The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History

Carlos Arnaldo Schwantes

Revised and enlarged edition. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996. 568 pp. Illus., maps. US$25 paper.

BY JEREMY MOUAT, *Athabasca University*

This is an expanded version of a book that was first published eight years ago. A survey text intended principally for the undergraduate market, *The Pacific Northwest* traces a little over two centuries of European colonization and settlement in the area that now comprises the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Although one might quibble with the author's description of the volume as "short" – not an adjective many people would use to characterize a book that runs to nearly 600 pages – it is never tedious. Writing synthetic overviews is not easy and Schwantes does an excellent job, succeeding in his self-appointed task of writing an "interpretive history of the Pacific Northwest ... [that] seeks main themes, paints with broad strokes, and engages in ... responsible reductionism" (xxi). Of course, such an ambitious project offers a reviewer numerous opportunities to protest that important topics have been ignored, that the coverage is superficial, or that the complex has been made to appear straightforward. But whatever reservations one might wish to register, overall the book is remarkably thorough and evenhanded.

Schwantes divides his study into five parts. Each begins with a short biography or vignette of an individual whose life, in the author's judgment, somehow captures a sense of the times. Thus the first section, "Isolation and Empire," opens with a brief chapter on James Cook, discussing the significance of his third voyage to the region. Subsequent chapters describe "The First Pacific Northwesterners" as well as the dynamics of the fur trade, the section concluding that the era established "the role of the Pacific Northwest as a colony whose natural resources were ripe for outsiders to exploit ... [and] revealed economic attitudes and patterns that were to be replicated in the future" (79). The second part describes the first years of European settlement, from the 1840s through to the 1870s, opening with a profile of the Whitmans, a missionary couple killed in 1847. The key issues of this troubled era – the Oregon Treaty, the gold rushes, the Civil War, and race relations – receive their due in the chapters following the one on the Whitmans. This was, Schwantes argues, "a time for establishing boundaries. Not just the obvious ones like those that separated American from British territory ... but boundaries of mind and spirit as well" (142). The third section – the largest and most substantial in the book – examines the fundamental transformation described in its title, "From Frontier to Urban-Industrial Society." After a profile of Henry Villard – the person responsible for building the Northern Pacific Railroad, the region's first transcontinental – chapters examine the impact of railways, the nature of the resource economy, immigration and urbanization, and the gradual emergence of a distinctive regional culture.

The fourth section ("Progress and Its Discontents") begins with a profile of May Arkwright Hutton. A resident of the Coeur d'Alenes and author of a novel on the labour struggles of the region's hard rock miners, Hutton later became a millionaire as a result of her mining investments and tried to destroy the extant copies of her early literary work. This is followed by a very good chapter – as one might expect from this author – on organized labour, "The Commonwealth of Toil." The section then deals with some of the major themes of the period from the fin de siécle to the Depression: progressivism, the impact of the First World War, the region's shifting demographic structure, the 1930s economic collapse, and the New Deal measures. Some less obvious features of the period – for example, the origins of television and the role of the Ku Klux Klan – are also covered. The final section of the book opens with a profile of Tom McCall, governor of Oregon in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A pioneer environmentalist and advocate of controlled growth, McCall's tempestuous career is an excellent introduction to this section, with its chapters on the "Roller-Coaster Years," "The Politics of Anxiety and Affluence," and "Environment at Risk."

The book has many strengths: Schwantes is a sharp observer, and his attention never lags. His comments on the 1980s and early 1990s are as thoughtful as those in earlier sections of the narrative. He ranges over many themes – from a fascinating aside on the region's early land act (121) to the meaning and significance of Northgate Mall (439) – without ever seeming ponderous or superficial. And the book itself is well-produced, with much illuminating detail in statistical tables (in addition to an appendix subtitled "A Statistical Portrait"), some fascinating photographs (a number of which were taken by Schwantes himself), and almost no typographical errors (a phrase printed twice on 125 was the only one that caught my eye).

In a way, the book's weakness springs from its chief strength. Schwantes' confidence and his ease with the material leave one a little uneasy; there is an inexorable sense of forward movement, an assumed logic to the narrative that masks a whiggish analysis. Intentionally or not, the reader is left with the feeling that this was not just the way it happened, but the way it had to happen. Schwantes seems little interested in contingency or choices: issues are more often described than they are explained (European occupancy of the region, the subordination of Native peoples to the "pioneers," the incorporation of the region into the territory of the burgeoning United States). Nor is there much discussion of "region" or even the problem of identifying the Pacific Northwest. It appears as a given, and its genesis – or definition, or invention – is never really discussed.

I suspect few scholars could write an overview as ambitious as this one and please everyone. While the treatment of some difficult historiographical issues is not all that satisfactory, this remains a very good book. It would be an excellent text for an undergraduate course on the region's history or, indeed, for any reader wishing an intelligent introduction to the subject.

The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism and Geographic Change

Cole Harris

Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997. 314 pp. Illus., maps. $24.95 paper, $65.00 cloth.

By Tina Loo
McGill University and Simon Fraser University

A little more than thirty years ago, a book called *The Seigneurial System in Early Canada* (1966) appeared that set the terms for the debate over the nature of New World societies in this country. Last year, the same author produced another book that will do the same thing. The author is Cole Harris, and his latest book is *The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism and Geographic Change*. These two volumes, not to mention his work on the *Historical Atlas of Canada,* are testimony to Harris's distinguished scholarly career and his contribution to our understanding of early Canada. Though they are about two distinct places, both *The Seigneurial System* and *The Resettlement of British Columbia* are animated by Harris's ongoing interest in the relationship between land and power in the New World and the social relations that grew out of it.

Harris's work has always been notable for its eloquent argument. While he has always been able to go beyond the empirical to the broadly conceptual, this new book does so in a different way, for it is shaped by his reading of a diverse and complex international theoretical literature on power. Unlike his early work on New France and Lower Canada, his latest contribution locates the non-Native settlement of British Columbia explicitly in the context of the expansion of European imperial and commercial power, a process that was at once brutal and subtle. Harris seeks to understand the process and meanings of colonization, which he sees as the displacement of Indigenous peoples and the remaking of space that was formerly theirs into an immigrant society. The specificities of place are not lost amidst the theorizing, however. Indeed, Harris contends that the very factors that made the European settlement of British Columbia different from that in other North American places are what make study of British Columbia so useful to understanding a process like colonization. Work like this, which uses the local to illuminate a global phenomenon, exemplifies the potential of regional history.

Read together, the essays that comprise this book (most of which were published before and appear here in somewhat modified form) make the argument that geographical change was both coincident to colonization and the means by which it was achieved. For Harris, the displacement of Indigenous peoples and the subsequent resettlement of British Columbia did not have to wait until colonies were formally established, nor was it a matter of armies, battles, or treaties. Colonization was certainly violent, but it was not just a matter of physical violence and force. The "ecological imperialism" of disease (Chapter 1), to use Alfred Crosby's term, paved the way for fur trade concerns

not simply to set up shop, but also to govern. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) was a particularly important "proto-colonial presence" (34), establishing a form of European rule over both Natives and non-Natives which, though founded on fear and violence, relied on symbolic gesture and theatre (Chapter 2). This was what Harris, following Michel Foucault, calls "sovereign power," power that hinged on ability to take away life. Unlike Europe, "sovereign power" in British Columbia existed without a sovereign and the accompanying discourse of rights. Nevertheless, backed by commercial interest and a discourse of efficiency and secure profit, it worked to produce the same result: control over a subject population.

As important as sovereign power was to establishing European control, the resettlement of British Columbia turned on "disciplinary power," the power to manage life, to create a way of seeing and acting in the world. For Foucault, disciplinary power was exemplified and achieved by the asylum, penitentiary, and hospital; and, for those who have applied his insights, by the school as well.

According to Harris, in British Columbia disciplinary power rested on the land system (Chapters 3 and 4). To me, this is the heart of Harris's argument, the core of his contribution, for it is the part of the book in which the links between colonization and geographical change are most visible and clearly articulated. Colonial power, as exemplified by the land system, worked by remaking the landscape, turning it into a tangle of survey lines, water rights, pre-emptions, townsites, and railway reserves – transforming it into a commodity to produce other commodities, particularly agricultural ones (Chapter 8).

The land system should not, however, be thought of simply as a set of rules that facilitated agriculture, but as a form of cultural practice. It was a whole way of thinking about land as a commodity that was centred on the idea and ideal of individual ownership. This in turn shaped how people related to each other, what their rights and obligations were, how freely they could move about the landscape, where they could live, and how they should live. Such a system had particularly important implications for Aboriginal peoples, "impos[ing] a spatial discipline with a profound capacity to modify Native life" (101). Indeed, by 1881, Harris argues, "Native power over the Lower Mainland and, to a considerable extent, earlier Native lifeworlds had collapsed" (102).

As the 1881 census shows (Chapter 5), however, the Lower Mainland was not British Columbia. The resettlement of the province was uneven: in certain parts of British Columbia – particularly in the north – Aboriginals remained visible and vital. Their presence, along with that of a small but significant population of Asian peoples, created the context in which European settlers forged an identity as Whites, thus ensuring that cultural diversity in the province would be defined racially (a theme elaborated on in Chapter 9).

If British Columbia was a "segmented society," it was also one where life was lived locally. Capitalism remade the landscape, giving birth to work camps, resource towns, and service centres like those around Idaho Peak in southeastern British Columbia (Chapter 7). While it linked those scattered settlements to distant markets, capitalism did so without creating very much in the way of internal cohesion. A staple economy combined

with British Columbia's relative isolation and rugged geography created attenuated societies emblematic not only of British Columbia, but also of the Canadian experience.

If the lack of internal cohesion in British Columbia had social implications, it also had political ones. "This ragged place," to borrow Terry Glavin's phrase, made governance exceedingly difficult; however, what is striking about British Columbia is just how quickly distances were surmounted by developments in transportation and communication, which facilitated the exercise of power (Chapter 6). Nonetheless, though many parts of the province were linked, British Columbia didn't really emerge as a reasonably well-articulated provincial society until the mid-twentieth century.

This is an important book, characterized by its broad, sometimes breath-taking, intellectual and empirical sweep. As is the case when covering lots of ground quickly, however, the ride is sometimes a bit bumpy. As the subtitle indicates, this is a book about colonial power and colonization and the centrality of geography to both. For Harris, colonization is fundamentally a relationship between Natives and newcomers, which is about land, and which is mediated by the land system.

Of course, it was not a relationship of equals; and Harris, like so many of us who have written about Native-White relations, has been forced to grapple with two countervailing pressures: the need, on the one hand, to acknowledge Aboriginal resistance and agency, and the need, on the other, to recognize their subjugation. The results, not surprisingly, are somewhat mixed. Though the book claims to explore colonization using post-colonial theory, there are very few "Native voices" in it – something Harris himself admits. The essays are not concerned with unsettling the discourse of colonialism using the different "subject positions" of Aboriginal peoples, nor is there any exploration of how Aboriginal peoples might have appropriated, transformed, or subverted the culture of the colonizers for their own purposes – two hallmarks of post-colonial literature. In fact, this is a book largely centred on the European colonizers and one in which Native peoples, despite a few examples to the contrary, emerge as victims, peoples pushed relatively quickly to the margins of BC society.

Despite this, Harris still has much to tell us about the relationship between Natives and newcomers, as he does in the first half of the book. But when he moves to discussing the newcomers alone, to exploring the "immigrant society" that supplanted the Indigenous one, he is less convincing. While geographical change remains foregrounded, the connections to colonization, which are so clearly and forcefully developed in the first four chapters of the book, increasingly fade away.

Three examples make my point. In "The Struggle with Distance" (Chapter 6), which is in many ways one of the best pieces in the book because of its integration of theory and empirical data, Harris outlines how developments in transportation and communication from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century knit British Columbia together and, in so doing, created both the opportunity and the means for state surveillance and control. Though he suggests that this "time-space compression" must have transformed the lifeworlds of the province's Indigenous peoples and

effected their further colonization, the idea remains unexplored. In the chapter on Idaho Peak (Chapter 7), Native peoples fade even further into the background. That essay, while wonderfully evocative and insightful, presents us with a typology of the kinds of societies created by a staples economy – something that is only tenuously linked to the issue of Native dispossession. Finally, though the piece on farming and rural life (Chapter 8) begins with the assertion that "agriculture was a culmination of processes of imperialism and colonialism that began with the first explorers, continued through the fur trade years, and reached a conclusion when ordinary people came into the province, took up land, made it into farms, and considered them home" (219-20), that assertion is not developed. Instead, Harris and his co-author describe the transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture in the province from 1881 to 1941 with almost no reference to its impact on Aboriginal peoples.

Focusing on the relationship between Natives and Whites, as Harris did in the first part of the book, kept the issue of power in the foreground. However, as Natives fade from the discussion in the latter part of the book, the analysis of power also becomes somewhat diffuse and diminished. From a fairly sharply drawn portrait of the HBC's sovereign power and the disciplinary power imposed by the colonial and early provincial state's land system, Harris moves to a much more impressionistic rendering of "capital" and its transformative effects on both the landscape and its peoples, and its role in creating an immigrant society. Though he acknowledges that capitalism created new relationships with the land and forged new relationships among people, those relationships are not discussed with reference to class, nor is the relationship of class to colonization explored. In addition, though the state and its role in colonization (through the land system) is clearly drawn out in the first part of the book, its subsequent role in the twentieth century – in the resettlement period – is unclear.

Despite all of this, *The Resettlement of British Columbia* is, as I said, a provocative and important book by someone who has given a great deal of thought to the relationship between land and power in Canada and, in so doing, has also given us all a great deal to work with and think about.

The Greater Vancouver Book: An Urban Encyclopaedia

Chuck Davis, Editor

Vancouver: Linkman, 1997. 882 pp. Illus., maps. $39.95 paper.

The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened?

Naomi Pauls and Charles Campbell

Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1997, 199 pp. Illus. $19.95 paper.

BY JONATHAN BAKER, J.D., *Vancouver*

Chuck Davis is a man of prodigious talents. In addition to being a great limericist, Davis is a journalist, a television personality, and a compulsive collector of facts. *The Greater Vancouver Book* is a tribute to both his love of history and his administrative talents. This urban encyclopaedia boasts more than 200 writers and nearly 400 articles covering history, environment, politics, clocks, boats, personalities – the works.

The scope is prodigious and intriguing. Some of the best historical pieces in the book are by Davis himself, who applies an investigative reporter's discipline. The problem with a few of the items by others is that this discipline is sometimes lacking.

Gillian Lunde's history of Science World begins in the middle. She starts with a deserved tribute to Barbara Brink and the Junior League of Vancouver but suggests that the dream of establishing a science centre began in 1977. Science World actually began in 1973. The fathers of the organization were Maurice Egan and Ernie Fladell who, with funding obtained by a Local Initiatives Program (LIP) grant, set up an Arts and Sciences Centre. A serious omission is the role of Haig Farris. Without Farris's herculean efforts, the institution would not exist.

Catherine Gouley's history of Granville Island appropriately acknowledges the role of Ron Basford, the federal minister who steered the project through Cabinet, and Russel Brink, the staff person who reported to the Granville Island Trust. She should have mentioned the western head of CMHC, King Ganong, and the first trust, all of whom had far more to do with the concept and its implementation than is ever acknowledged. Architect Norm Hotson is generally credited with the concept. It was, however, Ganong and the trust who gave Hotson his instructions to come up with a scheme that preserved the road system, the scale, and the industrial character of the island.

The book provides an impressive chronicle of cultural institutions. There are, however, some major omissions. For example, there is virtually no mention of the Vancouver Academy of Music. Scant reference is paid to the process by which federal LIP grants, conceived by the Trudeau government to create municipal leaf-raking jobs, were used to develop cultural programs. The Vancouver Social Planning Department was the first in Canada to use these funds to make work for unemployed artists. The money was administered by an

advisory committee that included Jack Shadbolt, Arthur Erickson, Tony Emory, and critics Max Wyman and Christopher Defoe. Out of this came Canada's first Art Bank, the Contemporary Art Gallery, the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, Science World, the Children's Festival, Tamanhus Theatre, City Stage, and the first *Vancouver Book* itself – to mention a few.

Donna-Jean MacKinnon's biographical sketch of Vancouver's mayors furnishes an interesting look at the long list of people occupying that largely ceremonial position. A reference to some of the top bureaucrats would have been even more interesting. Cecil Green, the founder of Texas Instruments, once explained in a Science World speech that he intended to locate that company in British Columbia but had so much trouble getting permits from the city engineer of the day that he and his wife hopped in their Model A Ford and went off to Texas. Given their importance it is curious that there is no mention of the city managers who have actually run the city. The index makes no reference to Fritz Bowers, who became the city manager in the mid-seventies, or to joint managers Gerald Sutton-Brown and Lorne Ryan, both of whom held the city in an iron grip until Mayor Art Phillips brought in his own cultural revolution.

Ernie Fladell contributes an article on festivals. He covers his own substantial contributions admirably but leaves the impression that everything started the year he was hired to run the Children's Festival which, in fact, had been started two years earlier. Very little mention is made of the Vancouver International Festival, which brought in virtuoso artists from around the world at a time when Vancouver had about five good restaurants and mostly amateur theatre.

The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened? chronicles the transition of the *Georgia Straight* from an underground newspaper to Vancouver's alternative paper. One gets the impression from Part One (1967-1972) that only the unreadable happened in the early seventies. Dr Eugene Schoenfeld's syndicated columns, in which he answers questions such as whether "to attempt to become an auto-fellatioist – would be stretching things too far," are as good as it gets. Alderman Harry Rankin contributes a letter in 1967 – "What Makes a Hippie" – in which he tries to figure it all out. "This 'opting out' doesn't make sense to me," he says earnestly. "I believe we can only make society better by chipping in and doing our share." I scanned the early years for something quotable. An anonymous letter-writer reviewing a satirical effort entitled "Anne Panders" described it as "unbelievably juvenile ejaculation." That pretty well sums up Part One (1967-1972).

The paper's adolescent years include a mix of writers such as Stan Persky and Tom Shandel. "What Makes Bruce Eriksen Run," by John Faustmann offers a few insights into the late councillor. Bob Mercer's piece on the opening of the Arthur Eriksen court house, and his prediction that after a year everyone would hate it, is at least readable. A column by none other than Doug Collins of *North Shore News* notoriety excoriates artists on the grant circuit as welfare bums. Ho hum.

Then it happened. The *Straight*, in about 1986, metamorphosed into one of Canada's best alternative papers. Strangely, the collection does not include any of the commentaries by its

staffer Charlie Smith, who is a distinguished journalist, investigative reporter, and analyst by any standard. John Master's. "Stupidville," dealing with the 1994 Robson Street Riot, is an intelligent piece of writing and is in marked contrast to the *Straight*'s coverage of the Gastown riots about twenty years earlier. The "Green Shadow," by Andrew Struthers, earns comparison with columns by Mordecai Richler. He describes his arrest and subsequent trial during a Clayoquot protest. While he is asleep in his underwear the police suddenly arrive.

> I sat up. Right in front of me a Zodiac hit the beach. Five cops in bright red survival suits spilled out. Still groggy from sleep, I ran into the bush wearing only my underpants.
>
> I had imagined the scene of my arrest very differently. Back in town, I'd pictured it this away: me and the police would talk it over, then they'd nod and slap the cuffs on me in a matter of fact way. Since I'd arrived at the camp, a second fantasy had eclipsed the first. In it, I was dragged from under the bumper of a logging truck while cameras rolled and loggers cursed and my eco-buddies sang "One Tin Soldier" in the background. But this was like nothing I'd ever imagined. I was being chased through the bush in my underpants, and not a camera in sight.
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> As I marvelled at the difference between fantasy and reality, I noticed Pierre, the local cop, coming through the trees. He was tracking me, just like a Mountie in some old movie. Then I thought, "Hey ... he really *is* a Mountie. And I'm his man!" I was trapped in the dark underbelly of the Canadian Dream.

Fur Traders from New England: The Boston Men in the North Pacific, 1787-1800

Briton C. Busch and Barry M. Gough, Editors

Spokane: Clark, 1997. Northwest Historical Series 18. 137 pp. US$29.50 cloth.

By James P. Delgado, *Vancouver Maritime Museum*

The maritime fur trade was the first European commercial incursion into British Columbia's waters. Beginning in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the trade opened the Northwest Coast of North America to a Pacific Rim and Atlantic economic system. It also had a profound and lasting impact on the region's Native inhabitants, who were active partners in the trade.

The maritime fur trade of the Northwest Coast has been the subject of a number of works in both the United States and Canada, most recently James R. Gibson's *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods* (1992) and Richard Somerset Mackie's *Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific, 1793-1843* (1997).

In *Fur Traders from New England: The Boston Men in the North Pacific,*

1787-1800, editors Briton C. Busch and Barry M. Gough have annotated and presented one of the first histories of the trade, written by mariner William Dane Phelps just a few decades after the events he recorded. Phelps's authorship of the account is for the first time affirmed by Busch, a scholar who has worked with two other Phelps manuscripts.

The account, exceedingly rare, was originally entitled "Some of the Early Men of the North-West Coast, by Webfoot" and was anonymously published in March and April of 1869 in the Boston *Commercial Bulletin*. The newspaper account was copied by hand and placed in the hands of historian Hubert Howe Bancroft sometime between 1869 and 1872, and today it resides in the collections of the Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley. The manuscript played a significant role in the historiography of the maritime fur trade and was drawn from heavily by historians Bancroft, R.S. Kuykendall, and Morison. It is, as editors Busch and Gough attest, "among the great texts of American maritime enterprise" (9). It is also a significant work and a necessary addition to the library of any Northwest scholar.

Following the voyages of Cook and Vancouver, the coast north of the Columbia River was in large measure abandoned by Britain. American traders, many of them hailing from Boston and surrounding Massachusetts ports, dominated the maritime fur trade in these waters – so much so that the Chinook trade term for Americans was "Boston Men." The listing of vessels engaged in the trade on the Coast, assembled by William Sturgis and James Gilchrist Swan (and reproduced in this volume as appendices), also attest to the predominance of Boston. It was not until after 1825, and the concerted efforts of the Hudson's Bay Company, that American domination of the coastal trade was broken.

As the editors note in their introduction, the story of these American maritime fur traders, their voyages and commercial transactions as well as their adventures and misadventures, was kept in logs and journals that were business documents that "contained precious secrets of trade advantages and corporate alliances" (11). It was not until after the trade had closed that Phelps, as one of the trade's first historians, could borrow the logs and journals of the Boston men and write his pioneering account. What makes Phelps's account all the more important to later historians is that the journals that he drew from in writing his history either have not survived or not found their way into a public library or archive.

Phelps's history is a nationalistic one that offers little context for the activities of the Boston men in relation to the Russian or English fur traders. Nor does it, as one would expect, offer much on the relationship between the traders and the First Nations, particularly the often heavy-handed methods employed by some of the former to induce "favourable" terms in their commercial transactions with the latter. It is, however, an essential, nearly contemporary account that has until now not been available in book form. Professors Busch and Gough, both accomplished maritime scholars with considerable experience in the editing and annotation of manuscripts, have done the profession a favour both in making Phelps's account available to a wider audience and in placing it, through a cogent, well researched, and well written introduction and carefully selected appendices, into a historiographical context.

Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific, 1793-1843

Richard Somerset Mackie

Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997. 420 pp. Illus., maps. $75 cloth, $29.95 paper.

Traders' Tales: Narratives of Cultural Encounters in the Columbia Plateau, 1807-1846

Elizabeth Vibert

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.
366 pp. Illus., maps. US$29.95 cloth.

BY ROBERT KUBICEK, *University of British Columbia*

The migration and mingling of peoples on the frontier, defined as a zone of interaction, is an essential theme in the formation of empires generally, and of the British Empire in particular. Extensive zones where migrants came in the nineteenth century to dominate host peoples were to be found in Africa, the Americas, and Australasia. The methods and perspectives developed to study the interactions between intruders and Native peoples of the post-imperial period (i.e., after c. 1960) are, not surprisingly, rather different from those employed when empire was in fashion. Then the migrant's view got pride of place; now it is the host's that is stressed.

Elizabeth Vibert concentrates, though not exclusively, upon the previously little-studied Plateau region consisting of the Columbia River and Fraser River systems. Richard Mackie's zone of interaction includes the interior Plateau region but also Pacific shores from Alaska to California and even Hawaii. Both focus on the early nineteenth century (c. 1790-1850), an intrusive phase in which migrants were less numerous than the host peoples and in which they had not imposed military and political domination. The migrants in this instance were not government officials, missionaries, or settlers but traders, particularly employees of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). The records these traders left, used extensively by both, are the key source for their studies.

Though the authors use similar sources, comprehend overlapping zones of interaction, and work on the same time period, their works differ in several respects. Mackie writes historical geography and, largely, to reassess the intruder. He is influenced by the work of E.E. Rich on the HBC and by Harold Innis on the fur trade. He identifies with the traders and, though not uncritical, is essentially appreciative of their accomplishments. Vibert, on the other hand, situates her cultural history in post-colonial discourse. Critical, if not suspicious, of "white, male, British, and middle-class" observers (4), she is inclined to see the traders' assessments as self-serving and more self-revealing than

insightful of others. At the same time she stresses the need to discover the Native experience, pointing out, for example, how the world the traders created in their records could, when used as evidence, lead in the present-day to grossly distorted assessments of Indigenous culture in court cases dealing with land claims.

From his perspective Mackie stresses the diverse activities of the HBC. These did not centre exclusively on furs. In bases on the lower Columbia and Fraser, salmon were processed (salted in barrels) and timber was sawed for export to Hawaii, where demand was stimulated by US whalers. One enterprising factor there sent a consignment of whale bone by Company ship to England, where it fetched a tidy profit. A map, entitled "The Pacific Rim" (156), both illuminates and exaggerates the extent of these activities. It is part of the evidence Mackie assembles to assert what others have largely ignored – that HBC officials "formed a regional economy on the Pacific coast, an economy largely independent of the east of the Rockies" (312). Their various impressive initiatives, including the systematic deployment of the steamer the *Beaver*, are painstakingly considered. However, the HBC's multifarious activities, though they resulted in some commercial success, did not, much to the author's regret, "translate into a British diplomatic victory," since Americans won the "political war of 1846" (314). The lower Columbia was lost to the British Empire and to what would become the colony cum province of British Columbia.

What role did Natives play in the Company's commerce? Recognizing the existence of a Native exchange system featuring *haiqua* (shells) and slaves, Mackie sees the Company committed to fitting into it. Exchange rates featured blankets calibrated in terms of beaver skins. Such exchanges were apparently seen to be advantageous by Natives, though the author observes that the European traders frequently remarked on the "absurd cheapness" with which provisions, trade goods, and labour were obtained (289). Provisions, he further points out, were often the result of women's work. Reference is also made to factors labelling the Natives as indolent, but the contradiction between that judgment and the essential role they played in the Company's commercial success is not engaged. "An immense creation and transfer of wealth occurred whereby commodities obtained from tens of thousands of Native people were converted in European and Pacific marketplaces into hard cash and handsome dividends that went directly to a few dozen Company shareholders, governors, and officers" (288-89). Mackie further notes much mingling, which facilitated material exchanges: "HBC employees of different ranks and backgrounds married or lived with Native and Metis women of all classes and cultures, from slaves to nobles" (308).

Given his approach, we need not expect Mackie to probe deeply the impressions the traders recorded of these economic and social encounters. Vibert does. She sorts out the names of groups of Natives that traders adopted, pointing out that they could be inconsistent with how these societies were organized by custom and manners. A recurrent theme in frontier studies alludes to the migrants' well-developed ranking of those encountered. The traders were no exceptions. "Fishing tribes" were indolent, "hunting tribes" industrious – an assessment derived from the traders' own identi-

fication with the hunt as a particularly "manly pursuit." Among Plateau societies the Salish Flathead (of what is now northwestern Montana) were the traders' favourites not only because they accounted for a substantial part of the Company's fur intake, but also because they were both buffalo hunters and courageous warriors, as was revealed in their conflicts with the neighbouring Plains Blackfoot. Natives, their nobility notwithstanding, were prone to acts of savagery. Compared to the traders' own notions of economic activity, Indigenous resource management was wanting.

By privileging Natives in interpreting traders' tales, the author shows traders' judgments to be quite misleading. Gift-exchange ceremonies, integral to Native social relations, were not always so recognized by traders even when they were recipients. The role of women in these societies often escaped them. Nor did they grasp the beliefs and practices Natives had fashioned, such as the use of prophecy, to cope with cataclysmic disease (i.e., smallpox epidemics that had preceded the traders onto the Plateau). Nor did traders understand the selective use to which Natives put introduced technologies. Plateau groups saw the gun more as a tool to cope with collisions with Plains adversaries than as a means to better pursue the hunt. Goods acquired were used for purposes "that transcended ... basic 'utilitarian' values" (279). Their possession achieved prestige; their gift-exchange fostered peaceful relations. At the same time the peoples of the Columbia Interior had not become dependent on the traders. They were, as others have stressed in the literature on the fur trade elsewhere in North America, active agents in the exchange. Vibert concludes, then, that the traders' verdicts contradicted, rebutted, or ignored their own observations. As "a highly educated, White, middle-class woman in the 1990s" (5) "unpacking" the tales left by the traders, Vibert recognizes she is not likely to provide definitive insights into Native attitudes and adaptations on the frontier in Plateau country in the early 1800s. But she thinks she may have provided illuminating glimpses.

These works, despite their differences – one shaped by an older perspective and the other by a newer one – do have one thing in common: excellent maps rich with geographical, cultural, and linguistic information as well as useful illustrations.

Aboriginal Workers

By Ann McGrath and Kay Saunders, Editors, with Jackie Huggins

Special Issue of *Labour History* 69. Sydney: Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Faculty of Economics, University of Sydney, 1995. 233 pp. Subscriptions: Individual, Australian $30, Instutions, Australian $60.

Aboriginal Labour and the Cattle Industry: Queensland from White Settlement to the Present

Dawn May

Cambridge and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 242 pp. US$59.95 cloth.

Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930

Rolf Knight

Revised edition. Vancouver: New Star, 1996. 397 pp. Illus. $24 paper.

By Dianne Newell, *University of British Columbia*

With a forthrightness more characteristic of Australian than Canadian scholars, historians Ann McGrath and Kay Saunders argue in their edited collection, *Aboriginal Workers,* that Australia's national history has rarely allowed space for the history of Aboriginal work. They suggest that the relative silence of historians on the issue of Aboriginal work and workers effectively props up an enduring racial stereotype of Aborigines as incapable of or unwilling to "work" away from their traditional communities. This racial stereotype is an enduring legacy of the imperial project.

McGrath and Saunders suggest that labour historians could have taken the lead in overcoming such racial stereotypes but failed to do so. However devoted they may have been to workers' causes, Australian labour historians have had trouble accepting the idea of Aboriginal workers. Whether by their silence on the subject of Aboriginal workers or their misguided attempts to explain why Aborigines did not work, labour historians have added to the larger ignorance (the "great Australian silence" [2]) of Aboriginal history and race relations. More specifically, they have, in effect, prevented explorations of Aboriginal workers' resistance and accommodation, their adaptability, the diversity of the work performed, and racial interactions in the workplace, then and now.

It is, therefore, fitting that McGrath and Saunders chose a special issue of

Labour History, which is the premier journal of labour and social history in Australasia, as a showcase for recent explorations into the history of Aboriginal work and workers. This is a compelling collection of revisionist scholarship for anyone interested in labour history or Aboriginal history in any industrial country. Of special note is the opening historiographical essay, "Working for the White People," by Ann Cuthroys and Clive Moore. The rest of the collection treats Aboriginal work in a dizzying variety of areas: pastoral industries, sports, the sex trade, domestic service, military service and wartime labour, the public sector, business, and the creative arts. Significant attention is paid to pastoralism, a widely dispersed economic activity that prevailed from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1960s; to the post-Second World War era, with its rapidly changing political context in which Indigenous peoples everywhere fought for economic self-sufficiency and cultural survival; and to female workers. In this regard, the individual essays by Peggy Brock on pastoral stations and reserves in South and Central Australia, by McGrath on images of Aboriginal labour and sexuality, and by Saunders on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander labour in Northern Australia during the Second World War are exemplary.

Of the diverse forms of, mainly low-wage, employment open to some Australian Aboriginal peoples, stock production and domestic work on pastoral stations and reserves have received the greatest attention from historians and anthropologists, who have produced a half-dozen monographs on the subject in the past decade. The latest volume published is Dawn May's *Aboriginal Labour and the Cattle Industry*. In this industry, it was possible for Aboriginal peoples to remain on familiar territory, to be highly mobile, and to establish a symbiotic relationship with the pastoralists. May documents the struggle of White settlers to establish a cattle industry in Queensland and demonstrates the indispensability of Aboriginal men and women to that goal. Aboriginal pastoralists were the invisible pioneers who, under colonization, lost control of their lands and labour to the new economic order in which they were forced to participate. Although she uses sources and an approach that reveal more about state intervention and the activities of the White pastoralists than they do about Aboriginal workers, the remarkable, if harrowing, story of Aboriginal workers comes through. It is a history of accommodation and resistance, coercion and conflict, and terror, then eventual movement towards independence for Aboriginal peoples. The book's strength rests in its detail and excellent appendices, which provide estimates on the number of Aboriginal workers in the cattle industry of Queensland and locations of cattle properties there. Significant, too, is May's willingness to address contemporary issues of Native title. In the changing legal climate since 1970, a few Aboriginal people and communities in Queensland have been able to purchase cattle stations and take over the management of national parks, thus opening the possibility of pursuing more traditional forms of land use and control.

Until recently, the only monograph devoted to a history of Aboriginal labour in Canada was Rolf Knight's *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1848-1930*, first published in 1978. The original edition offered a provocative

overview of White-Indian relations to 1930 in British Columbia, a resource-rich province with, historically, the highest and most culturally diverse concentration of Indians in Canada. Knight, an anthropologically trained labour historian, challenged the old assumptions and conclusions of previous ethnographies and works of history, which treated Indians in British Columbia simply as part of the pre-European past. He wanted to counter Robin Fisher's 1977 historical study, *Contact and Conlict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, which alleges that after the end of the age of fur enterprise in British Columbia, Indians were reduced to irrelevance in the industrial economy of incoming White settlers. Knight refused either to place Indians on a pedestal or to see them as helpless victims, although in subjecting Indian workers to a class-based analysis Knight seemed to err in the opposite direction. Knight culled existing published and unpublished studies and the annual reports of the Department of Indian Affairs to demonstrate that Indians were active participants in industrializing British Columbia, which until at least the 1930s demanded seasonal labour in temporary resource work camps and company towns. And he argues that in participating in construction, fishing and fish processing, farming, forestry, mining, transportation, and cottage and reserve industries, BC Indians were not simply following their "natural" inclinations and traditional activities: they were operating within entirely new structures.

Aptly named an informal history, the 1978 edition of *Indians at Work* is a polemic, a hastily produced synthesis written to counter Fisher's then recently published history of White-Indian relations in British Columbia. It was a cheap product of a struggling local leftist press that possessed limited marketing ability. The pages and binding disintegrated at a touch. The illustrations were a mess. The essential documentation for statements of fact and conclusions was hit-and-miss. By the early 1980s, it was impossible to find a copy in bookstores. Despite its poor quality and inaccessibility, Knight's insights and arguments were so fresh and thoughtful that the book gathered a strong following over the next two decades. I was one of many fans.

For many that championed the original book, including BC First Nations, the recently published revised edition comes as a disappointment: It has the same old title but a very different message. The thrust of Knight's revisions to the eighteen-year-old book signal his opposition to the BC government's recent recognition of an Aboriginal right and willingness to undertake Native land claims negotiations. He laments that at the time he wrote the original version of *Indians at Work*, "any policy that required the transfer of large blocks of land and other public resources to exclusive Indian title seemed utter fantasy" (327). One wonders where Knight was when the Supreme Court of Canada's 1973 ruling on the landmark *Calder* case, a long-standing land claim of the Nishga of British Columbia, established the possibility that unextinguished Aboriginal rights existed in Canada. This possibility immediately led to the revision of federal policy on claims and a promise to negotiate with Indians. By and large the modern claims process has been remarkably ineffective south of the 60th parallel. This failure is deeply felt in British Columbia, where most First Nations never signed treaties.

Knight's opposition to Native claims will not be immediately apparent to readers, who will instead learn from his preface to the new edition that he is neutral on the subject: "None of the discussion presented in this book is intended to bear upon contemporary Native claims, one way or another. None of it was gathered with that enterprise in mind and none of it is intended for such use" (xii). He writes that his revisions are "trivial," laced with "a degree of irreverence," limited to modifications of "certain passages" and the occasional addition of "new information," "but basically that account remains as originally written" (xi). Nevertheless, the author's sharp opinions and his discussions of both old and new research on Native studies are tucked into the text and endnotes of every chapter. He criticizes or trivializes the work of scholars such as Wayne Suttles, who have been influential in promoting Native people in the courts, and boosts the expertise of researchers such as Duncan Stacey, who work on behalf of the Crown against Native interests. By the final pages of the new edition of *Indians at Work,* Knight's opposition to Native title and self-government becomes a rant against the "Native Agenda" of ethnic-based claims, which he attributes to the recent emergence of a Native middle class and non-Indians who support that agenda (326-28).

The histories of Aboriginal work considered in this review reinforce my impression that it is impossible to discuss meaningfully Native economic and labour history without raising the issue of Aboriginal title. The landmark ruling on Aboriginal title handed down by the Supreme Court of Canada in the case of *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* in December 1997 places the Aboriginal peoples of Canada in the strongest position ever to claim ownership and use of their ancestoral lands. Tradition holds that the significance of this Canadian ruling will also be felt in Australia.

A Persistent Spirit: Towards Understanding Aboriginal Health in British Columbia

Peter H. Stephenson, Susan J. Elliott, Leslie T. Foster, and Jill Harris, Editors

Canadian Western Geographical Series 31, Victoria: University of Victoria, 1995 (distributed through UBC Press). 390 pp., $25 paper.

By Mary-Ellen Kelm
University of Northern British Columbia

A Persistent Spirit is a collection of twelve essays written by a range of authors, including community health officers, government statisticians, private consultants, academics, and psychotherapists. Peter Stephenson and Susan Elliott state simply that the intention of the book "is to inform, to raise awareness of Aboriginal health issues, and to point

the way toward increased understanding and response to issues of Aboriginal health through various ways of knowing and doing" (iii). Certainly, this collection informs. Together the chapters indicate the nature and future direction of empirical research into First Nations health and health care.

About half of *A Persistent Spirit* is devoted to delineating the nature and causes of First Nations health problems. Beginning with Steven Acheson's overview of the demographic and epidemiological impact of contact, subsequent chapters present literally reams of information to show the negative ways in which Aboriginal bodies have been affected by sustained involvement with Europeans. Now, long after diseases like smallpox and measles have slashed Aboriginal populations, epidemics of abuse, suicide, and diabetes are stalking the First Nations with deadly persistence. Chapters drawing on morbidity and mortality statistics, teasing out the quantifiable characteristics of suicide-prone communities, or documenting the rise of diabetes and cancer as killers in Aboriginal communities provide a wealth of data disproving any naive claims that the First Nations are not disadvantaged in intensely real and verifiable ways by our society.

The view of the First Nations that emerges from these chapters is indeed depressing: the suicide rate in British Columbia was 50 per cent higher among Natives than non-Natives in the 1980s; the mortality rate for status men and women was twice the rate of that for the rest of the population; and the death rate among status Aboriginal children was over four times higher than that for other children in the province (72). These statistics speak loudly, perhaps too loudly, talking over First Nations lives that belie these numbers, that challenge standard epidemiological interpretation.

Take for example the conclusion that "birth statistics ... [as] health indicators are much poorer for Status Indians than the rest of British Columbia ... [having] more of the following health risk factors: teenage mothers; large families at younger ages; low birth weight babies; preterm babies and high birth weight babies" (90). Yet much of the evidence on First Nations maternity in this chapter suggests that these "risk" factors do not seem to obtain for the status population. Though teenage pregnancy, in particular, is defined as "risky" based on studies involving the non-Native population, Aboriginal teenage mothers are less likely to have low birth-weight infants than their "elderly" (i.e., over thirty-five years old) Native or non-Native teenage counterparts (59). Similarly, Aboriginal teenage mothers are less likely to lose their babies to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome than studies of the syndrome based on non-Native population would predict (71). All of this seems to suggest that teenage pregnancy may be less risky for the First Nations than for the rest of the province. Perhaps it would be more useful, then, to study what we might learn from Aboriginal communities in lessening the risk to non-Native teenagers and their infants.

In general, rates of improved Aboriginal health outlined in this and other chapters are considered to be "masking" the differences in health status between First and Second Nations in this province. It may also be, however, that statistics elucidating these differences may mask instances where the First Nations are not the example of physiological or socio-economic pathology. In this way, such

statistics actually help constitute that pathology rather than simply describe it. None of the essays look closely at the ways in which they themselves construct Aboriginal people as essentially unwell and, thus, contribute to the ennui that surrounds discussions of First Nations health.

Fortunately, much of the rest of the book, which deals with ways in which First Nations are dealing with continuing health problems, is more culturally aware, more focused on doing rather than surveying. Hopkinson, Stephenson, and Turner provide a welcome hands-on description of the Nuxalk Nation's work to restore the availability of traditional foods to its people. Allan Wade's article on resistance knowledge and therapy focuses on the practical efforts to heal the trauma of residential schooling experiences without utilizing the disempowering concepts and techniques of traditional psychotherapy. The best chapter is Simon Read's, documenting the remarkable efforts and successes of the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation as it gradually takes control over its health care system. He writes in a forthright manner about the ways in which internalized colonialism and continued government parsimony and control inhibit First Nations efforts at creating Aboriginally centred, yet hybridized, autonomous health care systems. This chapter and that on the Cowichan experience of health care provision take us beyond bemoaning poor health and into the arena of action.

In 1993, John O'Neill, the rapporteur of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Round Table on Aboriginal Health and Social Issues, identified several themes of that discussion. He entitled theme number seven as "Practice Before Policy (or, Just Do It!)." In doing so, he noted First Nations frustration with the rate of change, with the emphasis in non-Native health science on quantifying dysfunction, with the inability of non-Native health care providers to see the "positive lifestyles and values" in Aboriginal communities. *A Persistent Spirit* exemplifies both what is good and what is bad in the field of First Nations health studies, for it continues the trends that O'Neill so appropriately condemned yet also points the way towards Aboriginally centred studies that study, promote, and enable healing.

Tsimshian Culture: A Light Through the Ages

Jay Miller

Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. 202 pp. Illus. US$45 cloth.

By Jonathan R. Dean, *University of Chicago*

Jay Miller's latest contribution is a welcome addition to the literature on the Tsimshian peoples of the northern British Columbia coast. His familiarity with the community of Hartley Bay and his extensive work in the area allows him to approach this topic with an unforced intimacy. Miller begins with the puzzle of how to model Tsimshian society. He credits a

student at Prince Rupert with giving him the idea of diagramming the culture, which he then developed into a "tree of light": an axis ascending from the matrilineal House to Heaven and light. Over time other structures were appended onto Tsimshian society, including the crest system, the *naxnox* ("wonders"), and the *halait* (roughly, "power") privileges. By drawing on a number of *adawx* ("sacred histories") Miller examines how the theme of light binds these features to the Tsimshian culture even as they remain functionally distinct from one another. The structure of this book generally follows this topology of Tsimshian society, ascending the "tree of light" towards Heaven. Along each of these branches the Tsimshian appear to follow the rule of four, as in four crests, four *naxnox* domains, and four major *halaits* (as well as four house corners and four legitimate faiths), each in turn grouped into dual pairs. For anyone who has attempted to puzzle through Tsimshian social structure, Miller's work is concise and penetrating.

In particular, Miller's unified treatment of *halait*, *naxnox,* and crests is illuminating. These three aspects of Tsimshian spirituality have long posed a riddle to Euro-American observers, and his adept handling of their distinctive purposes and origins will make the complexities of the Tsimshian belief system much more accessible to readers. As Miller notes, the *naxnox* have largely been supplanted by Christian beliefs, while the *halait* persists both in the traditional form and in the form of gifts that set persons apart (referring here to Marie-Françoise Guédon's excellent essay on the Tsimshian world-view). The crest system remains vital as well.

Through the examination of oral tradition, and the recounting of his own and others' observations, Miller emphasizes the persistence of Tsimshian culture. With roots in the area dating as far back as 10,000 years BP, the present-day Tsimshian and their ancestors have clearly been resilient, maintaining cultural continuity while continuing to adopt and adapt foreign beliefs and materials – as in the use of a saxophone in place of the "traditional" drum at a Hartley Bay feast. Other topics that Miller introduces in an explicitly Tsimshian context are crystals, for their unique properties in reflecting light, and masks, which allow the wearer to display and to master powers. The topic of crystals is particularly intriguing, and one hopes Miller will uncover more information and develop this in greater detail in the future, given the close association between crystals and light (and therefore Heaven).

A succinct examination of the history of the post-contact period includes the Fort Simpson fur trade and the missionary movement, which began with the arrival of William Duncan in 1857. Miller concludes that "Christianity has now assumed many of the aspects of the traditional religion, but except for the loss of masking and certain other artistic expressions of spirituality, the fundamentals remain ... Ancient logic stands firm when Tsimshian raise their voices to sing 'Jesus is the light of the world.'" Miller also includes a bibliographical essay on the scholarship of the Tsimshian, all of which might profitably be consulted by interested readers.

There is little to fault in this work, although some readers may find the Gispaxlo'ots chiefs Ligeex somewhat over-exposed. Within the corpus of Tsimshian oral tradition there are many significant nobles, many of whose exploits are also documented in Euro-

Canadian records. It might have been preferable to detail a broader spectrum of Tsimshian chiefly practices and accomplishments. The author's examination of the sale of Ligeex's monopoly (and subsequent potlatch) in 1866 may give rise to some discussion, as there appears to be no mention of either in the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) records or Duncan's writings of the 1860s. Duncan did attempt to sell his store to the HBC in 1866, although the offer was declined because of the many restrictions he placed on the subsequent operation of the venture. However, the Ligeexes are manifestly vital actors within both Tsimshian *adawx* and Euro-Canadian scholarship.

This is a significant book and an important contribution to the field, and it will be valued for its innovative analysis of Tsimshian culture "through the ages."

The Heiltsuks: Dialogues of Culture and History on the Northwest Coast

Michael E. Harkin

Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press in cooperation with the American Indian Studies Research Institute, Indiana University, 1997. 195 pp. Maps. US$40 cloth.

BY MARGARET SEGUIN ANDERSON
Universitiy of Northern British Columbia

The dust jacket on this volume informs readers that "what Marshall Sahlins has done for the Hawaiians, Michael Harkin has done for the Heiltsuks," and indeed the book inside the cover is very much in the tradition of theoretically minded anthropology. It is thoroughly researched and careful of the details of the presentation of Native cultures, but its real topic is disciplinary theory. In this case the theory that Harkin explores very effectively melds and extends several strands of postmodern theory to argue that cultures, specifically the cultures of the nineteenth-century and contemporary Heiltsuks, should be seen as a series of dialogic discourses about power, playing out the dialectic between uncontrolled exogenic forces and the intrinsic ordering principles of society. This argument is presented through a chapter reconstructing the culture of the Heiltsuks in the nineteenth century and one summarizing the current contexts of the Heiltsuks, followed by three chapters on theory ("Narrative, Time and the Lifeworld," "Contact Narratives," "Dialectic and Dialogue") and three chapters applying that theory to specific Heiltsuk cultural discources: bodies, souls and goods. A short final section highlights conclusions about "Worlds in Collision." The various chapters are quite self-contained, and in fact three of them were previously published as articles. The remarkable total absence of photographs of Heiltsuk people, places, or artefacts in the volume is not surprising if it is understood that its main thrust is theoretical.

Given Harkin's focus on the central significance of dialogue and discourse, it is peculiar that he gives scant consideration to the significance of the millennia of intellectual and material exchanges that shaped all of the groups on the Northwest Coast, including the Heiltsuk, long before the arrival of Europeans. In fact, Harkin seems to fall into a generalized Heiltsuk-centricity. He argues that the Heiltsuk were the most feared group on the BC Coast (x), unparalleled in ferocity (2), and that they experienced perhaps the most rapid cultural transformation of any tribal group in the history of Western colonialism (ix, 2). He states that the Heiltsuk were the dynamic centre of diffusion of masks, dances, myth, and other elements of culture (1); speculates that they may have invented the Winter Ceremonials (159, n. 2); and argues that when they received missionaries they became the most progressive nation on the Coast, embracing the evangelical message and transforming themselves into paragons of the Victorian virtues of hard work, prosperity, and progress (x).

It seems more plausible that Harkin is dead on about the dialogic nature of cultural change and that this was the case long before the Europeans arrived on the scene – there was certainly a constant ebb and flow of ideas, and the fascination of the Heiltsuks may lie not in their sui generis inventiveness but in their location on the cutting edge of cultural exchange between the matrilineal nations to the north and their southern neighbours, whose systems were based on flexible bilateral patterns of kinship. For example, Harkin enthuses that the Heiltsuk may have been the inventors of the Winter Ceremonial: "Only in the Heiltsuk case do we find a strong and clear example of a dialectical opposition between two dance series, in which the forces of chaos are subdued and appropriated by forces of structure" (159, n. 2). He is incorrect. Halpin's 1973 study of Tsimshian crests made a similar argument, showing the tension between the series of Naxnox masks and Halait performances expressing the power of chaos, which is opposed to the chiefly system that tames and controls it. While elements of the Tsimshian Halait system may well have been borrowed from the Tlingit and Haida, or for that matter from the Bella Bella, the complex as a whole is clearly ancient among the Tsimshians. The Tsimshian Halait performances are obviously analogous to parts of the Heiltsuk dance cycle, and it is likely that these were borrowed back and forth several times, with the most recent exchange just before the time of European contact bringing the Tsimshian the "secret society" dances developed by the Heiltsuks; but it is crucial to understand that these imported Heiltsuk performances may equally well have been made from the stuff of earlier borrowings from the Tsimshian Hailait. The dialogue is very old.

Despite its theoretical orientation and Heiltsuk-centricity, this volume will be a valuable to BC specialists: there are few other sources as detailed on Heiltsuk culture and ethnohistory, and the theoretical arguments are worth the trouble to follow through. Readers in British Columbia will note several anachronisms in the volume: though the publication date is 1997, three of the seven chapters were originally published as journal articles between 1988 and 1994, and the volume as a whole was apparently not thoroughly updated prior to printing. Specifically, the discussion of BC politics indicates that the long-defunct Socreds are in government, there is no

mention of the BC Treaty Process, and the Supreme Court decision in the Gladstone case affirming the rights of the Heiltsuks to sell herring roe is mentioned only in a note. While the chapter on the nineteenth century is specific and detailed, the material on the present context is marked by a remarkable lack of specific actors: a chapter dealing with the Heiltsuk people in the present day with not so much as a mention of such people as Chief Ed Newman will seem very peculiar to readers who are familiar with the BC scene. Another jarring note is the argument on page 26 that the shortage of newer housing on reserve is a factor contributing to the migration of young people to the suburbs of Vancouver, where solidly middle-class housing is available. But there is no documentation provided to show that the migration of Heiltsuks to the Lower Mainland is primarily to middle-class suburbs, and this seems to be a rather surprising claim.

Despite minor flaws this is an excellent addition to the literature. The chapter on contact narratives is interesting and well developed, as are the detailed substantive chapters on the dialectics between Heiltsuk and European understandings of the body, souls, and material goods. *The Heiltsuks* will take an important place on our bookshelves – and not only in the theory section.

Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia

Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, and J. Donald Wilson, Editors

Calgary: Detselig, 1995. 426 pp. Illus. $28.95 paper.

By Dianne M. Hallman, *University of Saskatchewan*

This text is valuable because it brings together the fruits of extensive research on education in British Columbia in a convenient collection. It joins the work of new scholars to the field with that of established academics in three broad areas: "childhood and pupilhood," "becoming and being a teacher," and "organizing and reorganizing schools."

Jean Barman's introduction provides a thumbnail sketch of formal educational structures as they emerged in the mid- to late-nineteenth century as the British colony attained provincial status. Focusing on the settlers to this area, she argues that by the mid-1860s an educational consensus in favour of free non-denominational schooling had developed, which formed the basis of an education system that was not fundamentally altered for over a century.

The first group of essays documents some aspects of the experience of pupils and children within this stable system. The editors are to be commended for this focus; educational historians have typically given scant attention to the children for whom educational structures are set up. While the essays in this section do not provide an all-encompassing history of schoolchildren, the discrete research projects give insights into important aspects of this history. Timothy

Stanley's essay shows how schooling practices and children's textbooks perpetuated a White supremacist ideology. Barman explains how the federal assimilatory policy ensured that Aboriginal children were "schooled for inequality." It is, however, less clear what schooling for equality might have meant – the local school option, such as Barman implies, or formal recognition of and respect for Aboriginal epistemologies? John McLaren reveals yet another dimension of state regulation of cultural homogeneity in his chronicle of how the law was invoked to remove Doukhobor children from their communities in order to "resocialize" them.

Moving away from a primary concern with the impact of state policies and practice on children in the abstract, Emilie Montgomery documents the personal impact of the war on actual children as recalled by adult interviewees. Neil Sutherland contributes four articles in which the "thick description" of the culture of childhood and schools evokes an intimate sense of connection to the chores, games, and routines of the past. Critical readers might wish for more theoretical and methodological discussion: how is childhood a "culture"? which children and whose culture?

The next section, on "becoming and being a teacher," begins with a brief profile of British Columbia's twentieth-century teaching force. The remaining essays are heavily slanted towards the problems and concerns of rural teachers of the 1920s and 1930s. Several include the views of teachers themselves, as they recollect their experiences in interviews or express them in diaries and official documents. The rural focus is not surprising given the geography of the province, but it may limit the breadth of the text's appeal and application. On a contemporary note, the cautions raised by Nancy Sheehan and J. Donald Wilson regarding the transfer of authority for teacher education and certification to the BC College of Teachers are extremely important to consider as other provinces contemplate a similar move.

In the last section, five of the six essays are authored (or, in one instance, co-authored) by Jean Barman. Several focus on the relationship between the administrative structures of schools and students' identity formation. The piece on the Vernon Preparatory School is of particular interest for its attention to a largely unstudied ethnicity in Canada. Here Barman details the deliberate inculcation of a British ethnic identity in the "Christian gentlemen" being made fit "to play the Game of Life." Patricia E. Roy's account of the education of Japanese children interned during the Second World War relates one of the most extreme examples of "reorganizing schools." In this instance, "national interests" and children's interests were very much at odds.

The text does not report much new research. Several of the essays have been published previously; many of these are based on findings of the large-scale Canadian Childhood History Project. Its title aptly demarcates the limited content. There is almost no reference to teacher unions, informal education, or early childhood education, which readers might expect to find in a comprehensive educational history. The editors have achieved a compilation that attends to gender and addresses diverse ethnicities and socio-economic classes. Despite its limitations in scope and poor copy-editing, it is a useful resource for university students and educators. Historians of education in other provinces might well follow suit.

Kindling the Spark, The Era of One-Room Schools: An Anthology of Teachers' Experiences

Vancouver: British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association, 1996.
212 pp. Map. $19.50 paper. (BCRTA, 550 W. 6th Avenue,
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2)

By Patrick A. Dunae, *Malaspina University-College*

When the BC Retired Teachers' Association was established in 1945, Max Cameron was completing his landmark *Inquiry into Educational Finance.* The provincial government accepted Cameron's recommendations and, in 1946, over 600 school districts were consolidated into seventy-four large administrative units. In the process, hundreds of small rural and assisted schools, many of them one- or two-room structures, were closed.

At the time, the public welcomed the new order. Many of the old schools were primitive affairs, and consolidation meant that rural children could enjoy some of the educational amenities that had previously been the preserve of "lucky city kids." But there was much to be said about the old days, when schools and communities, teachers and pupils, were closely connected. With that in mind, and to mark its fiftieth anniversary, the BCRTA recently asked its members to share their memories of their first years of teaching. A selection of their responses forms the heart of this charming and evocative book.

All told, over sixty contributions are included. Most of the submissions are brief, two- or three-page sketches. Ten of them are about teaching in the prairie provinces, one (the longest) recounts Bernard Gillie's experiences as a school inspector in the Arctic in the 1950s; one (the most academic) is a reprint of an article by Thomas Fleming and Carolyn Smyly on the indomitable Lottie Bowron, who served as British Columbia's Rural Female Teachers' Welfare Officer between 1929 and 1934. The majority of the contributions are reminiscences from teachers who taught in this province, in remote places like Loos and Pass Creek, between 1919 and 1945. Three-quarters of the sketches are written by women.

The main features of their stories may be familiar to readers of this journal, from the scholarly works of Professors Barman, Calam, Fleming, Sheehan, Sutherland, and Wilson. Some of the ground in this book has also been covered in *Floating Schools and Frozen Ink Wells* (1985) by Joan Adams and Becky Thomas. But there is a freshness and vitality here, a sense of immediacy and intimacy, that has not been captured elsewhere.

The book is rich in detail. Consider, for example, Kory Callaghan's recollections of the school at Chezacut in the 1920s:

> There were ten regulation desks in assorted sizes, teacher's desk and chair, a four-foot high heater and big wood box, homemade painted blackboard and a sand-table, something I was never to see in any other classroom; a few shelves holding some government textbooks, a box of plasticine, and not much else except a bucket for water and a cup. (13)

One teacher recalls how her mastery of the Maclean Method of Writing landed her her first job at Heriot Bay on Quadra Island; another how Doukhobour parents in Glade berated her for promoting militarism when she lined up children for a relay race on Sport's Day.

Some of the teachers report petty injustices, but in the main they have fond recollections of school trustees and inspectors. Indeed, perhaps the most striking aspect of this anthology is its up-beat and affirmative tone. "My heart still warms at the memory of those happy years" (44) is a typical comment.

One closes this book with a sense that, for many practitioners teaching in rural schools was not so much a searing experience as it was a character-building one. Eleanor Anderson, who taught in floating schools on Desolation Sound and Toba Inlet in the 1930s, conveys the sentiments of many of her colleagues in this book:

> Those first three years of my teaching career gave me many experiences I had never expected to have. Besides the ones I have recounted, I learned to teach ten grades in a one-room school, to deal with a very backward child who was constantly beaten by his father, to walk boomsticks, to row a boat, to enjoy boating, to understand a bit about the logging industry and to appreciates the beauty of British Columbia. I also came to realize that I loved teaching, and knew I had made the right decision when I decided to attend the Vancouver Normal School (79).

This anthology was compiled under the leadership of Gale Lindenthaler, with the assistance of Lillian Holeton and Loma Robb. *Kindling the Spark* is illustrated with photographs and enlivened with pen- and ink-drawings by Sarah Walker.

The Maritime Defence of Canada

Roger Sarty

Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1996. 223 pp. Illus., maps. $20. paper. (Vanwell Publishing, 1 Northrup Crescent, St Catherines, ON L2R 7S2)

Jericho Beach and the West Coast Flying Boat Stations

Chris Weicht

Chemainus: MCW Enterprises, 1997. 288 pp. Illus., maps. $39.95 paper. (Chris Weicht, Box 85, Chemainus V0R 1K0).

BY PETER N. MOOGK, *University of British Columbia*

History is a matter of perspective. James A. Boutilier's collection of papers, *RCN in Retrospect, 1910-1968* (1982), provides the view of retired senior naval officers as well as of academic writers. That collection might be styled the view from the ship's bridge. Roger Sarty's

collected essays and papers give us the perspective of prime ministers, chiefs of staff, and British advisors. This is a political account of defence measures and the strategic considerations behind them, although fiscal savings and appeasement of isolationist sentiment outweighed military strategy in peacetime. Senior officers proposed and cabinet ministers disposed. The writer's interests grew out of his doctoral dissertation on the defences of Halifax and Esquimalt, his work for the Department of National Defence's Directorate of History and Heritage, and "musings that arose from involvement in three successive projects on the history of Canadian maritime defence" (xvi). "Maritime defence," as used here, is primarily about naval protection, although the complementary roles of the air force and the army's coast artillery are acknowledged. The last is the focus of the sixth paper, "Canada's Coastal Fortifications of the Second World War." The history of the coast artillery in 1938-41 is a story of rapid improvisation by shifting vintage guns from the Halifax batteries and from surplus American stocks to Canada's other ports as a riposte to possible attacks by armed surface vessels, then seen as a real threat. British Columbia's protection is the subject of two other essays and, contrary to the myth of federal indifference to the Pacific Coast, this region was given priority over the East Coast in the allocation of weapons until 1940.

The eight papers are placed in rough chronological order. It is a pity that they were not re-edited to form a comprehensive whole, because there is considerable repetition in the essays. A background survey may be in order for a new audience listening to one paper, but the stories of the naval service's evolution under Prime Ministers Laurier and Borden, of the scratch-built patrol fleet of the First World War, of the effects of inter-war budget cuts, and the belated rebuilding of the navy in the 1930s pale after the fourth retelling. The tale of Premier Richard McBride's 1914 purchase of two submarines in Seattle is recited three times. As a consequence of reading government documents, the author uses those orotund phrases beloved of bureaucrats – it would be difficult to overstate the importance, highlights the salient features, by no means identical, distinctly unenthusiastic, palpably inadequate, and so on – with mind-numbing effect. This structural and stylistic weakness is a pity because the author has some insights to share, as, for example, with regard to the recurrent theme of the Canadian government's struggle to retain control of its armed services while cooperating with the forces of the neighbouring United States and those of the British Empire. The increase in British Columbia's coast defences in the 1930s is attributed to a desire to deny the Americans an excuse for intruding to protect a "defenceless" neighbour from the Japanese Empire. The essays cover the period in which Canada passed out of Britain's orbit and assumed the role of an American satellite. Sarty's essays on the Second World War give the practical reasons for this shift in dependency.

In keeping with the current rehabilitation of Prime Minister W.L.M. King – a political calculator despised by serving officers – "Wily Willy" is credited with seeing the armed forces as a symbol of Canada's sovereignty; with starting the rebuilding of Canada's armed forces in 1937, despite domestic resistance; and with regretting (in his diary, at least) that his pre-war defence

policy had been determined by political considerations at home and not by any international realities (133). By contrast, King's political mentor, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, is described as an indecisive creature who acted on defence matters only when forced to do so by a crisis, and then he came up with a compromise to nobody's liking. The Australian government's 1907 move to create a home defence fleet was a precedent for the Laurier government's Canadian Naval Service of 1910. Another fresh insight is contained in Sarty's account of the impact of Ultra decrypts on the Royal Canadian Navy's war against German submarines. The systematic deciphering by British analysts of coded messages produced on Germany's Enigma encryption machines, code-named "Ultra," has achieved mythic status as the Allies' ace card that won the Second World War. According to Sarty, Canadians received these decrypts, but the decoded German signals gave no exact fix on enemy submarines. Long-range, B24 Liberator bombers patrolling the Atlantic Ocean forced enemy raiders into subsurface running at reduced speed, thereby crippling their effectiveness. At most, Ultra allowed the rerouting of convoys away from known concentrations of submarines.

There is a hint of patriotic defensiveness in this book. The inferior performance of Canada's sheepdog navy, when compared with Britain's Royal Navy, is attributed to technological and organizational weaknesses. There is a faint acknowledgement of our military amateurism in Sarty's statement that "much of the difficulty arose from Canada's can-do spirit" (203). Canadians were slow to learn from the successful examples of RAF Coastal Command or of the American navy's hunter-killer groups. Convoy escort duty and anti-submarine warfare were the principal tasks of the RCN in the north Atlantic Ocean, and these provided the rationale for the post-war navy, although Canadian naval officers, like their inter-war predecessors, still dreamed of a "balanced" fleet with large warships.

Roger Sarty's view of defence measures from the perspective of the cabinet room and ministerial offices has much to recommend it, yet it is a dry narrative without the leavening of personal experiences. A recent history of British Columbia's seaplane defenders, *Jericho Beach and the West Coast Flying Stations* by Chris Weicht, provides a richness of technical and anecdotal detail concerning how Canadian defence policies were carried out by the RCAF in this province. Weicht has shown himself to be a diligent researcher and talented local historian. Ministerial policies and staff officer appreciations are mentioned in this book, although the writer prefers to discuss the men and the aircraft they flew. This is a serviceman's view of military history. It was not his intention to do so, yet Weicht has provided considerable evidence of the local improvisation and sometimes fatal amateurism – alluded to by Sarty – that characterized the Canadian forces before wartime realities and modern equipment led our personnel into a more professional approach to warfare.

The Promise of Paradise: Utopian Communities in BC

Andrew Scott

Vancouver: Whitecap, 1997. 223 pp. Illus., maps. $17.95 paper.

By J. Donald Wilson, *University of British Columbia*

For over a century British Columbia has been the location of attempts to found experimental, utopian, or ideologically driven settlements, including some religiously based ones that resembled in their eccentricity Heaven's Gate or the Order of the Solar Temple. Most of these intentional communities were short-lived – a major exception being the Doukhobors – and their legacy often passed away with them. Andrew Scott's book, *The Promise of Paradise,* is an account of fifteen communities of this type, including Metlakatla, Bella Coola, Quatsino, Cape Scott, Sointula, Brother XII, the Aquarian Foundation, and several small post-Second World War alternative communities (such as Argenta in the West Kootenays). Six of these colonies had a racial or ethnic basis, and all of them featured some sort of communitarian living. The latter, especially in the case of the Doukhobors, aroused particular concern from the provincial authorities. As a rule, throughout the twentieth century the Canadian state (at both federal and provincial levels) favoured individualism and private enterprise. It was deeply suspicious of socio-economic systems based on co-operation and collectivism wherein property and resources were held in common and everyone was working for the good of all rather than for individual enterprise. Since private property and individual ownership were seen as the Canadian way, all of the ventures discussed in *The Promise of Paradise* were subject to varying degrees of criticism, suspicion, and, in extreme cases such as the Doukhobors, outright government intervention leading to imprisonment.

It is clear the author means this account to be a popular history. Hand-drawn maps and historical photographs add to the reader's enjoyment. The language is folksy and journalistic. In the present-day examples, such as in the West Kootenays, the Nass Valley, and WindSong near Fort Langley, the author has relied on interviews. In the historical cases, he has taken the trouble to actually visit the sites and thus is able to provide the reader with a "feel" for these settlements that, in some cases, date back a century. His description of the site of the Danish settlement of Cape Scott at the northern tip of Vancouver Island is particularly gripping. One quickly senses, even today, the futility of establishing a settlement in such a remote and harsh location.

On the other hand, for the historical settlements – those founded before 1945 – there is really nothing new here. Scott has recourse to all the standard secondary sources, such as George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic on the Doukhobors, Paula Wild on Sointula, and Ivar Fougner's diary on Bella Coola, and he draws his information from these accounts. He makes no attempt at an overall analysis incorporating all of these communities. What did they have in common, what not? Why was British Columbia at-

tractive to such groups of people? That dissenters and non-conformists got as far as the Pacific coast and could go no further is not a very compelling answer: "British Columbia was the end of the road," according to Scott (10). Why did all the historical settlements and most of the post-Second World War ones fail? To take but four of them – Sointula (Finns), Bella Coola and Quatsino (Norwegians), and Cape Scott (Danes) – we can establish, in addition to the factor of location and the absence of a road link, a lack of ideological cohesion, the inability to select new settlers, a lack (from the start) of a firm economic base, and an absolute dependency on outside capital and trade with the Lower Mainland. All these factors worked against the continued viability of these communities. Similar comparative analysis might have been applied to the religiously based settlements of Metlakatla (Tsimshian First Nations and the Anglican Church), the various Douk hobor settlements, and Brother XII.

Leadership is another fascinating point of comparison. Both Kurikka and Brother XII were theosophists, and both Sointula and the Aquarian Foundation were accused of being "free love cults." With charismatic characters such as Christian Saugstad, Matti Kurikka, Peter Verigin, Brother XII (Edward Arthur Wilson), and William Duncan, this is a natural point of analysis. To what extent did these settlements fail precisely because of faulty leadership on the part of men without whom, ironically, the colonies never would have been founded in the first place? These are some examples of missed opportunities in *The Promise of Paradise*.

Although it covers some of the same ground as Justine Brown's *All Possible Worlds: Utopian Experiments in British Columbia* (1995), the most original chapter concerns "post-war alternative experiments." Most of these would be described today as "back-to-the-land" or "hippie" settlements. Dating back to the 1950s, some of these still exist. Representative of this group are Kootenay Co-op Land Settlement Society, Lasqueti Island colony, New West Co-op, Argenta (near Kaslo), the Emissaries (near 100 Mile House), and Ochiltree Organic Commune (northeast of Williams Lake), which operated originally on a Marxist philosophy. Ironically, some of these communities were able to obtain government support in the form of Opportunities for Youth (OFY), Local Initiatives Program (LIP), and other types of grants. Although difficult to imagine today, these federal government programs were supposed to keep the lid on the radical potential of the youth and the counter-culture movements of the late sixties. In a lively fashion, the author recounts the origins, usually in rural settings, of dozens of these alternative societies designed for cooperative or communal living. By comparison the urban housing cooperatives of the seventies and eighties supported by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and discussed in the final chapter, sound very tame indeed. WindSong, with its ninety-six residents, was featured recently on the CBC-TV Noontime Show as a typical 1990s cooperative providing only marginal communal elements compared to the "hippie communes" – in Scott's words, a hybrid "half mall, half apartment building" (200).

The message of this book seems to be that "all utopias are doomed" because "the goal is unattainable" (17). Nevertheless, the author remains upbeat and optimistic. Utopian com-

munities still, as in the past, have a role to fulfil; namely, as "places where we keep trying to invent improved versions of ourselves so we can survive and evolve as a species" (17). Such a sentiment echoes the convictions of Sointula's founder Matti Kurikka (1863-1915), who had in turn drawn upon the thought of Owen, Fourier, and Saint-Simon. It would appear the utopian tradition still thrives in British Columbia as part of a long heritage.

Totem Poles and Tea

Hughina Harold

Surrey: Heritage, 1996. 218 pp. Illus., maps. $17.95 paper.

No Path But My Own: Horseback Adventures in the Chilcotin and the Rockies

Cliff Kopas with Leslie Kopas

Madiera Park: Harbour, 1996. 225 pp. Illus., maps. $26.95 cloth.

By Mary-Ellen Kelm
University of Northern British Columbia

Each year, small publishers across British Columbia put out popular first-person accounts of British Columbia's past. Hughina Harold's *Totem Poles and Tea* and Cliff Kopas's *No Path But My Own* are two such offerings. These books, via small bookstores and tourist centres, present British Columbia's history to a wide, international audience. For many readers, they represent British Columbia's past more so than any newly published monograph or even a handily written survey text. And so it is right that we question the images they present, the stories they tell.

Taking *No Path But My Own* and *Totem Poles and Tea* as examples, we see that the travel narrative is still an important form in popular historical writing. They offer us views of our past that are both useful and imaginative, that are potentially disruptive of traditional interpretations yet also constitutive of them. Assessing these books as history means coming to terms with the travelogue genre and the gendered and racialized meanings this genre creates.

Both books are set in the 1930s and involve young adults who come to maturity on the "frontiers" of non-Native BC society. *Totem Poles and Tea* centres around Hughina Harold's work as a nurse-schoolteacher with the Mamalilikulla people of Village Island. Compelled by the belief that she "had witnessed things that should not be forgotten," Harold revisited the letters she wrote to her mother at the time and compiled them into a seamless narrative. The result is a detailed picture of her relationships both with

the Kwakwaka'wakw, of whom the Mamalilikulla are part, and with the non-Native settlers in the area.

Harold seems both fascinated and repelled by the Kwakwaka'wakw. On the one hand, she describes their cultural lives as haunted by the ban on the potlatch and marvels at their resilience. On the other, her occupational focus on ill-health highlights the devastation of tuberculosis among the First Nations and seems to legitimate negative assessment of Kwakwaka'wakw commitment to hygiene and public health. Though never really comes to terms with Kwakwaka'wakw priorities, attitudes, or lifestyles, she does come to appreciate individuals as kind-hearted, competent, and quick-witted. More than once, the bravery and graciousness of her First Nations hosts ensured her safe passage across the treacherous waters of northern Vancouver Island, a point that Harold often misses as she recounts these events only from her own perspective as a terrified passenger. There is much to be gleaned here about reserve life of the 1930s by sometimes reading around the autobiographical focus.

Of her non-Native contemporaries, Harold is more uniformly sympathetic. She presents a comic yet poignant picture of the lives of long-time missionaries Kathleen O'Brien and Kate Dibben. She also tells the stories of the settlers of northern Vancouver Island and the central coast with great care. Clearly, she met some strong-willed and fascinating people and, as a source of their history, *Totem Poles and Tea* stands out. As an autobiographical account of one woman's journey into First Nations territory, *Totem Poles and Tea* exemplifies the alienation and personal growth that some women experienced as they ventured out into the cross-cultural "border zones" of British Columbia.

Cliff Kopas's stories are more firmly situated in his on-going assimilation into "frontier" life. *No Path But My Own* is a compilation of four travelogues connected by autobiographical "interludes" depicting Kopas's life between journeys. The magnificence of British Columbia's landscape figures prominently in Kopas's narrative, and the hardships of trail life, though starkly presented, never overwhelm the sense of excitement and exhilaration of the journey. Packhorsing through the Rockies and the Chilcotin, Kopas's story is a classic "man-against-nature-coming-of-age" saga. Beginning as a recovering invalid, through physical hardship he exhibits his masculinity and becomes a "chief" of the trail. The interludes are the only places where we hear about Kopas's personal life, his domestic existence, the birth of his children, the death of his first wife. Domesticity is abandoned, it seems, only to be replicated on the trail where young men collect the wood and cook the meals. Kopas clearly thrived on the trail and, though this book ends with the birth of his second son, the epilogue makes it clear that the Bella Coola valley and the Chilcotin plateau remained a central part of Kopas's life for many years.

The books have some things in common. In both, medical care provides a central stage for cultural interaction, and it is from this perspective that we see the unevenness of that exchange. Harold's account makes clear the imperial nature of social welfare, as she is enjoined to raise the Union Jack each morning before school. As she puts it, "Obviously, THE FLAG was critical to the smooth running of the mission" (29). But there is

sarcasm in her tone, and more seemingly useful was the vigilance implied in tooth-brushing and nose-blowing drills. For Harold is nothing if not persistent in her attempts to enforce non-Native habits of hygiene on the Mamalilikulla people and to dislodge their own healers. She takes great delight in "treating" the groaning wife of a respected healer with an enema, aspirins, and scotch mints and does not see the irony in performing such "heroic" measures before she has diagnosed the problem. Though she scoffs at the cedar boughs and eagle feathers of the healer's materia medica, her own offerings are only marginally more "scientific."

Kopas observes the application of missionary medicine, although he is less directly involved. For him, the ministrations of the dour Dr McLean seem crude and ritualistic – a tooth pulled here and there, some general anesthetic administered, but few lives saved mainly because the truly sick avoid the hospital and even those who allow themselves to be admitted are discharged once they become "chronic." Saving lives seemed of less importance, in Kopas's telling, than appearing to do so. Unlike Harold, Kopas is cynical about the "benefits" of Western medicine, recommending instead the therapy of trail life.

Both books are primarily stories of self-discovery. For Harold, this means entering a frontier of caring in which she is "made a woman" by extending the maternalism of her profession beyond the bounds of what, in different circumstances, would have been deemed appropriate feminine behaviour. Like many women travel writers' narratives, there are no panoramic vistas but, instead, the interior view of relationships, conversations, feelings. In this, as Sara Mills has shown, women's travel writing is transgressive in that it removes colonialism from the realm of politics, makes explicit the connections between the "colonizers" and the "colonized," and, in so doing, disrupts that binary opposition. At the same time, however, the focus on the personal defines such writing as "women's writing," in which an emphasis on the feminine contains any disruption of gender roles that might be imagined. We can see this clearly with Harold's story. Her life on Village Island must surely have required courage and resolve, yet she never portrays herself in any way that might be construed as masculine, as breaking gender roles. She is "plucky," not resolute; she might brave passage aboard a canoe across a dangerous stretch of ocean, but she still requires the men to help her from the craft. In the end, Harold's story is told entirely from the perspective of having left that community and having become reintegrated into mainstream society, leaving nursing, marrying a doctor, and retiring to housewifery. For Harold, her life with the Mamalilikulla must be nothing but an interlude, a premarital adventure.

On the other hand, Cliff Kopas is able to embrace his adventures – indeed, make a life out of them – precisely because trail life enhances his gender role rather than challenging it. Time after time Kopas must meet the challenges of the trail and show himself to be a man within a community of "frontier" men who thrive under harsh conditions. What is shadowy in Kopas's narrative is precisely that which grounds Harold's in the feminine world. Kopas shuns the domestic so much that the text defines his relationships with women

and children, indeed his whole home life, as "interludes." The contrast between the level of detail about Dr McLean's treatment of the Ulkatcho Carrier and the absence of that detail in the section documenting the death during childbirth of Kopas's first wife, Ruth, is strikingly eerie. So is Kopas's depiction of how "Ruth's son" was adopted out shortly after birth. This was, of course, his son, too, and yet his description of the surrounding events is detached, alienated, disturbing. Even so, *No Path But My Own* does foreground other relationships. Despite the title, and the cover art that shows a single man with a packhorse surveying the plateau, Kopas never attempted any of his journeys on his own. Always there was at least one other man, and we can follow Kopas's absorption into the network of male relationships that spans culture and class boundaries in an area defined as "frontier." As such, Kopas's narrative permits the reader to break the connection between "masculine" and "atomized" so often evident in depictions of "frontier" life and to see relational networks as key to men's survival as well as to women's.

Totem Poles and Tea and *No Path But My Own* remind us of the views of British Columbia to which the wider audience are exposed through some popular histories, including romantic images of hardship, stunning depictions of a terrifying yet magnificent environment, and primitive, disadvantaged First Nations. At first, these seem to be entertaining but retrogressive accounts of our province's past. It is possible, however, to see the contradictions in these books, to apply a gendered analysis that might prove useful in uncovering the lurking remainders of suppressed perspectives. As texts they tell us a great deal about the past and how we have come to know it, and this is, perhaps, a greater contribution to our field than the addition of more empirical data. *Totem Poles and Tea* and *No Path But My Own* are well worth reading.