

BOOK REVIEWS

*Into the House of Old:
A History of Residential Care
in British Columbia*

Megan J. Davies

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-
Queen's University Press, 2003.

264 pp. Illus. \$75.00 cloth,

\$29.95 paper.

PATRICIA VERTINSKY

University of British Columbia

MEGAN DAVIES's carefully worked study on residential care for the aged in British Columbia does indeed take us into the "house of old." And it is a sad journey, made more resonant to many of us through our own experiences of visiting those dear to us who have somehow ended up consigned to live, and often die, in institutional care for the old. A bleak disciplinary Foucauldian perspective seems hard to escape here. The Canadian old-age home is presented as an instrument of social control, one that manifests both the differential possession of power in the lives of the poor and disadvantaged as well as some of the unique characteristics of the institutional world.

The book covers the years between 1890 and the 1960s and presents the Canadian old-age home as an evolving institution, undergoing a fundamental shift from poor law facility to middle-class medical institution. In other words, Davies shows how the cultural legacy of England's Poor Law was transmitted by immigrants to Canada and reconfigured through generation after generation in various state and institutional policies and practices. Her claim is that the long, dark shadow of the Poor Law had an enormous impact on health and social assistance programs across the sweep of Canada's geographical and jurisdictional archipelago. She begins with a discussion of the elderly in the community and then examines the evolution of different kinds of old age homes in British Columbia – an evolutionary development that, she points out, was distinctly different from that in other parts of Canada. This is followed by an analysis of the changing ideas and ideals of institutional provision for the aged, taking us inside the world of the institution to get a glimpse of patient life. We are properly reminded that programs emerging from multilevel policy formation around the institutional needs of the elderly are

inevitably shaped and reshaped both by those who deliver care and by those who are its recipients.

Finally, Davies considers the place of the old-age home within the emerging welfare state and looks at one innovative program, the Hospital Clearance Program, which unsuccessfully attempted to deinstitutionalize elderly care. In effect, the twentieth-century old-age home is presented as the reconstituted workhouse of a previous era, emerging as an institution run by health and welfare professionals whose middle-class gaze and negative understandings of senescence extended to both clients and the nature of the facility. Professional attitudes, Davies concludes, typically embodied twin prevailing concepts of the elderly – the aged as dysfunctional, and the aged as victim – and while many nurses and social workers were kind to their elderly clients, the darker side of their professional perspective saw the elderly as an unhealthy element in the family, rationalizing their continued institutionalization and the nature of services seen as suitable. Such negative attitudes, she finds, pervade contemporary social work discourse today in its dealings with the needs of the old. Western society is deeply ageist, and the category “old age” is still not applied in any consistent or analytical fashion.

More than simply introducing us to an analysis of the cultural and political place of the old-age home, Davies wants us to meet those who entered there – to have the reader put on the shoes of the elderly, sit in their place, and live alongside them in their home and in the institution. It is here, I think, that she is least effective in achieving her goal. This is because the voices of the elderly, although always there, are perhaps filtered through too

many layers of historical writing and are muffled, thus being less evocative than might have been the case with a less cautious and scholarly style. However, through her finely worked history of institutional development, she does begin to pierce the vast silence surrounding the essence of the old-age home both in the past and in the present, and, with her extensive and painstaking research on individuals and institutions, to illuminate the often sorry tale of warehousing the old in Canadian society.

From the outset Davies lays bare her assumption that older people typically prefer to live in the community rather than in institutions, and she considers the factors that make elderly people vulnerable to institutionalization. Her story begins, therefore, with a close-up look at the coping strategies of specific populations of elders in British Columbia who looked institutionalization in the face and did not like what they saw. She shows how the natural resource economy of British Columbia had a particular effect upon the gendered nature of the culture of old age, highlighting the fact that, although we often associate aging with women (due to the fact that they tend to live longer than men), it was single and working men who typically needed assistance in their old age, at least until the 1960s. Single men working in mining, logging, and fishing industries or on road and railway construction were often unmarried and lacked family or community roots. The transient nature of their existence – along with racial and ethnic issues – left them vulnerable to impoverishment and institutionalization in old age. Davies found that older women on their own rarely appear to have been as socially marginal as were their male counterparts. When either group (or

married couples, who were more likely to remain independent longer than were single men or women) turned to the state for help, there were a number of options available. And it is to these varied sources of support (again, up to the 1960s) that the rest of the book is dedicated.

Throughout this extremely informative book we are reminded again and again that policies, like institutions, bear the indisputable and indelible imprint of the ideology and time that gave birth to them. Davies's descriptions of the various facilities that were provided over the years of her study are illuminating, especially when she shows us the sparse and dingy interiors, and poor services, of earlier institutions. Nor does she neglect to point out that the changes in later facilities were, more often than not, merely cosmetic. She provides some excellent pictures of the changing shape and styles of institutions designed or revamped for old people and, unfortunately, misses a wonderful opportunity to draw upon current discourses in cultural geography and architecture to show more vividly what the design, construction, and shifting functions and spatial configurations of the various buildings revealed about the values and aspirations of the age. Architects and planners of institutions for old people became, in a sense, partners in a dialogue with the body, and their views on design and society reflected an acute sense of how the aging body should be looked at and what it could and should become through appropriate discipline and care. If anything is described by an architectural plan it is the nature of human relationships, and *Into the House of Old* tells us a lot about human relationships, professional ageism, the institutional culture of the old, and the

continuing low status of the aged on the policy agenda. Above all, through her penetrating study, she reminds us that modern history has not been kind to old people, that institutions do not have hearts, and that residential facilities for the aged continue to harbour the ghost of the poorhouse. Anyone feeling the chill of impending old age can take little comfort in this reminder.

*Between Justice and Certainty:
Treaty Making in British
Columbia*

Andrew Woolford

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005.
240 pp. \$85.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

PAULETTE REGAN
University of British Columbia

ANDREW WOOLFORD'S *Between Justice and Certainty: Treaty Making in British Columbia* marks an important shift in the historiography of indigenous-settler relations in Canada. Focusing on the first ten years of the BC treaty process (BCTC) from 1992 to 2002, the author explores the tensions that exist between First Nations visions of achieving justice for historical wrongs, and government visions of creating legal and economic certainty in the province. The resulting work is a rich, nuanced analysis of these conflicting visions set within an emerging international discourse on reparations, restitution, apology, and reconciliation. Woolford draws on a diverse literature, including Elazar Barkan's *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); John Torpey's *Politics and the Past: On Repairing Historical*

Injustices (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003); Martha Minow's *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing Genocide and Mass Violence* (Beacon Press, 1998); Nicholas Tavuchis's *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* (Stanford University Press, 1991); and Trudy Govier's *Forgiveness and Revenge* (Henry Holt and Co., 2004). In doing so, he avoids the trap of regional parochialism, enabling the reader to understand the specificity of treaty making in British Columbia as part of a broader global phenomenon of the West's "coming to terms with the past." The author asks a pivotal question that should be of concern to all Canadians: "Is there a space between justice and certainty in which modern treaties can be made?" (viii). Woolford suggests that such a space of reconciliation can be created only if the non-indigenous majority looks beyond the neoliberal, utilitarian, future-focused visions of certainty that currently drive the BC treaty process (179-82); rather, we must take First Nations visions of justice seriously – visions that demand moral, political, and socioeconomic accountability for colonial wrongs that continue to exist today.

The book builds on earlier critiques of the BC treaty process that question its legitimacy and challenge us to rethink our ideas about treaty making and reconciliation. Two examples must suffice. Taiaiake Alfred's "Deconstructing the British Columbia Treaty Process," published in T. Mustonen and C. Rattray's edited collection *Dispatches from the Cold Seas: Indigenous Views on Self-Government, Ecology and Identity* (Tempere Polytechnic, 2001), is a scathing indictment of the process itself. Alfred argues that the process is morally and politically corrupt, will do nothing to achieve a just reconciliation, and fur-

ther entrenches colonial relations. In "Reconsidering the BC Treaty Process," published in *Speaking Truth to Power: A Treaty Forum* (BC Treaty Commission, 2000), James Tully suggests that the parties must engage in a dialogue about the "misrecognition" of historical treaty relationships and conflicting ideas about reconciliation. These issues, he says, must be explored thoroughly as a precondition to just treaty making. Woolford takes up these themes, ultimately seeking a common ground. Drawing on primary sources and field interviews, he links justice theory to the actual practice of negotiations, providing concrete examples of how power imbalances coupled with a denial of history play out at negotiating tables. The chapters are well written and organized, beginning with a discussion of procedural as opposed to substantive justice in order to establish a theoretical context for understanding the history of colonial land settlement in British Columbia; First Nations political activism; and the overarching, conflicting visions of justice that characterize contemporary treaty making. Woolford suggests that provincial and federal government responses to historical injustices remain "on an abstract level," enabling officials "to avoid any sense of moral responsibility for the past" (173). This precludes any serious discussion of reconciliation, which must necessarily encompass both symbolic and material redress.

Whereas Christopher McKee's earlier work, *Treaty Talks in British Columbia: Negotiating a Mutually Beneficial Future* (UBC Press, 2000 [1996]) accepts the premise that the respective parties can negotiate fair and equitable treaties within an "interest-based" or "mutual gains" negotiation model that focuses on building

relationships for the future, Woolford views this procedural model of justice as deeply flawed. He argues that the undue emphasis on process over substance in treaty negotiations will not achieve a just resolution to the unresolved “Indian land question” or provide adequate reparations for the historical injustices that have been perpetrated against First Nations (173). In the absence of clear substantive goals, governments manipulate the process, skewing it away from a reckoning with the past in ways that privilege neoliberal economic and political priorities. Thus the BCTC is mired in what Woolford describes as “symbolic violence” or “affirmative strategies” that invoke the rhetoric of reconciliation but that will actually deliver only minor reforms to accommodate First Nations within existing neoliberal structures and global markets. What is needed instead is a transformative justice that fundamentally “reconfigures symbolic, political, and economic relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples” (viii). Woolford’s ability to explain the subtle interplay between history and power relations, using examples taken from actual negotiations, is particularly effective in demonstrating the subtle forms of violence that permeate negotiations between First Nations and governments. This book is destined to become a standard text for university courses dealing with First Nations issues, but, equally important, it should be required reading for politicians, negotiators, and policy makers involved in the BC treaty process. *Between Justice and Certainty: Treaty Making in British Columbia* will inform all those who seek a deeper understanding of why treaty making and reconciliation must begin with facing our history. For as Woolford argues so persuasively, our failure to

do this will create neither certainty nor justice in indigenous-settler relations in British Columbia in the twenty-first century.

Musqueam Reference Grammar

Wayne Suttles

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004.

xxxii, 595 pp. \$125.00 cloth.

DOROTHY KENNEDY

Bouchard & Kennedy

Research Consultants

THE LATE WAYNE SUTTLES’S monumental *Musqueam Reference Grammar* focuses on the language of the Musqueam people of the lower Fraser River, speakers of a Downriver dialect of the language known to linguists and anthropologists as Halkomelem, one of the twenty-three languages comprising the Salishan language family of British Columbia and Washington State (and, marginally, Oregon).

Suttles undertook his study of Musqueam at various times over a fifty-year period, finding his first opportunity to learn about the Musqueam dialect (and thus to pursue the Boasian goal of exploring culture through language) while teaching anthropology at the University of British Columbia in the late 1950s. Andrew and Christine Charles of Musqueam proved to be ideal teachers, and Suttles was a most capable, dedicated student and a skilful field worker, though this study took his entire career to complete.

The volume begins with an informative introduction placing Halkomelem within its linguistic and cultural setting and clarifying recent taxonomic usage, much of which Suttles adopted for his editing of the Northwest Coast

volume of the *Handbook of North American Indians*. A brief summary of the regional social system follows. This is a subject to which Suttles made so many salient contributions early in his anthropological career that many colleagues lost sight of his initial interest in linguistics, which he developed while translating Japanese for the US Navy during the Second World War. Suttles concludes his introductory remarks with a sketch of linguistic variation found among his handful of fluent Musqueam consultants, along with his and their brief reflections on the dynamics of dialect formation and language change.

While a full understanding of the complex processes of linguistic change awaits further analysis, one comment by Suttles on Halkomelem dialects is of particular interest. In earlier times, Suttles opined, there was likely greater diversity within each of the Halkomelem dialect areas than there has been in the last couple of generations. Individual villages and even parts of villages could retain unique features of speech. Due to general language loss, it is not clear how homogeneous the Downriver dialect may have been, yet Suttles postulates, based on the Musqueam elder James Point's statements, that there were no great speech differences within this dialect. Musqueam speech closely resembled that of neighbouring Halkomelem groups. Beginning in the 1950s, however, the speech of younger Musqueam was influenced by Cowichan Halkomelem, due to the Musqueam students' attendance at residential school on Vancouver Island, in addition to the preferential use of the Island dialect for ceremonial purposes. The Cowichan dialect of Halkomelem, at the expense of the

Musqueam dialect, had become the language of the smokehouse.

Suttles's approach to presenting Musqueam grammar is contained in the title of the book. This is a "reference grammar," a work purposely cleansed of technical jargon so that it might be more accessible to non-linguists. In his descriptive framework Suttles places syntax before morphology on the grounds that this is more conducive to teaching one how to generate sentences than is the more commonly employed method of placing morphology first. Tables and lists of lexical affixes are introduced only after a good grounding in phonology and syntax, and throughout this highly readable volume caveats and footnotes alert the reader to divergent or contributing views. Suttles's elicitation of dozens of texts in Musqueam, only five of which are presented here, contribute to his compilation of an extensive lexical file that serves to elucidate phonological and lexical differences among Halkomelem dialects, and it adds significantly to our understanding of complex Musqueam grammatical rules.

Throughout the volume, each Musqueam individual's contribution is noted by the use of initials, along with a number representing the text from which examples were taken. Explanatory notes accompany each text and are compiled with such expertise that we are easily convinced of the high quality of the scholarship. The texts are presented in sets of four lines: (1) the original language as recorded; (2) the original language with morpheme-by-morpheme segmentation; (3) an analysis of the morpheme segments, identified by abbreviations; and (4) a close English translation. This structure is used throughout the volume. Suttles does not offer much comment on the

recording process, which may be disappointing to some, but that is not the aim of this work. Still, the texts offer many examples that are rich in sociolinguistic information and that are of interest to non-specialists.

Thankfully, for the non-linguists among us, this volume was not meant as a work of theoretical linguistics. Suttles's tendency to present analyses through examples, together with his brief formal summaries of major structures and processes, helps to remove some of the obscurity inherent in the study of these difficult Northwest Coast languages. For linguists, however, it is all here, including extensive sections on negation and lexical suffixes, abundant data on the morphology of the verb, and flowcharts to illustrate full paradigms of a few representative verbs. A chapter on kin terms provides materials that complement those presented in the excellent discussion of semantics and sememics included in Brent Galloway's (1993) more theoretically orientated *Grammar of Upriver Halkomelem*. Suttles does not employ Galloway's notion of "alloseme" (i.e., words and morphemes that are semantically close or parts of a continuous range of meaning) to describe the Halkomelem use of single kinship terms for dual relations equidistant from ego (such as great-grandparent and great-grandchild). What Suttles does explore is how kinship terms reflect features of Musqueam social structure.

An additional chapter on grammatical features concerning space and time, some of which Suttles has presented elsewhere (Suttles 1987), brings together data on spatial conceptions and discourse functions and illustrates the strength of his interdisciplinary approach, which draws upon linguistics, knowledge of the physical environment, and signi-

ficantly, Musqueam cultural practices. The result is a comprehensive and comprehensible account that will satisfy linguists and lay readers alike.

Musqueam Reference Grammar demonstrates the continuing contributions that twentieth-century linguistic research holds for the maintenance and renewal of Northwest Coast Aboriginal languages. It is appropriate that UBC Press should publish it now, at a time when Aboriginal communities are becoming acutely aware of the waning numbers of indigenous language speakers and are mustering all available resources to help preserve and revitalize these languages. It is well recognized that language revitalization requires a team approach, with members of the speech community as foundational, and with linguists assuming vital roles, contributing grammars and dictionaries, and advising on orthographies and teaching methods.

It was Wayne Suttles's hope that the Musqueam people themselves would discover a use for this grammar. But it may be that the book's true value will be appreciated only once the current glow of interactive, computerized language lessons has faded, as this grammar does not offer a quick fix for aboriginal language retention. It is simply a very fine reference work that presents the results of a talented linguist's collaborative efforts with previous generations of knowledgeable Aboriginal language specialists. It will be a useful and appropriate addition to the bookshelf of any student of the Northwest Coast.

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*Islands in the Salish Sea:
A Community Atlas*

Sheila Harrington
and Judi Stevenson, editors

Victoria, Vancouver, and Calgary:
TouchWood Editions, 2005.
160 pp. Maps, illus. \$44.95 paper.

COLL THRUSH
University of British Columbia

IN 1999 A SMALL GROUP of Salt Spring Island activists decided to mark the coming millennium by inventorying and mapping the unique resources of their island home. Inspired by bioregional writing and mapping projects in British Columbia, England, and elsewhere, and by new technologies such as geographical information systems (GIS), the activists began working not just with their fellow Salt Spring residents but also with activists, writers, and artists who lived on other islands in what is increasingly being referred to as the “Salish Sea.” Over the next few years, more than 3,000 people participated in an effort that resulted in this “community atlas” of seventeen

islands in the Strait of Georgia, a work of remarkable creativity and insight that is compelling and interesting on at least two levels: first, for what it tells us about the islands and, second, for what it tells us about the people who live on them.

The *Islands in the Salish Sea* project coordinators chose a total of seventeen Strait of Georgia islands for their study. They range from Saturna and the Penders in the southeast to Cortes and Quadra in the northwest, and they include both “official” Gulf Islands like Salt Spring and outliers like Howe Sound’s Bowen and Gambier. The editors chose to leave out smaller and mostly uninhabited islands as well as the intensely urbanized islands in the mouth of the Fraser – the latter an omission that raises interesting questions about the kinds of places that are deemed worthy of such investigations. While each island-based chapter includes a brief statistical profile – population in 1991 and 2001, the island’s size, hectares of farmland, protected areas, and green space – there is little else that is standardized here. In fact, the island chapters are nothing if not idiosyncratic, each being made up of themes and sidebars chosen by project participants. On Bowen Island we learn about both local frogs and newts and the crisis facing the world’s amphibians; on Mayne, we are told of a rich pre-internment Nikkei heritage, represented in greenhouses and gardens; on Denman, the emphasis is on an abundance of orchard fruits, many of which are heirloom varieties. (Sometimes, the information is just plain odd: what are we to make, for example, of the fact that the residents of Gambier Island have arms that are on average two inches longer than are those of Canadians as a whole? Not much, I would think.) The maps

themselves are as varied as the islands and their communities: Hornby's was obviously done on a computer, Kuper's is carved in cedar, and Salt Spring's is a purple-bordered cloak. Be sure not to miss the remarkable painted toilet at the very end of the atlas; a less subtle or more fitting metaphor for the region's current predicaments would be difficult to find. (It's also surprisingly pretty.)

For all the wonderful local colour and specificities of small places, there are also patterns here. Most notable among them perhaps is the profound anxiety, shared by many islanders, over a growing population and the effects of that growth on ways of life and senses of place. This is reflected, for example, in Hornby's map. As on other islands, residents worried that publishing the location of things such as groves of old-growth forest or pristine beaches would only put such local treasures at risk; the result is that the map of Hornby is almost empty. Indeed, there is no small amount of I-Got-Here-First syndrome in this collection, throwing contributions such as "Be Own Island," an anagram for Bowen, into somewhat harsher light. But given the sharp and sudden increase in island populations – and the shortages of water, arable soils, and undeveloped land – these people do have a point. Aboriginal histories and places are also highlighted throughout the atlas. While not every map includes references to indigenous place-names, those that do illustrate the density of First Nations presence in these islands, both historically and in terms of present-day land claims. (The extent of Aboriginal participation in the project is not entirely clear.) These and other common threads are complemented in the atlas' last section by a series of regional maps that focus on issues such as energy and transportation systems as

well as sites protected by the Islands Trust Fund.

And so at one level – that of being a rich description of a diverse and yet somewhat unified set of places – this atlas works wonderfully. But there is a second level at which this atlas also works – that of being a narrative. In this respect, the atlas serves as an incredibly rich source for those of us interested in the cultural, historical, and political nature of place-making in the modern world. In the essays that make up the first section of the atlas, the editors and others are quite explicit about how they see themselves fitting into the broader context of maps as representations of power. Editor Sheila Harrington argues, for example, that the maps in this atlas are quite different from those used to incorporate the Gulf Islands into the British Empire and Canadian nation, as well as from those used by present-day federal and provincial entities to manage resources and people:

Maps like these express the interior of a place, rather than the exterior boundaries of territoriality, surveillance, and control. They offer an outward portrait of a local intimacy, providing an opportunity to share, to empathize, to know and to care. They are a collective portrait of a community – a face – expressed beautifully and lovingly, with all the lines and marks of experience and age. (19)

It is this narrative of "interiority," of creating maps as a way to reorient notions of power and place, that makes *Islands in the Salish Sea* interesting on more than one level. Whether such an atlas truly departs from earlier geographical traditions of

“territoriality, surveillance, and control” is not entirely clear; that participants in this project *think* it does is. So, while this will be a particularly useful book for teaching the whats and wherefores of a particular region, as well as the how-tos of community mapmaking and environmental advocacy, it will also be a particularly useful source for insights into the culture of a particular BC region, into the rhetoric of place, and into popular understandings of social and environmental conflicts over the lands and waters of the “Salish Sea” – a geographical neologism that, in itself, merits discussion and debate.

It would be easy for more cynical readers to dismiss *Islands in the Salish Sea* as a wishful-thinking project of stereotypical Gulf Island progressives. Certainly, there is an aura of Birkenstocks and organic hobby farms, of the NDP and purple tie-dye about this book; however, the temptation to dismiss this project and its collaborators as something less than significant or well-thought-out should be avoided. There is much here to digest, dissect, and debate as well as to celebrate, support, and even emulate. For those of us interested in place – and I would hazard a guess that every person reading this review fits that particular bill – *Islands in the Salish Sea* is a model for thinking critically about our part of the world, for doing good research, and for actively building community and engaging in advocacy of place. Just imagine: what if every place in British Columbia, from Oak Bay to the Downtown Eastside, from Surrey to Fort Nelson, from Haida Gwaii to Whistler, was home to something like this? What if community groups, schools, and universities throughout the province (and beyond) engaged in this kind of work? Then where (pun intended) would we be?

Jean Coulthard: A Life in Music

William Bruneau
and David Gordon Duke

Vancouver: Ronsdale Press 2005.
216 pp. Photos, reproductions,
musical examples, bibliography,
index. \$22.95 paper.

JANETTE TILLEY
Lehman College,
City University of New York

WILLIAM BRUNEAU and David Duke’s *Jean Coulthard* is a long overdue tribute to an artist and teacher whose career in Vancouver spanned more than seven decades. Composer, pianist, and music educator, Jean Coulthard (1908–2000) was a significant figure in Vancouver’s musical life. From her earliest days teaching piano in the 1920s to her final years as a composer of international renown, Coulthard remained close to Vancouver and the Canadian west coast. In this, the first book-length biography of Jean Coulthard, Bruneau and Duke place the composer within her social, political, and cultural milieu to construct a portrait of a Vancouver artist.

Coulthard grew up in Vancouver’s wealthy Shaughnessy neighbourhood, where her musical talents were encouraged and cultivated by her musical family. Her mother, a singer and teacher, ran a successful music studio and was a significant figure in Vancouver’s developing cultural scene. It was through her mother that Coulthard was exposed to the music of the French composers Debussy and Ravel. After brief studies in London (1928–29) and later New York (1944–45), Coulthard joined the recently founded Music Department at the University

of British Columbia in 1947, where she taught music theory and composition until her retirement in 1973. Coulthard's years at UBC were not without their difficulties, as Bruneau has explored elsewhere ("Music and Marginality: Jean Coulthard and the University of British Columbia, 1947-1973," in *Challenging Professions: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Women's Professional Work* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999], 96-116). The years after her retirement were some of the most productive of her career and brought Coulthard national as well as international recognition. She drew inspiration from a variety of sources, from Thomas Hardy and Shakespeare to Emily Carr and Canadian folksongs. Her music is often lyrical, and although she eschewed atonality and experimentation for their own sake, her music is never derivative but, rather, explores modern sounds as a means of personal expression.

The eight chapters of this book trace Coulthard's family life and career in roughly ten- to fifteen-year increments. Breaking with musicological tradition, Bruneau and Duke do not divide Coulthard's biography according to musical style. This may be partly owing to the fact that Coulthard's output does not easily fall into neat, chronologically distinct periods. Rather, they recognize major career and family events as defining moments. Without the imposition of artificial periods, Coulthard's biography seems fluid and natural. Coulthard's music is placed within the context of her life, rather than the opposite – a life placed around musical achievements – which is so common in musical biography.

Bruneau and Duke tell Coulthard's story for "general readers and listeners"

and "hope to introduce something of the person and musician that Jean Coulthard was" (xi). Anecdotes told by Coulthard as well as photographs and journal entries enliven the narrative. One of the book's strengths is its intimate and familiar tone, which results from the authors' access to Coulthard's private documents, including her journals of the 1930s and personal interviews with the composer held over a six-year period before her death in 2000. Bruneau and Duke were both students of Coulthard, and their affection for their teacher shines throughout the text. Each chapter concludes with a glimpse of a selection of Coulthard's music from the period under discussion. While musical expertise is not required to understand these excursions into her music, some familiarity with musical notation and terminology is expected.

Serious students of music and its history in British Columbia may find this accessible volume light on specific musical and historical detail. The authors paint Vancouver's history with broad brushstrokes. A timeline of events (167-80) that matches Coulthard's life with landmarks in Canadian and musical history fills some of the gaps in the narrative. Of particular value to musicians and to those wanting to explore Coulthard's music are two lists – one a selection of her published and unpublished music (181-4), the other a list of recordings of her music on compact disc (185-92). Given the paucity of published work on Coulthard (the authors list just five items, three of which are by Bruneau himself), this volume offers welcome insight into one of Canada's important composers.

Raincoast Chronicles Fourth Five

Howard White, editor

Madeira Park, BC: Harbour

Publishing, 2005. 420 pp.

Illus. \$42.95 cloth.

JOCELYN SMITH

University of British Columbia

THE SINKING OF THE BC Ferries vessel *Queen of the North* on 22 March 2006 has brought the lives of British Columbia's coastal residents into sharp and extraordinary focus. It is a safe bet that most British Columbians knew nothing of Hartley Bay before its residents set out in the middle of the night to rescue survivors from the ferry; a safe bet, also, that many British Columbians could not have imagined (and had likely never thought about) how the loss of a ferry would affect the lives of coastal residents in every village and town from Port Hardy to Prince Rupert and well into the hinterland. By chance, this morning I heard that the BC and Yukon Hotels Association Board of Directors has demanded that "all levels of government cooperate to immediately address the ferry service crisis in the north." They add that "the Provincial Government needs to understand that this is causing a domino effect that will result in tour operators cancelling services for years to come. They maintain it is not a regional crisis limited only to the north but a catastrophic situation whose effects will be felt throughout BC and even Alberta" (*Local News*, CKNW, 13 April 2006, 0500).

Raincoast Chronicles is a wonderfully rich and varied account of lives lived in many of those coastal settlements that will be affected by the sinking. The editor, Howard White, began the series in 1972 with the intention of putting

"BC coast character on the record" (7). The journal has appeared regularly since then. Each set of five issues is gathered in a collected edition, and the present edition gathers the contents of issues sixteen to twenty.

In a collection with more than thirty contributors and the broad mandate to put character on record, it is both inevitable and desirable that the contents will be difficult to describe succinctly. The first and last items in the collection (issues sixteen and twenty) are Pat Wastell Norris's "Time and Tide: A History of Telegraph Cove" and Stephen Hume's exceptional photographic essay "Lilies and Fireweed: Frontier Women of British Columbia." These are the polished works of professional writers: "People tend to romanticize what they don't understand," Wastell Norris writes with a hint of superiority, "and they certainly didn't understand our life. They walked into our shabby kitchen, smelled bread baking and were enchanted. 'Back to the simple life,' they enthused. But it wasn't a simple life; it was actually very complicated, and it stretched our capabilities to the limit" (43). At the other end of the collection, Hume writes in a neat book-end of a response: "Until recently, women's own voices often emerged from the history of the day only as footnotes, brief asides, amused anecdotes, secondary references or quotations from forgotten journals, letters, memoirs, household accounts and family stories" (344).

The thirty-four pieces that lie between these entries cover topics ranging from the life and remarkable death of Francis Rattenbury, the selling of Estevan Lighthouse in 1942, west coast fishing superstitions, the smallpox epidemic of 1862, shipbuilding during the Second World War, and a first-hand description, in photographs and

words, of each stage of the canning line at California Packing Corporation. Of course, some pieces stay in the memory longer than do others; of particular note are Margaret McKirdy's "The Doctor Book," a poignant and beautifully written memoir detailing the influence of a home medical book on her and her family's lives, and Douglas Hamilton's "Aflame on the Water: The Final Cruise of the *Grappler*." In terse and stark prose, Hamilton describes the deaths, in many cases preventable, of 100 passengers aboard the steamer *Grappler*, which sank on 29 April 1883 in Seymour Narrows.

Two items would make this outstanding collection even better: a map of British Columbia that shows the locations about which the authors write (will the people of Hartley Bay figure in a future issue of *Raincoast Chronicles?*), and a biographical sketch of each author. What, for example, is Margaret McKirdy's connection with coastal British Columbia? As moving as "The Doctor Book" is, I could not see how the piece fit in with the overall theme of the collection. And what did Hallvard Dahlie do with his life after his three-month sojourn in a lighthouse on Cape St. James in 1941, described with humour and compassion in "Light at the End of the World"?



*Pro-Family Politics
and Fringe Parties in Canada*

Chris MacKenzie

Vancouver: UBC Press 2005.
248 pp. \$85.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

JOHN DYCK

Trinity Western University

ONE OF THE MOST contentious aspects of politics is the legislation of morals. How much should governments be beholden to any one set of religious beliefs held by influential minorities or a majority? Chris MacKenzie's book examines "Christian faith and politics" in Canada. It charts the course and evaluates the attempt of a small group of largely Roman Catholic pro-family activists in British Columbia "to create a political path down which they could march in an effort to influence an otherwise unresponsive Canadian state" (6). The emergence and success of the Family Coalition Party/Movement (fcp) of BC is the primary focus of the book. Beginning as a small Christian pro-family activist movement comprised of former Social Credit Party loyalists during the leadership of Bill Vander Zalm, the members sought in vain to have their "family values" platform debated in the public arena. When their efforts to have their "sanctity of life" program adopted by the Social Credit Party failed in 1990, Bill and Heather Stillwell joined Mark and Kathleen Toth, along with close friends, and formed the Family Coalition Party to generate political discussion of their platform.

In studying the effect that the fcp had on provincial politics, from its inception in 1991 until its merger with the Reform Party of BC and a number

of other minor right-wing parties to form the Unity Party in late 2000, MacKenzie has three objectives: to document the history of the Family Coalition Party; to trace the ideological roots of the pro-family movement; and to “understand the FCP’s dual character as social movement and political party, and the unique challenges that face a party/movement in Canada’s contemporary political climate” (9). How well does MacKenzie succeed in achieving these objectives? The history of the FCP is well covered. Through interviews with over 100 of its less than 1,000 members during its height of popularity, MacKenzie presents a very clear picture of why the original leaders set up the party, what they hoped to achieve, and why they believed their political support and impact was limited. The real question that needs to be asked is why study this small group of discontents? Their political attraction was always marginal, even among those evangelical Christians who accepted their unconditional principles of supporting “a definition of human life as beginning from the moment of conception and ending at the point of natural death” and espousing “support for defining family as that of a legally married man and woman with natural or adopted children” (11). Much to their chagrin, the FCP leadership found that their most naturally aligned supporters voted en masse for other parties at election time, showing that voter behaviour is affected by many influences and that most individual voters are not inclined to support non-contending parties. One important issue never pursued by MacKenzie is what impact the predominantly Roman Catholic composition of the party had on its attractiveness to other Christians who supported much of its core party platform. Studies by

John C. Green and others on the lack of success of the New Right in the United States to attract substantial numbers of Roman Catholics to their movement indicate that there are very important differences between the two conservative Christian constituencies.

On the second objective, tracing the ideological roots of the pro-family movement, MacKenzie ranges far and wide in the North American political arena, identifying the roots of the FCP in the emergence of neoconservatism and the New Right in the late 1970s and early 1980s, particularly in the United States with the election of Ronald Reagan. The New Right, a collection of general purpose political organizations like the “Moral Majority” and later the “New Christian Right,” coalesced around specific socio-moral problems (75-81). The 1980s political infatuation with small-c conservative governments like Margaret Thatcher’s in England and Ronald Reagan’s in the United States, the emergence of the Reform Party in Canada, and the election of Mike Harris’s conservative government in Ontario in 1995 are all shown to have been influential in bringing socially conservative Christians into the public arena. For many members of these disparate groups, the time had come to bring morality back into the public realm, and they believed their cause was just. MacKenzie does a good job of building his case for finding the roots of the FCP both in this New Right movement and in the history of western protest parties in Canada.

In addressing his third objective, understanding the FCP’s dual character as a social movement and as a political party (Chapters 3-5), MacKenzie introduces a number of categories and social science models to show the broad range of diagnostic tools available in describing and evaluating

the FCP. While the plethora of models used by social scientists to categorize social groups is impressive, the usefulness of applying them to the study of the Family Coalition Party is dubious. As mentioned earlier, as both a movement and a party, the FCP is so small that MacKenzie becomes guilty of exaggerating differences between “new counter movements” and traditional counter-movements (130). To compare the FCP with previous party/movements like the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the Social Credit Party, the Green Party, or the Reform Party is to accord too much significance to the FCP.¹ Never once in a provincial election did their popular vote reach 3 percent in any BC riding. Not only was the FCP ineffective as a political movement but its impact as a political party was negligible. Even its re-formation as the Unity Party in 2000 has not endeared it to the BC electorate. The Family Coalition Party is a good example of how a narrowly focused program will not attract electoral support.

Chris MacKenzie has performed a valuable service, documenting the struggles that political movement/parties have in gaining electoral credibility. Much of his larger analysis is worth reading since it updates social science categories used to explain the rise of New Right fringe parties in western Canada. However, the Family Coalition Party is too small to be the appropriate case study if such an analysis is to have comparative value.

¹ David Laycock, in *The New Right and Democracy in Canada: Understanding Reform and the Canadian Alliance* (Oxford University Press, 2001), is more complete in his discussion of the New Right, its evangelical roots, and its appeal in British Columbia.

In Plain Sight: Reflections on Life in Downtown Eastside Vancouver

Leslie Robertson and
Dara Culhane, editors

Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2005.
180 pp. \$18.95 paper.

LARA CAMPBELL
Simon Fraser University

AS THE TRIAL of the serial killer accused of murdering women from the Downtown Eastside continues, the Woodward's building on Hastings Street is turned into luxury condominiums, and the 2010 Olympics draw closer, the “problem” of Vancouver's infamous Downtown Eastside has grown increasingly visible in the media. Dara Culhane and Leslie Robertson's *In Plain Sight: Reflections on Life in Downtown Eastside Vancouver* takes an area that has been defined by its problems (7) and involves the women who live and work there in a study on the connections between housing and health in marginalized communities. Robertson and Culhane hope to end the silencing of marginalized women's lives by publishing the stories of seven female residents of the area: women who, as the book eloquently points out, are visible in the public imagination as social problems and “deviants,” yet whose humanity remains invisible, hidden from mainstream society by poverty, racism, addictions, and violence.

The book is located in the ethnographic tradition of approaching research and writing as “engaged witnesses” rather than as detached, neutral observers (14), and it gives the subjects some control over the project, including an opportunity to critique transcripts of interviews. The editors

shape the research as little as possible; the detailed stories of the seven women are the heart of the book, and these stories are lightly edited, prefaced by a brief commentary, and concluded with a set of questions that give the last word to the interview subjects. The result is an absorbing but challenging documentation of women's lives. The stories do not always flow either chronologically or thematically; the reader moves in and out of time frames, geographic spaces, and life events; and the narrative is fluid and circular rather than linear and explanatory. The book itself, however, is not without a narrative structure, for the women who chose to publicly reveal their stories were all participants in the larger Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council-funded Health and Home Project. The seven women were all willing to make their stories public, to engage in a longitudinal study, and to meet with researchers for two fairly extensive interviews. All seven self-identify as women who wish to move out of the drug and sex trade (13), which itself creates a particular narrative of recovery that shapes the stories and helps to explain the commonalities in the book's themes. The women talk about the process of hitting "rock bottom," they are self-consciously aware of their shortcomings and are often hard on themselves, and they are determined to educate the public about the fact that life on the street is difficult and unromantic (169).

Since the narration of the stories is shaped by the intent to explore the relationship between health and housing, it is not surprising to see certain common themes emerge. As I read through each narrative, I was struck by the similarities: childhood and adult lives uprooted by constant moving; isolation from community

supports; lives shaped by loss and mourning; early childhood sexual and physical abuse; the varied humiliations of poverty, especially with regard to children; and the inadequacies of inexpensive housing, including noise, dirt, rats, and roaches. While ethnographers are most interested in the everyday lives of the subjects of study rather than policy analysis, Robertson and Culhane also clearly demonstrate that policies on affordable housing and access to health care cannot be understood apart from mental illness, lack of childcare, and/or poor job opportunities. As a result, I found myself wanting some suggestions for future policy directions. Perhaps the best place to start is with the alternative health, social, and legal policies suggested by the women interviewed, including legalizing drugs and prostitution to create safer spaces for women, raising welfare and disability rates, and creating resources to help women get the social benefits to which they are entitled. But perhaps most moving is the plea for a more ethical and caring society, from recognizing that addressing child poverty means caring for poor mothers and valuing the labour of all mothers to recognizing that recovery from addiction is a process rather than a one-time decision.

In Plain Sight is a welcome addition to the growing literature on housing and health, and its ultimate strength lies in the respect it shows the women who were interviewed. While rooted in the distinct geography and history of Downtown Eastside Vancouver, it should be compulsory reading for anyone interested in making social policy that is attentive to the needs of women living in Canada's marginalized urban communities.

*Marine Life of the
Pacific Northwest:
A Photographic Encyclopaedia of
Invertebrates, Seaweeds
and Selected Fishes*

Andy Lamb
and Bernard P. Hanby

Madeira Park, BC:
Harbour Publishing 2005.
398 pp. Illus. \$69.95 cloth.

TONY PITCHER
University of British Columbia

THIS BOOK IS A self-confessed labour of love, and it took the authors twenty-five years working in their spare time to complete it. Beautifully produced and reasonably priced, it has over 1,700 original colour photographs of 1,400 plants and animals found along our coast from southern Alaska to central California. The book includes some seaweed photos taken by Michael W. Hawkes (UBC). In a short introduction Andy Lamb, formerly of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, now from the Vancouver Aquarium, and the professional photographer Bernard Hanby set out their rationale for producing the book (“it’s time, already”) and explicate a laudable and helpful conservation philosophy that was so evidently lacking in their former bosses.

It is difficult, however, to work out who the intended buyers of *Marine Life of the Pacific Northwest* are meant to be. I suspect that the authors, too busy being in love with these wonderful animals, did not think much about that common publishing question. Most of these animals and plants are commonly met only by scuba divers, while a subset of them

are encountered by beach and rocky shore ramblers. A few professionals need scientific identifications: these include schoolchildren and university students on field courses, reef guardians and other environmental volunteers, and technicians and scientists engaged in environmental monitoring and research. The problem with this beautiful book is that it is not obvious how it serves the needs of any of these potential purchasers.

The publisher confidently states that “the book is designed to allow the reader to recognize virtually any coastal organism that might be encountered,” but I do not think this confidence is well-founded. We can “recognize” only what we know and have met before; meeting these wonderful sea creatures for the first time, we need to find out what they are. For that, one needs a field guide, which this book could so easily have been. Indeed, the typography, introductory reference guide, and colour-coded page tips suggest that someone attempted to produce a field guide, but the rest of the production does not match that aim. Moreover, the introduction, written by the respected Murray Newman, founder of the Vancouver Aquarium, describes the book as an encyclopaedia rather than as a field guide, and I think he is dead right. The large coffee-table cloth format would be hopeless for field use, even when carried in the large trucks favoured by BC scuba divers. How is the most likely target audience expected to use this book? By comparing their own amateur snapshots with the professional photos in the book? By bringing rotting organisms home and depleting the natural environment? There are a few hints at identification in the text accompanying each photo (e.g., for a pink annelid tube worm: “graft-like

incisions around the anterior part of the head and twig-like gills" [159]), but for the most part, we have only the photo, size, and habitat to go on. For scientific purposes, unequivocal identification usually requires a dichotomous key approach or the description of unique diagnostic features. Unfortunately, neither the precise identifications required by scientists nor the synoptic field guide desired by amateurs will be well served by this book.

Marine Life of the Pacific Northwest fails (rather splendidly) as a field guide, but does it stand up, as its title would lead one to expect, as an encyclopaedia? Unfortunately, the answer is "no." What is there is marvelously documented and interestingly written, but there are, unfortunately, some obtrusive curiosities within this book. For example, the inclusion of most seaweeds, sponges, bivalves, all types of worms, sea slugs, crustaceans, and echinoderms is encouragingly complete, but we have only some jellyfish and squid, a few deep sea creatures, and, from page 361 on, one finds such an odd and incomplete assortment of BC fishes – mainly rockfish and sculpins – that one does have to ask why any fish are included at all (the authors had some lovely photographs perhaps?). Moreover, no marine mammals or sea birds are included. These omissions mean that the book cannot meet its claim to be an encyclopaedia. Again, readers will doubtless find the inclusion of an unidentified, headless fragment of a worm on page 161 intriguing, and even charming, but why is it included in the book? The labour of love factor strikes again, I fear.

The photos, the main distinguishing feature of the book, are superb. But even here one can carp a bit. For identification, the photos could do with a size scale (such as a loonie or

quarter): when one reads that most were taken with a high-end macro lens, one realizes that many of those crabs and worms could be quite small (e.g., that pink tube worm on page 159 is only eight centimetres long). The authors also congratulate themselves on not using any digital photography aids, but that may be why many of the photographs seem very flat, with the result that crucial animal bits like legs, spines, and feelers disappear into the background. The processing of visual information in our human brain is very sophisticated, and we do not perceive real animals as being flat, even when the camera sees them that way. Some digital image processing techniques can bring out features that facilitate our visual recognition, and they could have been employed judiciously to the reader's advantage.

In summary, this lovely, big, colourful, and information-packed book will doubtless attract many purchasers. I am sure it will find a home on the shelves of many professional and amateur naturalists in British Columbia, but I wonder how often this flawed encyclopaedia will actually get taken off the shelf after its purchase. There is a super field guide in here crying to be let out. *Marine Life of the Pacific Northwest* would have been much improved with stronger editorial assistance, perhaps from a mainstream international publisher that has experience with producing field guides.



*Homefront and Battlefront:
Nelson BC in World War II*

Sylvia Crooks

Vancouver: Granville Island
Publishing 2005. 228 pp. Illus. \$24.95
paper.

DUFF SUTHERLAND
Selkirk College

WHEN AUTHOR Sylvia Crooks was a three-year-old growing up in Nelson, a young man named Maurice Latornell taught her how to skate. In 1944, Latornell died during a bombing mission over Berlin. For Crooks, Latornell's death "brought home ... more than any of the newsreels or war movies, the reality of the war" (105). At the time, Crooks did not know how or where Latornell had died. However, she never forgot him and eventually decided to research his life and death, beginning by confirming the spelling of his name on the Nelson cenotaph. This project eventually evolved into *Homefront and Battlefront: Nelson, BC, in World War II*, a chronicle of the lives of all the men whose names are commemorated on the Nelson cenotaph and the impact of the war on the city. This is a thoroughly researched and poignant book that makes a useful contribution to the history of the West Kootenay region and that will be of interest to historians of British Columbia.

Each chapter of *Homefront and Battlefront* covers a year of the war, with a final chapter covering some of the men and women who survived and returned home. The method of organization effectively enables the reader to see how the course of the war affected those on the battlefronts and those on the home front in Nelson.

Casualties were relatively light during the early years of the war but then grew steadily as men from the Nelson district became involved in the heavy bombing of Germany during the latter part of the war, in the fighting in Italy, in the Normandy invasions, and, finally, in the defeat of Japan. Crooks does a good job of telling the story of pilot Hampton "Hammy" Gray, the last Canadian killed in action during the war, who died in an attack on Japanese ships in Onagawa Bay – a mission for which he was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross (VC). Gray's parents had already lost their other son, Jack, earlier in the war and their sister Phyllis's recollection of receiving the sad news about Hampton suggests the VC's limited consolation: "my parents were very proud of him for serving but it was very hard on them to lose both their sons" (169).

It is a cliché, but Crooks's portraits of the lives of the seventy young men who went to war and never came back does provide the reader with a vivid sense of the waste and loss of war. Many of the Nelson casualties were recent high school graduates who had yet to find their place in the world: some had jobs and were developing careers and families but many are described simply as nice young men who excelled at sports, sang in the choir, and signed up with their buddies. Hampton Gray signed up with his friends Peter Dewdney and Jack Diamond; they were known to friends and family as "the Three Musketeers." Peter Dewdney was the only Musketeer to survive the war. For the families, the losses were traumatic and lasting. One man noted that the death of his uncle during the war "was a dark, brooding theme in my family life, one that ebbed and flowed sporadically through time but always came up ... on Remembrance Day"

(173). More broadly, Crooks's portraits provide a window on the society and economy of the West Kootenay of the 1930s. The Nelson district casualties came not only from the city itself but also from the mining, logging, and farming communities around the lakes and rivers of the region. Often these families were of British heritage, had had direct experience of the First World War through the father, and might have recently migrated from the Prairies in search of a better life. West Kootenay had once been an extension of the American "Inland Empire," but by the 1930s it was clearly a Canadian and British region.

Homefront and Battlefront also chronicles life in Nelson during the war. Crooks relies on a careful reading of the daily press and her own and others' recollections to describe how the citizens of Nelson mobilized to support the war effort. The fundraising campaigns, the continual production of "V-Bundles," the entertainment of servicemen on leave from the Commonwealth Air Training Schools, and all the regular patriotic events support Crooks's point that Nelson engaged in a "total" war effort. She does not neglect to point out that the darker side of Nelson's wholehearted commitment to the war effort was hostility towards the Japanese Canadians interned nearby and towards the Doukhobors, who opposed war service. The most vivid descriptions of

the home front, however, focus on the way the war effort absorbed the lives of Nelson's children: comic books, toys, and games had war themes, and the children became deeply involved in the fundraising and salvaging campaigns to support the war effort. As a child, Crooks assumed that news broadcasts would come to an end when the war was over! It would have been interesting to hear more about how Nelson's families coped during the war. Crooks reports the recollection of an eleven-year-old girl whose mother sent her back to school for the afternoon after telling her at lunchtime that her father had been killed overseas. However, we do not learn any more about how the family dealt with their loss. Patrick Lane, in his recent memoir, *There Is a Season*, refers to the intense loneliness and unhappiness of his mother and other women during the war years in Nelson, when their husbands were away.¹ Lane's references to wartime Nelson are brief, but they suggest a rawer and rougher city life than emerges in *Homefront and Battlefront*. All in all, though, *Homefront and Battlefront* is an excellent and well researched work of local history that could serve as a model for similar studies on the impact of the Second World War on British Columbia's communities.

¹ Patrick Lane, *There Is a Season* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2004).