratic government and now a rising star in the Jim Pattison business empire.

Still Ranting is a collection of nearly fifty essays that range from two to eight pages, housed under five broad categories: On Politics; On the World in General; Past, Present, and Future; On Fishing and Other Sports; and On Travel. The book is an eclectic collection, with Rafe Mair's thoughts on everything from fly fishing to Bill Bennett, who Mair believes to be second only to W.A.C. Bennett (Bill's father) as the "best premier British Columbia ever had" (80). Mair obviously likes to provoke his audience, and readers of this journal will likely find something to infuriate them. He pulled my chain with his essay on the need for British Columbia to separate because we are so hard done by by central Canada. To describe Rafe Mair as a provincial rights advocate would be more than an understatement. Yet his unrelenting attacks on the federal government, especially the centralized authority in the Prime Minister's Office, are a bit facile. He tends to ignore what a decentralized federation Canada is and how much constitutional authority lies within the jurisdiction of the provinces.

---

[1] Robert A. Campbell, *Demon Rum or Easy Money: Government Control of Liquor in British Columbia from Prohibition to Privatization* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press and McGill-Queens University Press, 1991), 159-64.

While *Still Ranting* is a fun read, *Rafe: A Memoir,* is a better book because it offers more context. As well, many issues raised in the first book are repeated, sometimes word for word, in the second. Mair's hostility to the "establishment" is probably the closest he comes to an overarching theme in the memoirs. His use of the word is very broad, but he comes near to defining it as "business leaders, labour leaders, politicians, artsy-fartsy types [especially CBC interviewers and interviewees] and the media themselves" (239). Mair poses as the anti-establishment crusader who takes pride in poking the privileged defenders of the status quo.

Yet the anti-establishment garb does not entirely fit when one considers Mair's own credentials. Born on the west side of Vancouver on New Year's Eve 1931, he attended St. George's private school, and his 1956 UBC law school class included "far too many distinguished members than I could name in the space allotted" (19). In part, Mair grounds his support of affirmative action in the awareness of advantages that his privileged background has given him. When CKNW fired Mair in 2003 he phoned Jim Pattison and soon had another job at Pattison's 600 AM, where he continues to command the airwaves. Mair has a keen sense of radio journalism as entertainment, and kicking authority figures has kept his show high in the ratings. Quite correctly, Mair sees himself as the heir to Jack Webster, and he claims that Webster taught him "that you didn't have to know a hell of a lot about your subject if you were an entertainer" (225).

Still, Mair does more than inflame and entertain. He has never been too shy to use his airtime as a bully pulpit. Some may remember his unrelenting attacks on the Charlottetown Accord, a 1992 proposal for constitutional change, which was defeated in a national vote. Perhaps thanks to Rafe Mair British Columbians were the most opposed to the deal. Much of his opposition to the accord was due to the fact that it recognized Quebec as a "distinct society." Had the accord passed, however, it would have granted more power to all of the provinces, not just to Quebec.

An avid environmentalist and fly fisher, Rafe Mair has been extremely critical of the fish farm industry and its threat to indigenous salmon runs. He considers Paul Watson, "the Sea Shepherd Society's whale protector" as "one of my heroes" (87). Diagnosed with clinical depression, Mair has also worked hard to undermine the stigma attached to mental illness.

Perhaps somewhat tongue in cheek, in his memoirs Mair describes himself as a "new socialist." Those beliefs are fleshed out better in the first essay of *Still Ranting* ("Drifting Left"). While firmly on the side of private enterprise, Mair defends the regulatory and redistributive role of government: "Corporations don't give a damn about the environment except to the extent that governments force them to care" (5). He argues that government regulations, not corporate consideration, protect workers' safety. As he points out in his memoirs, Mair is a now an active Christian. Yet he is no social conservative: "as I see it, no matter what your sexual preference, if you love God and your neighbour as yourself you can call yourself a Christian" (178).

Rafe Mair is a complex man of conviction, and one is left with a begrudging respect for him. One might quibble with descriptions but, rather than a new socialist, I think he is an old-time Red Tory. Since the Canadian Alliance takeover of the Progressive Conservative Party, however, Red Tories have become an endangered species. Rafe Mair may have more in common with the fish and whales than he realizes.

Negotiated Memory: Doukhobor Autobiographical Discourse

Julie Rak

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004.
184 pp. Illus. $29.95 paper.

Myler Wilkinson
Selkirk College

In *Negotiated Memory: Doukhobor Autobiographical Discourse*, Julie Rak refers to Doukhobors as "bad subjects," drawing on a concept formulated by Louis Althusser to describe a people who "resist the institutions, laws, and beliefs that would make them into 'good' immigrants and docile citizens" as well as who refuse "to recognize the terms of recognition" that would lead to cultural assimilation. She goes on to argue that "bad subjects cannot be treated as people who have histories and knowledges of their own because the history of the bad subject cannot be recounted or written inside of the State," and she wonders how it was that Doukhobors, one of the perennial "bad subjects" of Canadian cultural history, began to use "a discourse of the 'good subject' – like autobiography."

Certainly the history of the Doukhobors may be subsumed under a state definition of bad subjectivity, whether in Russia (rejecting the national church, refusing to serve in the Tsarist army, burning firearms to protest militarism) or in Canada (espousing a millenarian faith that stands in direct contrast to liberal, materialist society, refusing to swear allegiance to the Queen, and insisting upon living a communal, pacifist lifestyle). The very word "Doukhobor" – "spirit wrestler" – carries an intense dialectic of social exclusion and rejection measured against a recalcitrant sense of heroic personhood within communal society.

Rak moves from the concept of "bad subjectivity" – a political category – to the idea of autobiography as a negotiated space of personhood, a resistance to dominant social discourse, what might be understood as the resistant self, or selves, of Doukhobor history. She links this resistant self of Doukhobor experience to the recurrent historical motif of *Plakun Trava*, a Russian water plant that "defines itself by the current it grows against," a subjectivity that seeks narratives of identity in order to resist prevailing social forces of conformity. Rak's implicit idea throughout is that, historically, to be a Doukhobor has been to suffer for a belief in social otherness, an alternative spiritual existence that critiques dominant materialist ideology. Doukhobor narratives of self have claimed the realm of suffering as a sign of individual and collective health. Rak says that "the very act of entering autobiographical terrain [is] an attempt to negotiate what will be remembered about Doukhobor history as well as what position Doukhobors will have in Canada both now and in the future."

This is the intellectual heart of Rak's book; an early chapter deals at length with the history of autobiographical theory (mentioning names such as Lejeune, Olney, Roy Pascal, and Sidonie Smith). Rak proceeds from this overview of academic theory (which, to her credit, she questions as a valid approach to Doukhobor experience of self and community) to a detailed examination of Doukhobor history and belief (a chapter that is notable both for its clarity and its lack of theoretical apparatus). The middle section of *Negotiated Memory* is taken up with the diaspora of Doukhobors from Russia to Canada. Rak argues that this forced homelessness is coupled with the Russian concept of *Vechnaiia Pamit* and what she calls the "diasporic imaginary, which the Doukhobors translate as eternal memory *and* eternal consciousness in the Kingdom of Heaven after death ... This oral tradition forms the sacred language of migration, resistance, and suffering also found, or referred to, in Doukhobors' written autobiographical productions."

The concluding chapters of *Negotiated Memory* explore at length actual autobiographical narratives not of literary artists but, rather, of people who have just emerged into literacy and who often express themselves in unique hybridized narratives, relatively unconstrained by dominant rhetorical models. There is much worthwhile (and little-known) research material in these final pages – extended examinations of self-narratives by people such as Vasily Popoff, Cecil Maloff, Gregory Soukorev, Nick Arishenkoff, Cecil Koochin, Vanya Bayoff, Helen Popoff, and, perhaps most important, Anna Markova. Rak makes the intriguing point that, in the period between 1930 and 1960, a wealth of autobiographical writing came from a segment of the Doukhobor community that one might think the least likely to have produced it: the Sons of Freedom. She examines hybrid narratives from people such as Mike E. Chernenkoff, Alexander Efanow, Fred Davidoff, and Peter Malloff, casting some light onto the little known, and often misunderstood, thoughts of this radical subgroup of the Doukhobor family.

At the conclusion of *Negotiated Memory,* I found myself thinking not only about what Rak says concerning the politics of autobiography and of the writers she includes but also about those others who remain silent. I wondered about a writer such as Kathryn Solovyova, who once responded to the question "What is your autobiography?" with the answer "You must read my poems" (poems that, arguably, are the finest by a living Doukhobor artist); or of a postmodernist such as Denis Denisoff, whose novel *Dog Years* explores not only the Chernobyl disaster but also young Doukhobors in Ukraine coming to terms with the politics of sexual difference; or even Vi Plotnikoff, whose book *Head Cook at Weddings and Funerals* contains the recurring character of Ana, arguably a mask for the author's extended imaginative autobiography. Perhaps what these questions prove is only that autobiography, as a genre, is notoriously slippery (or that these writers may be the subjects of another kind of book). What Rak has written is a serious and worthwhile addition to our understanding of the way a marginalized people struggles, against all those social currents that would silence them, to find and honour a collective autobiographical voice.

The Slocan: Portrait of a Valley

Katherine Gordon

Winlaw, BC: Sono Nis Press, 2004.
320 pp. Illus. $24.95 paper.

W.A. Sloan
Castlegar, BC

This long-awaited book argues that the Slocan Valley, through its often dramatic history, is a reflection of the region and its connection with events in British Columbia and Canada. Not so much a local history, it offers a broad economic picture of the West Kootenay region, with snapshots of its social components. Gordon argues that the Oregon Treaty's 1846 placement of the forty-ninth parallel had a profound effect not only on the Native peoples of the region, the Ktunaxa and the Sinixt, but also on ensuing settlement.

Gordon begins by defining the spectacular geography and geology of the Slocan Valley and the place of Native peoples. She provides a brief picture of the influence of the fur trade in drawing the Sinixt, the Lakes people, south within the cultural influence of Fort Colville, but she says nothing about the first gold rush in British Columbia – the Pend d'Oreille in 1854 – which overnight established dynamic mining forces in conflict with the Lakes. These developments would be factors when many of the Lakes people chose to relocate below the forty-ninth parallel on the Colville reserve in 1872, eleven years before the first reserve was established in the Kootenays.

British jurisdiction arrived with placer mining in the 1860s, but Gordon relates that the real imprint on the West Kootenay occurred when, in 1885, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) passed by the northern tip of the region. She overlooks the Northern Pacific Railway, which arrived in 1883 and which, from Spokane, built its "Inland Empire," which included the West Kootenay. Mining in the Slocan Valley peaked in the late 1890s as the patchwork Great Northern Railway, with its subsidiaries – the Kaslo and Slocan, and the Nelson and Fort Shepherd – both arrived in 1895. This forced the CPR to improve and consolidate its land and rail connections to Sandon. Aided by a subsidy in land and cash in return for a fixed freight rate on incoming food (the Crow Rate), the CPR built the Crowsnest Pass Railway in 1898. This connection and mining lands were combined with the newly acquired Trail Smelter (1896) to form the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company (CM&S, later Cominco), and another subsidiary, West Kootenay Light and Power, in 1906. Gordon makes much of the role the zinc penalty and tariff played in causing reduced access to the American market prior to the First World War. More important to the solution of the "zinc problem" was the shift in interest away from American smelters to Cominco, which was developing an electrolytic process for refining zinc. This process made smelting the huge bodies of low-grade zinc-bearing ore possible; notable was the ore from the Sullivan Mine, which allowed cheaper more permanent rail access and more stability for working populations than was the case in the Slocan. The bright lights of Sandon, with its opera houses and red light district, would dim by 1910 as the town of Trail, with it's huge smelter and the service centre of Nelson were becoming the "bright lights."

The remaining chapters address the social elements of the Slocan Valley. By 1910 several mills and a few productive farms were supporting small communities. A speculative boom in fruit lands before the First World War led to the arrival of some notable families and characters but little long-term permanence. By 1910 the Doukhobors had relocated to the West Kootenay and Boundary District, and the author's synthesis of the issues around leadership, militarism and pacifism, registration of vital statistics, and compulsory schooling is excellent. Despite the picture created of the 1930s Slocan Valley as a "good place in hard times," the Depression ensured that there was limited work at low wages in valley mines, mills, and farms. Commercial fruit-growing was nearing an end, and in 1938 the Doukhobor lands were seized. A left-wing union (not a company organization, as intimated), Local 480 of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, was formed in 1939 as economic vitality began to return.

The arrival of Japanese internees after 1942 relieved some of the downturn of the 1930s and provided the Slocan Valley community with many resourceful and talented people. Gordon discusses the economic demands of the Second World War, which further expanded hydroelectric generation in the valley, and government treatment of the Doukhobor "extremists," particularly the seizure of children to enforce schooling in 1953. Government retention of Doukhobor lands worsened relations until 1963, when lots were transferred back to individual families.

Gordon notes that the arrival of conscientious objectors fleeing the United States during the Vietnam War contributed to the valley's communities and greatly influenced the general culture. A high proportion of literate, highly educated, free-thinking, and tolerant individuals injected energy into community life: artisan shops, galleries, and libraries were invigorated, and property values reversed as cash flowed into the strapped region. Tourism began a climb that, by the 1980s, resulted in a heightened level of confrontation between environmental interests and resource extraction interests.

In closing, *The Slocan* sets a very high standard for local history. Photographs are well selected and are of high quality; maps are well crafted; and sources are provided.