

BOOK REVIEWS

Bill Reid and the Haida Canoe

Martine J. Reid, ed.

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2011. 152 pp. \$29.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT
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MOST PEOPLE identify Northwest Coast Aboriginal culture with the totem pole, most notably with the dramatic Thunderbird-winged carvings of the Kwakwaka'wakw peoples. In *Bill Reid and the Haida Canoe*, Martine Reid and co-authors James Raffan and Michael Robinson set out to put the canoe, not the totem pole, at the forefront of Northwest Coast Native culture. The canoe was not, of course, only a means of transportation. It could form part of a dowry. It was a tool in warfare. It represented the owner's wealth and abundance. And, among many other things, it was a vehicle for connecting Aboriginal peoples to their myths and rituals.

The book's editor and principal author, Martine Reid, begins her story in 7000 BCE when archaeological evidence suggests that Northwest Coast peoples built sea-faring vessels. Reid does not indicate when the western

red cedar dugout canoe became a part of Native culture. She does, however, use visual and written evidence from eighteenth-century European explorers, along with models of canoes, to show that the curved bow, vertical stern, and the painted imagery that we associate with the twenty-first century dugout canoe was in place long before Contact. Moreover, if anyone wonders if the numerous diseases that decimated Native peoples from the late eighteenth century on put an end to canoe building, Reid offers nineteenth-century photographs of canoe-strewn West Coast villages to show that canoe-making was evident during that century. This was not the case, however, in the next century. While the Peters family of the Ditdaht peoples, the Davidson family in Haida Gwaii, and the Hunt family in Victoria continued to make canoes during the first half of the twentieth century, the canoes they made were less for their own use than for sale to private and public collections.

Martine Reid's introductory essays sets the stage for her discussion of Bill Reid's now famous canoe, the *Lootaas*. More than fifteen metres in length, the *Lootaas* was made during the mid-1980s in the village of Skidegate on Haida Gwaii. The *Lootaas* had its

debut at Expo '86. Three years later it was paddled up the Seine from Rouen to Paris to honour the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss and to mark the bicentennial anniversary of the French Revolution. In 1998 it carried Reid's ashes to his mother's village of Tanu. And today the *Lootaas* is stored in a boathouse in Skidegate.

Martine Reid offers several photographs of Reid, adze in hand, carving the *Lootaas*. Sadly, Reid, who was suffering from Parkinson's disease, performed a largely supervisory role. The author also insists that, for Bill Reid, the ovoid, which was derived from the shape of a canoe, formed the basis of Aboriginal art. This does not take into account the artist's long-held view that the form line, not the ovoid, was the dominant element in Northwest Coast art.

More generally, Martine Reid and her co-authors fail to address the difficulties that the former CBC announcer had being accepted into the Haida community. Part of the problem, as I argue in my own biography of Bill Reid, was that Reid was clearly seen as an outsider. Moreover, he employed non-Aboriginal artists to carve the *Lootaas*. (This prompted the Haida carver Garry Edenshaw [Guujaaw] to leave the project in a huff.) Things did not improve when Bill Reid commented to a *Globe and Mail* (29 March 1986) reporter: "Haida time is nobody giving a damn about anything."

As Bill Reid well knew, works such as the *Lootaas* were created as a result of the tensions that existed between his Aboriginal and white sensibilities, and between the white and the Aboriginal worlds. Any discussion of his work and life should surely take this into account if it wishes to give an objective account of the context in which his finest work was created.

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The Cannibal Spirit

Harry Whitehead

Toronto: Hamish Hamilton, 2012.
295 pp. \$32.00 cloth.

JUDITH BERMAN
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HARRY WHITEHEAD's novel *The Cannibal Spirit* fictionalizes one of the most important figures in the history of BC anthropology, Franz Boas's long-time collaborator George Hunt. With many points of reference to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the book is a compelling read and a serious attempt to address issues of colonialism, modernity, and the relation of ethnography to both. It is at the same time problematic from the standpoint of biography, history, ethnography, and, ultimately, its own literary purpose.

History in several senses is one of its themes. Hunt's viewpoint alternates with that of Harry Cadwallader, in real life his white brother-in-law but here portrayed as his son-in-law. Both men "travel backward" (106) into their pasts as they journey into the "darkness" of the BC wilderness, Cadwallader sent to find Hunt as Marlow was sent to find Kurtz, each man seeking resolution for his personal crisis.

The novel addresses history on a larger scale as well, with Hunt represented as, among other things, a man navigating between the assumptions of colonialism and anthropology to document the equal and distinct character of

indigenous history. As one of the book's Kwakwaka'wakw characters says, Hunt put their stories in books "for white people to see ... we is real and forever, same as them, important as they in life" (55).

Whitehead has made an effort to imagine indigenous characters that are as "important" and as "real" as his white ones, and his research has some depth to it. He has, however, exercised considerable licence with the historical subject matter (noted generally in his acknowledgments). He did not attempt to capture the real-life Hunt's voice or, for that matter, the human being, despite the preservation of hundreds of Hunt's letters to Boas, some of which Whitehead has clearly read. (The obscenities Whitehead puts in Hunt's mouth have no place either in traditional Kwakwaka'wakw or, according to descendants who remember him, in his English usage.)

The story radically alters the chronology of Hunt's life, compressing into a single year Hunt's 1900 prosecution under the Indian Act; a 1903 trip to New York to work with Boas; Indian Agent Halliday's 1922 confiscation of Kwakwaka'wakw dance regalia; and last, but in Whitehead's narrative the precipitating event, the 1925 death of George's eldest son David. David's six siblings who survived to adulthood are reduced to a single sister, excising the forebears of many contemporary Kwakwaka'wakw.

The treatment of ethnography is similarly cavalier. For example, a central thread that features the real-life Tlingit notable Sheiksh ("Shaiks"), based on Tlingit clan history recorded by Ronald Olson (likely taken from *Social Structure and Social Life of the Tlingit in Alaska*, 1967), alters Sheiksh's moiety and clan affiliation as well as his genealogical connection to Hunt, thereby violating

Tlingit principles of matrilineality and moiety exogamy. It moreover changes Hunt's principal Tlingit crest from Raven to Killer Whale and confuses the hereditary crest with the shaman's initiating spirit. If indigenous history is as "real" and as "important" as that of the colonists, these changes are akin to conflating the Tudors and the Bourbons, depicting the Union Jack as the French flag, or presenting the clan tartan as a Christian symbol.

Finally, there is Whitehead's manufacture of a "darkness" in Hunt that attaches to him the same lurid images promoted by the book's colonial antagonists. At the beginning of the fictional Hunt's journey he decapitates his son's corpse and bears the rotting head away with him; at the other end, deep in the forest, he becomes a killer, head-hunter, and "Cannibal Spirit" for real, "despite [my] half-white blood ... more savage than ... you can know" (167-68).

A fictional protagonist based on Hunt might have served Whitehead better in some ways, but would leave the book's contradictions at its core. Taking so much liberty with real indigenous history undermines the proposition that it matters, and capitalizing on stereotypes that equate Aboriginal life with savagery and darkness likewise ensures that the novel cannot transcend what it attempts to critique.



*Resilience, Reciprocity and
Ecological Economics: Northwest
Coast Sustainability*

Ronald Trosper

London and New York: Routledge,
2009. 188 pp. \$30.00 cloth.

JUDE ISABELLA
University of Victoria

IN THIS BRIEF and densely packed treatise on why and how the Aboriginal economy of the Northwest Coast worked so well, Ronald Trosper dives into science fiction/fantasy territory: he reimagines the clash of two competing economic systems, with one system focused on the group, the other on the individual. It's a compelling "What if..." scenario with a happy ending.

In *Resilience, Reciprocity and Ecological Economics*, Trosper – an economist well-versed in anthropological literature – is part of an academic effort in the natural and social sciences to investigate how past human cultures lived successfully within local ecosystems without destroying them. Trosper spent much of his research time with the Nisga'a First Nation.

Formerly a University of British Columbia professor and a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana, Trosper first pierces an enduring myth that stalls any conversation about how some human cultures lived within nature's boundaries – the myth of the Noble Savage. The myth was debunked almost one hundred years ago, and again by anthropologist Ter Ellingson in his 2001 book *The Myth of the Noble Savage*. Trosper further eviscerates the myth's "spin game" by methodically

dissecting how First Nations from northern California to southern Alaska exploited a common pool of resources for the collective good.

He devotes over half the book to revealing how First Nations societal regulations protected their resources from overexploitation. Generosity and reciprocity are key protective elements employed by the potlatch, a societal ritual providing rules around land proprietorship. Only good resource managers could keep the wealth (salmon) flowing to the community. For anyone who enjoys economists' preoccupation with game theory, Trosper casts the potlatch system into the "prisoner's dilemma." Through the potlatch, First Nations solved the dilemma in the case of fisheries: "leaders of the groups with access to the fishery were required to give away wealth through feasts. This requirement, applied to the prisoner's dilemma story, is that the fishermen share their catch" (53).

It's Trosper's trip into the alternative universe, however, that imparts a sense of moving towards creating a resilient society. In the chapter entitled "An Alternative History of Industrialization of the Northwest Coast," he creates a counter-factual history of how two disparate groups with different economic systems could have interacted. In trotting through how canneries, mining, or lumber industries might have functioned under an Aboriginal economic system, Trosper, as an economist, paints a picture for readers – an illuminating picture illustrating how any economy can have a conservation ethic by invoking societal norms that consider the group (present and future) and not just the individual.

*Voyages: To the New World
and Beyond*

Gordon Miller

Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre,
2011. 200 pp. 90 colour illus.
\$55.00 cloth.

BARRY GOUGH
Victoria

THIS IS A BOOK about ships, large and small, and of their experiences – mainly in the line of exploration and discovery. From the mid-fifteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries the world's oceans and distant annexes were sailed by enterprising mariners on commercial and naval ventures. The global reach of Europe was soon achieved, and trades in essential and exotic commodities brought into existence a worldwide commercial network that underpinned diplomatic struggles and, in many instances, wars and testy rivalries for control of distant shores and hitherto unknown peoples. Much has been made of the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and the Indian Ocean as locales for the unity of peoples on their littorals to establish, say, in the first instance, a Mediterranean civilization.

With this book we are taken to broader seas, where more adventurous mariners with better ships found an opportunity in their individual lines of work. Gordon Miller, marine artist of unique artistic skills, happily matched with an unbending determination to ensure that what he paints has authenticity, has selected watercraft from the great ages, beginning with the Norse, moving through the age of the Hanseatic League, progressing through to the vessels of Columbus, and advancing to the ships that brought Cartier and Drake to the

shores of North America, east and west, respectively. He then proceeds into the great age of discovery, notably introducing the search for breadfruit at Tahiti; moving on to portray vessels from San Blas that sailed to establish San Diego, San Francisco, and Nootka; advancing to show Spanish vessels in high Alaskan latitudes; and venturing to show merchant shipping in the sea otter trade, sailing Hawaiian waters or passing through a harbour full of junks in Whampoa Roads, Pearl River, Canton.

But Gordon Miller's love is the collectivity of sailing ships that added so much to European knowledge of the Northwest Coast of North America in the late eighteenth century. He gives pride of place to Spanish ships, such as Francisco de Eliza's *San Carlos* and José María Narváez's *Santa Saturnina*. These vessels, and others, made an incomplete examination of the Strait of Juan de Fuca then pointed the way into the Strait of Georgia, identifying or confirming Haro Strait and Rosario Strait (the outside passages, so to speak, of the San Juan Islands). Diminishing food supplies and hostile First Nations deterred further progress, and it was not until the triumphant year 1792 that Galiano and Valdes and Vancouver and Broughton made their fuller examinations, disproving claims to a North West Passage in these latitudes, something that was confirmed by Alexander Mackenzie, first across the continent the following year. The Americans make their appearance, notably in the form of Robert Grey's *Columbia Rediviva*, and there is a lovely view of the launch of the *Adventure* at Meares Island in early 1792. Miller has painstakingly detailed these explorations under sail, and then we get an indication of the future, and of steam power, with several

views of the Hudson's Bay Company's *Beaver*, one lying off of Fort Rupert, northern Vancouver Island, that place of such evanescent commercial activity but long-standing residence of the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation. Always for those who study the age of sail there is regret, even remorse, that so little was done to preserve these and other ships for posterity. But Gordon Miller has two concluding views that are, in their own way, testimonies to a world that we have lost. One is the clipper *Thermopylae* (rival to the *Cutty Sark*), which, at one time, called Victoria home port. The other is the *Pamir*, last seen on the Northwest Coast in 1946. With this the age of sail had closed, except for the yachting age, which was to succeed it. Sailing for commercial reasons or navigating for scientific results had given way to new passions still with us.

With concern for accuracy matched with artistic beauty and discerning proportion, Gordon Miller's paintings are a delight to view. This book is a tribute to a life of hard and dedicated work. His paintings grace many fine collections and are housed in many museums. In addition, you will find his paintings reproduced in many a book on Northwest Coast history, an enduring tribute to their accuracy and compelling attraction.



Angus McDonald of the Great Divide: The Uncommon Life of a Fur Trader, 1816-1889

Steve A. Anderson

Coeur d'Alene ID: Museum of
North Idaho, 2011. 232 pp.
\$19.95 paper.

DEIDRE SIMMONS
Victoria

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY (HBC) has been a source for North American historians since the late nineteenth century. From the beginnings of its adventures in the fur trade, the HBC's head office in London, England, sent out writing supplies and laid down rules for keeping post account books and journals at each of their remote posts. These post journals and related correspondence were then sent back to London each year with the returning fur cargoes. Not all of the correspondence, journals, and account books made their way back to the HBC's headquarters/offices in London. Some were lost (overturned canoes, unsuccessful expeditions, ships sunk at sea, mishaps at fur trade posts). Others have turned up in various museums, archives, and rare bookshops, deposited by family members who found them sometimes generations later. I have documented many such stories in my book *Keepers of the Record*.

One such treasure, the "Memoranda" book of Angus McDonald, is in the University of Montana library (MSS 344). It may have been one of several kept by McDonald during over thirty years as post master, clerk, and chief trader of the HBC, but it is the only one known to have survived. It is not an official HBC document, but it is written in one of the standard books sent out by the company

for the documenting of the daily post routine. The handwritten manuscript has been transcribed by Steve Anderson and excerpted in his biography, *Angus McDonald of the Great Divide: The Uncommon Life of a Fur Trader*. The “Memoranda” contains narratives of his exploits, observations, and adventures, plus stories and poems, including stories told by his Métis wife, Catherine, and written down by McDonald. Anderson has chronicled the life of McDonald based on his comprehensive research in the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (HBCA) located in Winnipeg, and in many archives in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, using passages from McDonald’s writing to enhance the story and to provide personal glimpses of this man’s approach to life in unsettled territory at the end of the nineteenth century.

McDonald was born in Scotland in 1816 and received formal schooling including studies in the classics, philosophy, and literature. He joined the HBC in 1838 as a general servant with his first posting in York Factory. He was twenty-two, a rugged Scot, tall and strong with an inquisitive nature, a bright intellect, and quick wit. He was soon sent west to Fort Colvile (now in Washington State), and had other postings throughout the Columbia District where he hunted and traded furs, clerked at and managed fur trade posts for the Company, and lived a lifestyle more akin to that of the Aboriginal people he interacted with on a daily basis. McDonald resigned from the Company at the age of fifty-six as the fur trade was waning in 1872. He never returned to his homeland and died in 1889 near Fort Connah in Montana.

Anderson has been researching and writing stories on the Pacific Northwest’s fur trade since the early

1980s. He is the retired manager of Fort Nisqually Living History Museum. This book provides a uniquely personal perspective to the history of the Pacific Northwest, and with the accompanying information provided by Anderson, adds to a general knowledge of fur trade history and the relevance of the HBC in the area. There have been other personal diaries published, and the HBCA post journals contain the details of day-to-day life in the trading posts, but there are no such journals for the years that McDonald served at Fort Colvile or Fort Connah (or Flathead). McDonald does not report on the fort activities – supposedly he included those in other books that are now lost – and the “Memoranda” is more of a personal record. Records such as this are rare among fur traders for this time period.

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The Private Journal of Captain G.H. Richards: The Vancouver Island Survey (1860–1862)

Linda Dorricott and Deidre Cullon, eds.

Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2012.
272 pp. \$24.95 paper.

BARRY GOUGH
Victoria

CAPTAIN (later Admiral Sir) George Henry Richards, Royal Navy, is one of the great personages of

that unique era in modern history known as Pax Britannica – a period when “Britain Ruled the Waves” and sometimes, as I have often said, “Waved the Rules.” During the long quietude between incarcerating Napoleon at St. Helena in 1815 and going to war against Imperial Germany in 1914, the peacetime missions of the navy were extensive, indeed global. The life of Richards shows this global reach. Although he is better remembered in British Columbia, it should also be mentioned that he is well known as a naval figure in New Zealand, the Falkland Islands, in Montevideo, and in British hydrographic circles. Indeed, so capable was he as a hydrographic surveyor and commander of ships that he became hydrographer of the navy in 1864, the highest mark in his line of work. He was at the top of his profession.

He was an aquatic globetrotter. He had been to the Pacific in *HMS Sulphur*, taken an active share in the China war of 1839-42, and boosted his reputation as a seagoing fighter. He surveyed the southeast coast of South America and was promoted to commander for gallantry in storming the forts on the River Parana. He surveyed in New Zealand waters during the Maori Wars and then went to the High Arctic to search for Captain Sir John Franklin. He was a man of tremendous physical strength, and although he apparently suffered a hand injury, perhaps in the Parana affair, he made one of the most extraordinary sledging journeys on record when searching for Franklin. But his monument lies in the waters and shores of British Columbia, where he directed a massive survey under tremendous pressure, with the aggressive Americans then searching out the goldfields of the Fraser and Cariboo, and the United States Army

landing intemperately on the disputed San Juan Islands. As the book under review shows, he had an important role in the survey of Vancouver Island and coastal mainland British Columbia, particularly the former, and by the time his work was completed most of the major harbours and ports of Vancouver Island had been charted. And, given the size of the Island and the difficulties of navigation, this achievement was prodigious. Surveying was the harbinger of commerce, and at the time that Richards was in these waters the challenges of promoting change were mighty, the colonies being largely out of the mainstream of world commerce and affairs. It must be kept in mind that, during these years, the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) was losing its monopolistic dominance, San Francisco and Sitka were the main ports of call in western North America, the Panama Canal was only a dream – as was a Canadian transcontinental railway – and no docking facilities existed at the nascent naval base of Esquimalt. And if this were not enough, a great squabble had developed between the Colony of Vancouver Island and the Colony of British Columbia as to primacy in trade and commercial futures.

Richards arrived in the steam sloop *HMS Plumper* at Esquimalt on 9 November 1857. That vessel proved too small and defective for this part of the world, and the paddle sloop *Hecate* was sent out to replace it, arriving 23 December 1860. Richards was in charge of the survey until he sailed for home in the *Hecate*, leaving his understudy Master Daniel Pender in charge. At the close of the *Hecate’s* commission, early in 1863, Pender was placed in command of the *Beaver*, hired from the HBC, and continued until 1870. Richards’ first duty was to complete the survey of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and recently,

in reviewing the particulars of this, I was again reminded of the heroic and important nature of that work. Richards headed up an important team of surveyors to complete this work, the details of which found their way into a chart of the strait and early sailing directions. On his recommendation, two lighthouses were ordered erected on the British side of the strait, one at Race Rocks and the other, Fisgard, at the entrance to Esquimalt harbour. Richards had the pleasure of seeing these lights illuminated, and they proved of inestimable value to navigation, as did their partners on the American shore. Richards, while here, was appointed a second commissioner to Captain James Prevost, the UK representative, to fix, with his US counterpart, the actual position of the 49th parallel where it reached Pacific tidewater. Richards later placed a marker on Point Roberts for the same purpose.

The private journal here under review begins in February 1860 and recounts the various voyages and passages, particularly those pertaining to the 1860 survey season. Among various places featured are Haro Strait, Burrard Inlet, Nanaimo, Johnstone Strait, and Nootka. Details of the 1861 and 1862 survey seasons continued, much like those of the 1860 season, though in different locales – pressing north to the new mission station of Metlakatla, for instance, and revisiting Fort Rupert, Vancouver Island, then in sad decline. Social commentary about First Nations peppers the Richards narrative, though this was not a preoccupation with him. He was a surveyor, and he kept to his task. Mrs. Richards had joined him, courtesy of an agreement with the Admiralty, and their first son was named “Vancouver,” after the explorer (not the city, then unfounded). Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Pender’s first son,

also born on Vancouver Island, was called “Esquimalt.” As for place names, Richards followed the injunction of Admiral Francis Beaufort, a former hydrographer, that Native names were to be kept wherever possible and that the application of politicians and statesmen was to be kept in line. But some places did not have Native names that could be called up, and, accordingly, we find Thormanby Islands in Malaspina Strait, named after the racehorse who won the 1860 Derby; Merry Island, named for the racehorse’s owner, J.C. Merry; Buccaneer Bay, named for a faltering contestant in the derby; and Tattenham Ledge, named for that well-known turn in the course that comes just before the horses run down the straight for the winning post. These legacies come from the time when Richards was on survey. He encouraged the continuance of Spanish place names on this coast. When reading these journals we are reminded of the clear-headed nature of the commander, how he was able to direct a team of commissioned and non-commissioned subordinates, how he was a great leader of men, and how he was able to keep up morale, prevent desertion, and maintain strict discipline afloat and on shore.

Many of these details, and others besides, are given in this book, though the reader is left to fill in many particulars and to do some additional research to supplement the narrative and the sparse (and sometimes incomplete) footnotes. It is to be regretted that the editors are not more fully versed in the particulars of the colonial histories of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. Perhaps the greatest matter of omission is any discussion of the “Report of Captain Richards on the Harbours of Vancouver’s Island and British Columbia, 23 October 1858.” Richards made this report to

Governor James Douglas, and the whole was reprinted, with supplementary correspondence, in the *Parliamentary Papers, Part II for 1858*, dealing with British Columbia (and Vancouver Island). Richards recommended that if Vancouver Island was not to be part of British Columbia, then a site for a seaport for British Columbia could be located just above Annacis Island, sixteen kilometres below Fort Langley on the Fraser River. This sparked a battle royal between Victoria and what became New Westminster as to primacy for commercial growth. This can be found in the press and Colonial Office records. New Westminster Municipal Council thanked Richards for bringing the nine-hundred-ton *Hecate* to the wharves, thus dispelling arguments from Victoria that the Fraser was unnavigable. But Richards kept private his own views, as this entry for 1 November 1862 reveals: "The Town of NWr has increased somewhat, but there are not the same unerring signs of prosperity as at Victoria. A miserable contracted jealous feeling pervades all classes, military included, and a wretched kind of repining that they cannot alter their geographical position, a desire to quarrel with everyone who comes from Victoria, or says a word in its favour." The contrast between the two places was great, he observed, and he noted that the miners coming south for the winter got on to the first ferry bound for Victoria. He added wryly, "The misfortune of New Westminster is that Vancouver Id with its beautiful harbours and pleasant resting places exists" (226).

In later years, Richards became a pillar of the scientific world, a fellow of the Royal Society and a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. Like many a great hydrographer he later went into the private world of commerce, in

his case helping lay submarine cables across the North Atlantic. In his time, he sailed the seven seas. Further, he knew all about triangulation, lunars, chronometers and how to regulate them; the drawing of draft plans; the engraving of charts; and how knowledge was best disseminated in the Victorian world. He had the capacity, too, to keep his political superiors on their toes so that they were careful what they said about the workaday world of plumbing the depths of the oceans and shoals and of finding reefs and rocks that posed hazards to shipping. The account he gives of how the *Plumper* ended up on the south side of the Strait of Juan de Fuca rather than on the north shore, where Richards thought he was, is a testament to the fact that these were (and are) dangerous waters, with tricky tides and currents, prone to storms and blanketing fog. As Richards was reminded, he inhabited the natural world, with all its wonders, surprises, and difficulties. Such is the life of the mariner.

This printing of the Richards journal of the early years of the 1860s, though by no means the complete story of Richards on the Northwest Coast, is welcome. In a footnote the editors point out that Phillip and Helen Akrigg knew that this journal existed and was in private hands in England. I made several requests to them in my attempts to run down all important and relevant documentation in the course of my research for *Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-1890* (UBC Press, 1984). Naively, I had thought that scholars would share their findings. I was to be sadly disappointed. This experience was the only case of keep-away that I have ever experienced as a historian; I expect I am not alone. In the circumstances, I was obliged to devote more time to

reading the in-letters of Richards to the Admiralty and the hydrographer as well as to James Douglas. And, on reflection, I am assured that the external views Richards expressed are the more important and the more valuable to telling the story, particularly with regard to such subjects as Indian policy, commercial development, and making navigation safer by the preparation of charts and *Sailing Directions* (published by the Admiralty). A person of great humanity, Richards knew both sides of the Pax Britannica – how to be tough and yet how to extend responsibilities of trusteeship to First Nations. The belligerent and the humanitarian went hand in hand, and we come away from his pages thinking that he has given us a window on a world perhaps now lost but one whose features are discernable – features that continue to pose problems that are not so different from those of yesteryear. And every mariner, every yachtsman, owes a debt to George Henry Richards.

Searching for a Seaport: With the 1870s CPR Explorer Surveyors on the Coast of British Columbia

James Sirois, with a foreword
by Barry Gough

Hagensborg, BC: Skookum Press,
2011. 200 pp. \$34.95 cloth.

JAY SHERWOOD
Vancouver, BC

WHILE RESEARCHING *Surveying Central British Columbia* I learned that, in the 1920s, Frank Swannell several times found evidence of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) surveys that had been made through

the Tweedsmuir and Chilcotin areas a half century earlier. He cut out an inscription written onto a tree in an 1876 camp and brought it back to the Royal British Columbia Museum, and I had the opportunity to view this special artefact.

When we think of surveying the route for Canada's first transcontinental railway we usually picture the difficulties of getting through the Rockies or Major Rogers finding a pass through the Selkirks. Most people don't realize that equally important and difficult was the search for a seaport on the Pacific Ocean. That is the subject of James Sirois's latest book, *Searching for a Seaport*. Throughout the 1870s, the CPR sent several survey parties to examine every possible harbour and inlet from the US boundary to the mouth of the Skeena River. The surveyors were trying to find a route that would connect with one of the possible passes through the Rockies, provide a feasible railway grade through the Coast Range, and reach the ocean at a suitable seaport that had sufficient land to accommodate a large city. Through excerpts from the journals kept by the surveyors, Sirois chronicles the incredible hardships and near-starvation most survey crews endured.

As Sirois points out: "The CPR project in BC should have begun with a consensus of the only places on the BC coast where a world-class harbour could be developed" (159). He also contends that: "There were arguably, at that time, only two mainland locations in coastal BC with the potential of developing into a world-class harbour. One was Burrard Inlet and the other, up until 1879, was the disregarded northern possibility of Port Simpson" (159). The geography of the BC coast was not as well understood as were the possible routes through the Rocky Mountains.

A closer examination of the potential seaports before examining the Rockies would have enabled the CPR to eliminate many of the surveys they did in the 1870s. As the men worked in the field searching for the best technical route, engineers and politicians lobbied for their preferred location, while the Canadian government looked at the route with an eye to its neighbour across the border.

In the end, the selection of the CPR route across the Prairies and through British Columbia to the Pacific seaport was based more on political than on technical considerations. Sirois writes: “to the complete astonishment of many, and the total horror of others, the Syndicate, on the basis of their own agenda, scrapped Fleming’s [i.e., Sandford Fleming, chief engineer] ten years of transcontinental rail engineering with 1,160 miles of location surveys through the western interior – to say nothing of the millions spent and the many lives that were lost” (175). Fortunately for British Columbia, the political choice included Burrard Inlet as the seaport.

Sirois’s book includes several photographs taken by Charles Horetzky, one of the surveyors, and hand-drawn maps made by the author. The author draws on his knowledge of the area and includes some personal photographs of locations visited by CPR surveyors. He provides an extensive bibliography and footnotes but no index. The book would have benefitted had it been better edited and had its information been organized more carefully. The first quarter of the book, which is largely background, could have been compressed. Some of the source material is not properly referenced. Despite these drawbacks, *Searching for a Seaport* is an informative and absorbing account of a little known but vitally

important part of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

*Nature’s Northwest:
The North Pacific Slope in the
Twentieth Century*

William G. Robbins and
Katrine Barber

Tucson, AZ: The University of
Arizona Press, 2011. 286 pp.
\$24.95 paper.

RICHARD A. RAJALA
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IN *Nature’s Northwest*, William G. Robbins and Katrine Barber have synthesized a wealth of scholarship on the Greater Northwest, encompassing Idaho, Oregon, Washington, western Montana, and southern British Columbia. The authors track social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental themes in a three-part narrative that pays due attention to the significance of the 49th parallel while at the same time capturing the transcendent forces of settlement and global capitalism. The resulting treatment emphasizes the dispossession of American Indians and BC First Nations from their homelands, the emergence and recent crumbling of resource economies, a consequent demographic shift disadvantaging rural communities in relation to metropolitan centres, and a trajectory of political change from government activism to post-1970s neoliberalism. Lines of inequality have sharpened, then, as early twentieth-century promotional exuberance over the region’s abundance has given way to degraded environments and “an eroded social cohesiveness” at

the end of the millennium (11).

The narrative begins by documenting early twentieth-century transcontinental railway construction, resource exploitation for global markets, anti-Asian policies, and the determination of governments to push Natives/First Nations to the margins. Big Bill Haywood, the “quintessential turn-of-the-century western radical,” personifies proletarian opposition to capitalist exploitation, with workers and radical ideologies crossing a permeable border freely (36). But reform enthusiasm, the authors make clear, did not extend to Aboriginal peoples whose seasonal participation in the resource economy and resistance to assimilationist policies such as residential schooling and the potlatch law illustrate their adjustment to “the larger society on their own terms” (50).

Part 2, spanning the world wars, extends the discussion of class conflict and Aboriginal issues. By the mid-1920s militant industrial unionism had been quashed and nativism gave rise to enthusiasm for the Ku Klux Klan, albeit with less strength in British Columbia than elsewhere. An intervening and very rewarding chapter on regional culture between 1900 and 1930 ranges in topic from the art of Emily Carr and Charles Russell to the collectors of Aboriginal artefacts and stories such as those offered by James Teit and Montana’s Lucullus McWhorter, whose efforts at documenting Native cultures often contributed to narratives that relegated Native people “to a distant and romantic past” yet also contributed to historical understanding (92). Resuming the narrative with a chapter devoted to the wrenching changes brought about by the Great Depression and Second World War, Robbins and Barber provide an insightful analysis of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal relief

programs; however, more attention to Canadian federalism would have encouraged an assessment of the On-to-Ottawa Trek and 1938’s Bloody Sunday in Vancouver.

Part 3 treats the evolution of the post-industrial Greater Northwest. Concerns about the transition to a peacetime economy faded in the American states thanks to federal investment in Cold War military facilities, while the timber industry boomed on both sides of the border in an era of consolidation. Pacific Northwest agricultural production soared as well, mechanization triggering a demographic shift from the countryside to cities, where African Americans who had moved west for defence work faced discrimination in housing and access to public facilities. For Native Americans, the Cold War logic of liberating repressed peoples produced the policy of “termination,” designed to end federal trusteeship. Introduced with catastrophic consequences for the Klamath tribes of Oregon, but in the end rejected by tribes in western Washington, termination had the “ironic effect of strengthening tribal identity” (139). The goal of fuller integration motivated postwar Canadian policy as well, but 1951 changes to the Indian Act did nothing to correct the marginal economic position of increasingly restive BC First Nations or to resolve the land title question.

Robbins and Barber bring their considerable expertise to a splendid chapter on postwar environmental change, highlighting the “dam-building juggernaut” that knowingly sacrificed salmon and Native fishing sites to the perceived social and economic benefits of hydroelectric power, flood control, and irrigation – a logic of high modernity that carried over to British Columbia under W.A.C. Bennett’s

Two Rivers Policy. In explaining how the main stem of the Fraser River remains free-flowing, the authors credit Canadian policy-makers for listening to fisheries biologists, a perspective that obscures Ottawa's tendency to let BC politicians have their way when push came to shove with regard to industrializing rivers. The following chapter on modern environmental politics does refer to federal-provincial conflict, although the transition from the election of Dave Barrett's NDP government in 1972 to the Forest Practices Code of the early 1990s might have been better contextualized by paying some attention to Jeremy Wilson's *Talk and Log: Wilderness Politics in British Columbia* (1998). The account is strong, however, in placing Aboriginal peoples at the forefront of environmental issues and in documenting the fight over treaty fishing rights in the American states, the impact of the *Calder* and *Sparrow* cases in British Columbia, and the Bill Bennett government's continued denial of Aboriginal title.

After a wide-ranging discussion of regional culture over the 1930-2000 period, Robbins and Barber turn to a sobering epilogue. At the end of the millennium rural economies are in disarray as resource communities experience the arrival of affluent retirees and pleasure-seekers. Growing urban centres exhibit a "veneer of wealth" that masks the struggles of an underclass of marginally employed service workers (218). The new economy is one of deepening inequality, then, reflecting the forces of globalization and neoliberal politics. The border matters, however; despite the deterioration of the Canadian welfare state, its provisions still compare favourably to the American model. Meanwhile, although the region's increasingly

diverse population poses challenges, the authors see a strong commitment to the environment among newcomers and established residents alike, presenting them as the source of a "collective sense of commonwealth" with the potential to give rise to healthier policy (232).

Robbins and Barber deserve praise for writing a transnational regional history of great thematic reach and coherence. While the decision to restrict the analysis to southern British Columbia might have been justified – and I have called for a fuller engagement with the historiography of the province at a couple of points – the strengths of this ambitious project far outweigh any shortcomings. I would not hesitate to make this the core text in a course on BC-Pacific Northwest history.

*Seeing Reds: The Red Scare of
1918-1919, Canada's First
War on Terror*

Daniel Francis

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press,
2010. 280 pp. Illus. \$27.95 cloth.

DUFF SUTHERLAND
Selkirk College

IN *Seeing Reds: The Red Scare of 1918-1919, Canada's First War on Terror*, Daniel Francis provides an overview of the response of the Canadian state and elite to the postwar labour revolt. Although he writes for a popular audience, Francis makes extensive use of the wealth of academic writing and research produced on the topic over the past generation. He also nicely sets the events in Canada within the broader context of the worldwide social, political, and economic upheaval in the aftermath of the First World War.

Francis concludes that working people wanted change in Canada after the First World War but that there was not a widespread desire for violent revolution. Viewed in this light, the government and employer demonization and repression of working-class organizations, leaders, and dissent during and after the war reveals the fragility of liberal freedoms and democracy in Canada. Looking back over the past century, Francis concludes that, "when faced with perceived threats to security ... the Canadian government, with the support of the press and much of the public, has responded ... with Robert Borden's stern hand of repression" (246). While parts of these conclusions may be debated, *Seeing Reds* is nonetheless an engaging and useful work that deserves a wide readership.

As his title suggests, Francis finds the roots of Canada's "Red Scare" in the events of the First World War. Working-class Canadians came to deeply resent the Borden government's handling of the war effort, which saw industrialists profit on munitions contracts, a soaring cost of living, high casualty rates devastate working families, the imposition of conscription of manpower but not wealth, and the internment of immigrant workers as dangerous "foreigners." By war's end, many working-class Canadians felt the country had to change; their radical union and political leaders saw the revolutions unfolding in Germany and Russia as models for this change.

Certainly the Borden government, along with many business leaders and a large part of the middle class, saw the growing discontent sweeping the country as the beginnings of a revolution. In response, the government used its wartime powers to crush working-class protests, strikes, and

dissent – a campaign that continued until 1920 and included the suppression of radical unions and parties; the deportation and jailing of leftists; widespread censorship, including the banning of foreign-language newspapers; the use of police and militia forces to break up strikes and protests; and the mainstream media's demonization of "Reds" as dangerous and ruthless terrorists.

According to Francis, the full-blown repression of the scare began in the summer of 1918, when Canadian workers were in outright revolt. A strike wave rolled across the country, radicals led the union movement, there was an explosion of anger at the killing of the labour organizer and draft resister Ginger Goodwin, and many were following the successes of the Bolsheviks in Russia. The scare culminated with state and employer actions – organized by the Citizens' Committee of 1000 – to break the Winnipeg General Strike, which the elite feared was part of a broader conspiracy to overthrow the "system." For the government and industrialist "scaremongers," this conspiracy could be traced back to, among other events, the Western Labour Conference in Calgary in March 1919, at which radical union leaders had endorsed the formation of the revolutionary One Big Union. Francis determines that the scare wound down after the courts found the Winnipeg strike leaders guilty of seditious conspiracy at the end of the famous "show trials" of 1920, which were prosecuted by members of the city's elite.

All of this is written in a clear and compelling way. One problem, though, with viewing this critical period in Canadian history as a passing episode (a "scare") is that it underestimates how long the repression went on. In

British Columbia, one can see all of the same techniques of state and employer repression present in the breaking of the Wobbly-led logger strikes of 1923–24. At the same time, it is hard to disagree with the examples Francis presents in his conclusion of other moments when the Canadian government responded with repression to perceived threats to the stability of the state – from the Communist Party activism of the 1930s to the current “war on terror.” This does reveal the fragile nature of freedom of expression and the rule of law in Canada. However, one could argue that Canada’s elite, rather than episodically, has always and continuously taken threats to its interests seriously. One feels, too, that the *Strike Bulletin* editor Abe Heap’s call at the end of the war for a “better day” does represent an ongoing desire and efforts by many to build a significantly different Canada.

*Swift and Strong: A Pictorial
History of the British Columbia
Regiment (Duke of
Connaught’s Own)*

Ron Leblanc, Keith Maxwell,
Dwayne Snow, Kelly Deschênes

Vancouver: The British Columbia
Regiment (Duke of Connaught’s
Own) Museum Society, 2011.
353 pp., Illus. \$50.00 cloth.

JAMES WOOD
University of Victoria

HAVING DEDICATED *Swift and Strong* “to all Dukes, past, present and future,” the authors of this outstanding volume have successfully commemorated the life and times of the British Columbia

Regiment (BCR), Duke of Connaught’s Own, a Vancouver-based armoured reconnaissance regiment of the Canadian Forces Primary Reserve. This pictorial history features a truly impressive array of visual images and first-hand accounts to tell the story of Vancouver’s oldest militia regiment. Maps and primary documents provide a backdrop for the battles, campaigns, and exercises that have characterized the BCR’s existence – events that span from formation of the regiment in 1894 to its active participation in the Boer War, two world wars, UN peacekeeping efforts, and the war in Afghanistan.

As a regimental history, *Swift and Strong* is a welcome successor to Douglas E. Harker’s *The Dukes* (1974), the unit’s first regimental history. Harker’s earlier work was a concise operational history that also detailed the BCR’s many transitions and reorganizations over the years. From its founding as an independent company of British Columbia’s Brigade of Garrison Artillery, in 1899 the regiment was converted to a rifle regiment, then an overseas battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War, followed by conversion to an armoured role during the Second World War and continuing to this day. The serving and retired members of the regiment who produced *Swift and Strong*, however, have gone well beyond Harker’s earlier work, not only in chronological terms by continuing the regiment’s history to the present day but also in the highly visual style of the present volume and in its more personalized focus on the memoirs, journals, biographies, and letters of the Dukes in peacetime and at war. *Swift and Strong* tells the regiment’s history in its own words, the emphasis being on first-hand accounts and high-quality photographic images. The result

will appeal to those with an interest in military history, Vancouver's cultural heritage, and/or the social significance of the militia in a Canadian city. Above all, this book will have its greatest significance to families of serving or former members of the BC Regiment.

This book's vast range of photographic material details not only the war history of the BCR but also its role in the Vancouver community. In these photos, the regiment's history is set against the backdrop of city landmarks, such as the old Imperial Opera House, or defining moments in Vancouver's history, like the send-offs given to its soldiers in 1899, 1914, and 1939. On page 156, one sees the famous "Wait for me, Daddy" photograph of a young boy reaching for his father's hand as the regiment marched off to war in 1939, this being one of the iconic images of Canada's Second World War. Cap badges, medals, and decorations are effectively displayed, along with a wealth of information on both the recipients and the actions for which these decorations were awarded. A special section is reverently devoted to the five Dukes who have been recipients of the Victoria Cross.

In many respects, *Swift and Strong* parallels the redirection of regimental histories in recent years from a narrow focus on operations overseas to a consideration of the social and cultural aspects of the military service in Canada. For example, while the BC Regiment was once known for being "more English than the English," in terms of both its ethnic composition and its traditions, today the regiment is proud that the number of visible minorities in its ranks is ten times that of the Canadian Forces average (270). Rifleman Sam Perry's 1904 victory in the prestigious Basely marksmanship championship is set against another

recent win by the BCR's Corporal Ryan Stacy in 2010. Cross-border training exercises between the BCR and units of the US National Guard in Washington State continue today, much as they did when the first of these visits took place in the 1890s. Traditions such as the St. Julian Dinner continue on an annual basis, with the regiment commemorating the tragic losses it suffered during the 2nd Battle of Ypres in 1915. Meanwhile, new traditions continue to be formed, with Chapter 10 of this book devoted to the experiences of Dukes who have served in Afghanistan.

Swift and Strong imparts a sense of this being a regiment that is not only aware but also justifiably proud of its history. For example, in 2006 a team of Dukes climbed Mount Hart-McHarg and Mount Worthington, two Rocky Mountain peaks named for commanding officers of the regiment who were killed overseas. At the summits they built stone cairns in their honour, this being just one example of the unit's spirit. *Swift and Strong* is another one. This is a beautifully presented and detailed history of the Dukes and a highly personalized portrait of Vancouver's citizen soldiers, past and present.



*The Chuck Davis History of
Metropolitan Vancouver*

Chuck Davis

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2011. 592 pp. \$49.95 cloth.

JOHN DOUGLAS BELSHAW
Langara College

EVERYONE WHO has spent any time researching Vancouver history seems to have a Chuck Davis story. Here's mine. It's about 1980, I'm a callow not-easily-impressed grad student doing work on some arcane heritage tax law and someone suggests I call Chuck because, of course, he knows everybody. I get his answering machine – for the record, this was my very first encounter with such a contraption, which qualifies Chuck as an early adopter. What comes whispering down the line initially is car traffic, distant voices, maybe some construction noises, then “Hear that? That’s the sound of the city. And this? This is the sound of me, Chuck Davis. Leave a message.” Playful and intimately connected to the city he loved, even on his answering machine, there was something incorrigibly original and authentic about Chuck.

That’s a fact and it’s a fun fact as well. Which was Chuck’s stock in trade and the overarching theme of his latest, last, and legacy project. His original *Vancouver Book* is long out of print and obsolete, though its successor, *The Greater Vancouver Book* (a bigger, better “urban encyclopedia”) might still be hunted to ground. Neither volume, however, are precise palimpsests for *Metro*. The earlier incarnations were, frankly, cheaply produced, and it has taken no small effort to ensure that my copy of *Greater* is not mistaken for an abused phone directory destined for

the recycling bin. Neither book made Chuck rich; they were, by all accounts, labours of love. But they did two things: first, they confirmed Chuck’s reputation as an archival packrat of the first order; second, they established an environment in which *Metro* could thrive. To be sure, *Metro* is not going to make Chuck any more wealthy than did its predecessors. He’s beyond that now, though not beyond the reach of praise.

It’s probably best to say what this book is not. It’s not an encyclopaedia nor is it exhaustive. There are no cross-references, the index is limited and incomplete, and there are plenty of redundancies (the Woodward’s story may be found in its near entirety on three separate occasions). There are also the inevitable gaps that every reader will find, based on her or his special interest. Nor is the book rigid in its focus on the history of Vancouver: Chuck was an aficionado of comic strips and he makes mention of the first appearance in a Vancouver newspaper of his favourite syndicated American strips, including *Pogo* (not exactly a Vancouver event). This is essentially a chronology of factoids. There’s none of the analysis and little of the in-depth scrutiny found in *Greater Vancouver*, and *Metro* has a personal touch that makes it very un-encyclopaedic. The book is organized chronologically so there is a sense that this is a comprehensive day-by-day account of everything. But it’s not.

Historians will want to know how the book handles the treacherous terrain of colonialism, sexualities, patriarchy, class. Does it address them head on or does it perpetuate a vision of the past in which differential power is normalized? Yes and no. Chuck recognized oppression and he had the good sense to flag in the past what were, if not turning points, certainly pivotal moments, some of which may

surprise the careful reader. For example, minimum wage legislation in 1924 had the effect of throwing out of work large numbers of Chinese-Vancouverites and was thus a systemic and oblique instrument of discrimination (135). At the same time, the pre-contact history of the region is given only passing attention, and old chestnuts like “first White child born in Vancouver” or “first religious service on Burrard Inlet persist (while neither umpteenth Stó:lō child born nor millionth Aboriginal spiritual event are enumerated). But it’s a book about “facts,” and it is how one defines “facts” that determines much of what goes in between the hard covers.

One can be critical, but that would be both curmudgeonly and churlish and it would miss the point. Chuck (and those kind and decent people who put their shoulders to the wheel to ensure that this book would survive Chuck’s death) set out to produce an assemblage of information meant to excite interest in the city, and in that *Metropolitan Vancouver* succeeds with panache. It honours and it takes to task and it does so in a way that is both delightful and personable. Every now and again Chuck has a walk-on role in his own prose, as when he says “my favourite story about” or “I well remember.” It is like a long lunch with a charming storyteller, someone who adores the subject matter, who loves the smell of microfilm in the morning, and who wants nothing more than to please the audience by demonstrating that, at the end of the day, it’s a wonderful world.

*Chilliwack’s Chinatowns:
A History*
Chad Reimer

Vancouver: Chinese Canadian Historical Society of British Columbia, Gold Mountain Stories, 2011.
211 pp. \$21.49 cloth.

LILYNN WAN
Dalhousie University

WRITING ABOUT immigrants has long been central to Canadian historical scholarship. Today, the history of immigration also constitutes an essential element of the popular imagination in Canada and, in turn, of our sense of national identity. Chad Reimer’s *Chilliwack’s Chinatowns* is a particularly interesting monograph because it speaks to both academic and popular audiences: it employs academic rigour in its extensive use and presentation of archival material and is also written in a narrative that is highly accessible to a popular readership. Reimer offers a detailed and thorough account of the brief existence of Chilliwack’s two Chinatowns in the early part of the twentieth century, from the labourers who cleared land in the 1880s to enable non-Native settlement in the Chilliwack region to the controversial fires that permanently destroyed both communities in the 1920s and 1930s.

Taking what Franca Iacovetta describes as the “cohesive community” approach, Reimer unearths rich accounts of everyday experiences and evidence of the diversity of immigrant life. In his stories, the fluidity of racial and ethnic hierarchies is revealed through descriptions of the interactions and networks that existed among the residents of early Chilliwack.

Chilliwack's Chinatowns follows the conventional master narrative of Chinese immigration that begins with the gold rush and ends with stories of the victory of integration into mainstream Canadian society. It focuses too heavily on men and the merchant elite in reconstructing these communities and is framed in the unproblematized language of contemporary liberal multiculturalism. Nonetheless, Reimer's work makes some valuable contributions. His regional and rural focus offers a useful balance to the existing literature on Chinese and non-European immigrants more generally, which tends to concentrate on urban communities. This rural focus also reveals the essential connections between peripheral regions like Chilliwack and core urban regions like Vancouver, particularly in the discussion of market gardening. As Reimer points out, the surviving documents favour the experiences of the merchant elite, and their stories constitute the bulk of this history. However, the most engaging and analytical parts of this book are found in chapters 10 and 11. These chapters are based on court records and provide insight into the experiences of the labouring classes, who were the demographic majority of the Chinatown community in Chilliwack at this time.

Chilliwack's Chinatowns offers an interesting local history and a wealth of primary document material. It is an excellent resource for students and scholars of race, ethnicity, and immigration in Canada, and it will serve as a basis for further interpretation and analysis.

*The Kelowna Story:
An Okanagan History*

Sharron J. Simpson

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2011. 308 pp. \$36.95 cloth.

DAVID DENDY
Okanagan College

SHARRON SIMPSON's *The Kelowna Story* intends to provide for the people of Kelowna, most of whom are recent arrivals, "a collective memory" (9) of the origin and development of their community. Overall, Simpson has accomplished this in a reasonably balanced manner, largely through summarizing and consolidating existing published material.

She covers the main events of a hundred and fifty years of Kelowna's history, from the establishment of the Okanagan Mission by Oblate missionaries in 1859 to the Okanagan Mountain Fire that destroyed 239 houses in 2003. However, the episodic nature of this coverage means that continuity is somewhat lacking. For example, early buildings in Kelowna's downtown are described, but the reader does not discover when they got electric power, piped water, or sewer service. And it is a little disappointing that Simpson, who served on Kelowna's city council, does not use her first-hand knowledge to give a little of the "behind-the-scenes" story of the explosive development of Kelowna since 1970, when it changed from being an agriculturally based community to being a major urban centre.

Simpson's main focus is on the "development" of the infrastructure of buildings and transportation rather than on people and society. Even the photographs reflect this. Many

buildings get more than one photo, or even double-page spreads, while there are very few images of people. There are no photos of the founding settler, Father Pandosy; or of the first mayor; or of villains such as outlaw Boyd James and murderous police chief David Murdoch, whose stories are all told in considerable detail.

The coverage is somewhat uneven. The First World War is hardly mentioned, and the coverage of the 1920s is quite thin. Native people get only a vague page and a half, with no mention of their actual habitation and activities within Kelowna. The Chinese, who made up over 10 percent of Kelowna's population in 1930, get short shrift, receiving only scattered mentions. And while the outlying communities of Okanagan Mission, Rutland, and Glenmore feature in regular vignettes, East Kelowna doesn't even make the index.

The book is attractively produced and presented. Unfortunately, while editorial care has been taken with grammar, style, and the spelling of names, the book is peppered with factual errors that undermine confidence in its accuracy. Some are simply careless and should have been caught in the editing: the Similkameen Valley is not to the east of the Okanagan (25) and Rock Creek is not to the west of Osoyoos (31). The apple variety is Golden Delicious, not Yellow Delicious (258). The Kelowna Cannery produced No. 2, No. 3, and No. 10 (= one gallon) cans, not "two-, three-, and ten-gallon sizes" (103). Some errors come from an overly casual approach to history. Simpson says that "gas lamps ... lit every house and shop" in 1904 (81); however, despite historical clichés about the Edwardian era, Kelowna never had gas lighting. She means coal-oil lamps. "Kelowna Pride" was a brand of cut tobacco produced in the 1920s not the

1890s, as Simpson has it (72). And some things are simply wrong. The early rancher A.B. Knox did not eventually sell out to his nemesis Tom Ellis (36) but, rather, to a syndicate of property developers. Furthermore, Simpson cannot resist embellishing stories, as with her assertion that "early settlers patrolled the lakeshore, musket in hand, to protect their families" from the lake monster Ogoogo (56). And the killer Boyd James was *not* Jesse James's nephew (106). Since Simpson does not provide source citations, it is difficult for readers to verify which "factual" statements in the book may be trusted.

*The Legendary Betty Frank:
The Cariboo's Alpine Queen*
Betty Frank and Sage
Birchwater

Halfmoon Bay: Caitlin Press, 2011.
272 pp. \$24.95 paper.

JUDY CAMPBELL
Barkerville National Historic Site

AS A YOUNG GIRL, Betty Cox (Frank) had some very non-traditional ideas of what she wanted to be when she grew up. She dreamed of riding horses, mushing dogs, and guiding hunters in the northern wilderness. This autobiographic tale captures the life of a woman who successfully flaunted authority and overturned gender stereotypes while living a life of adventure that would give Indiana Jones heart failure.

Betty was born in 1931 to Dutch immigrant parents in the Peace River Country of northern Alberta. Driven off the farm by hard times, the family joined the hundreds on the move, taking whatever work, legal or illegal,

that could be found. They finally come to rest on a small island north of Powell River, which was home base while Betty's father fished and logged up and down the coast.

Here Betty, the oldest of five children, honed the skills she would need to achieve her ambitions. Her father gave her a .22 rifle when she was just ten, and she soon learned to hunt. She played on the shifting log booms, camped out on their island, and rowed small boats through dangerous tides. She learned to be resourceful and self-reliant, surviving tuberculosis and gangrene and even protecting the neighbour's children and goats from a roving cougar.

But young Betty was a "holy terror" (21) at school. She was a charismatic troublemaker who led other students on rebellious forays into the woods, physically challenged every new student, and drove her teachers to distraction.

Ironically, she became a schoolteacher, one of the few acceptable routes available for a single woman to get a foothold in the north. After teaching in several northern communities, she took a post in Alkali Lake west of Williams Lake. Here, she learned to ride, operated a guest ranch, and eventually started working on her real dream – to become a big game guide and outfitter. The gutsy Betty thought nothing of learning a new trade on the fly, by trial and error, or, more correctly in this wilderness setting, by the "do-or-die" method. She fell through the ice on Quesnel Lake with her entire dog team, fended off bears in her remote trapping cabin, and packed moose carcasses down mountains in the dead of night.

It was also here in the Cariboo that she met her future husband and father of her five children, Gordon Frank. It is at this stage of her narrative

that the uniqueness of Betty's story becomes even more apparent. She did not become a wife, supporting her husband's ambitions. In Betty's life, her ideas and dreams always shaped the family's future. Her guiding and trapping income was supplemented by Gordon's logging, but neither economic nor family stresses could keep Betty out of the mountains.

These are very much Betty's stories, told in her own voice. Sage Birchwater, who is noted for his sensitive portrayal of the life of the Tsilhqot'in woman known as Chiwid, manages to organize the convoluted narrative threads of "the only person ... who can tell five different stories at the same time" (11) into a coherent whole. The book bumps along in approximate chronological order through the various phases of Betty's life, one hair-raising adventure after another.

This is Cariboo history at its grittiest, an unfiltered look at a lifestyle that is now all but lost even in Betty's remote mountains. It is a chronicle of rural people, living at the margins of mainstream BC society, with few resources except what they can glean from the land. To survive, they hunt, fish, cut shakes, and trap. They rely on horses, dogs, beat-up vehicles, and each other. The book documents their lives with a level of detail found in few other sources, and this is perhaps its greatest value. The stories, often hilarious, sometimes scary, and occasionally sad, paint a picture of a life lived to the fullest and of childhood dreams realized beyond expectations.

*Return to Northern British
Columbia: A Photojournal of
Frank Swannell, 1929-39*

Jay Sherwood

Victoria: Royal British Columbia
Museum, 2010. 196 pp. Illus. \$39.95
paper.

BEN BRADLEY
Queen's University

THIS IS THE THIRD and final instalment in Jay Sherwood's series about the work of provincial land surveyor Frank Swannell. It describes Swannell's activities during the 1930s, including several seasons spent in areas of northern British Columbia that he had visited before the First World War – hence the “return” in the title. Like the two previous books, it focuses on Swannell's work in the field. Each chapter is organized around a summer's fieldwork and draws heavily on Swannell's diaries, maps, and photographs as well as on those made by his compatriots. The chapters are illustrated with many superbly reproduced photographs.

In spite of its title, *Return to Northern British Columbia* is not as focused on a particular region of British Columbia as were the previous books. The narrative jumps around the province, just like Swannell did, for surveyors took employment wherever they could get it during the Depression. After working in the Peace River Country from 1929 to 1931, Swannell was unable to find work in 1932 or 1933; hence, there are no chapters covering those years. In 1934 he signed on with the Bedaux Expedition, and his participation lent the fanciful outing a veneer of scientific legitimacy. He then worked on the headwaters of the Skeena River, in the Big Bend

country, and on central Vancouver Island before heading back to northern British Columbia for one last season in 1939.

Swannell's peregrinations show the different kinds of work that surveyors undertook during the 1930s and the different kinds of conditions they encountered. Several chapters emphasize the dramatic changes that air travel brought to the practice of surveying. Aerial photography made surveying faster and cheaper, while airplanes made it easier to move survey crews around the country and to keep them supplied. Swannell had much less need for packers and boatmen than in previous years, and this may explain why there are far fewer images of First Nations people in this book than there were in the previous two: air travel freed surveyors from reliance on the people who lived on the lands they examined.

This series provides a valuable look at surveying in British Columbia from the perspective of the men who worked “on the ground.” It is also a useful resource for historians interested in some of the province's lesser-known corners. However, the sustained focus on fieldwork results in Swannell and his surveys appearing detached from the broader social, economic, and environmental history of British Columbia. This final book in the series would have benefitted from more reflection on Swannell's overall significance to the province, and the short chapter about his retirement years could have provided a venue for this. Sherwood shows that Swannell lived to see mines, mills, roads, and utility lines built in areas of the province that had once seemed impenetrable. He even attended the 1952 opening of the Kenney Dam, which flooded extensive sections of the Nechako River valley that he had surveyed prior to the First World

War. Here, surely, was an opportunity to consider the land surveyors' role in facilitating these kinds of developments, an opportunity to locate them in "the big picture." Given the amount of work that Sherwood has put into tracing Swannell's travels and travails, this reader would have appreciated his thoughts on the matter.

*The British Columbia Court
of Appeal: The First Hundred
Years, 1910–2010*

Christopher Moore

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010, for
The Osgoode Society for Canadian
Legal History. 304 pp. \$85.00 cloth.

DELOYD J. GUTH
University of Manitoba

A LAW COURT HAS an inner life, beyond the many outside lives that it can rescue, ruin, remedy, and reward. When it is an appellate court, the urge to converge as group judgment replaces the isolation of the solo trial judge; but in all cases the goal is to speak with one voice for maximum authority and future predictability in law.

Provincial courts of appeal in Canada are recent statutory creatures. They have taken most of the twentieth century to settle jurisdictionally alongside the Federal Court of Appeal and the Court Martial Appeal Court, none of which is constitutionally embedded and all of which operate beneath and are answerable to the Supreme Court of Canada. British Columbia was the third province (after Ontario [1867] and Manitoba [1906]) to grow a separate appellate court out of its trial court, by statute in 1909 and with its first sitting in 1910. Prior to this, in Canada, an

appeal of any trial court judgment had to remain within that same court, before the collective colleagues of the trial judge who rendered the appealed judgment.

One century later, making 2010 its historical *annus mirabilis*, the British Columbia Court of Appeal has been quadruply served: by *The First Hundred Years*, by a special 2009 issue of *BC Studies*, by a documentary film entitled *Though the Heavens Fall* (out of the Justice Education Society of British Columbia), and by published notes and articles scattered through volume 68 (2010) of *The Advocate* (British Columbia), offering an excellent historical summary by Hamar Foster, some scintillating alphabetical doggerel by retired justice Martin Taylor, and other commemorative notes organized and edited by Christopher Harvey. Let the record show that this Court of Appeal has made a commendable effort at creating its historical identity.

The First Hundred Years pioneers two novelties for law court history: it is a team effort on the part of a law student committee of researchers-writers; and it puts its narrative into one chapter per decade, 1910 to 2010, to supply the reader with individual judicial biographies and then a brief sketch of one "typical" case. Each biography offers a one-page quickie formula of birth, education, law practice, bench service, death: in short, a series of obituary notices, lacking the more substantive depth of a *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* entry, with nary a mention of specific judgments that might define and measure the judge's abilities. British Columbia, perhaps uniquely among Canadian provinces, has produced an amazing number of biographical portraits in oral history collections, books, articles, and obituaries – a culture of personalities and individualism – that *The First Hundred*

Years commendably and thoroughly collects, cites, and, for this cohort of justices, summarizes. But it does so in a two-dimensionally flat manner that avoids any prosopographical synthesizing of the characteristics of this cohort in order to show why and how the same sorts of people shaped British Columbia's rule of law.

From its earliest days, after An Act Constituting a Court of Appeal and Declaring its Jurisdiction (sbc 1907, c. 10), the Court of Appeal had more than the normal share of characters. By the time of its first sitting in Victoria, 4 January 1910, the court had survived the bitter public vindictiveness dividing its two most prominent jurists: Gordon Hunter, a "bon-vivant," and Archer Martin, an "irascible" loner (to borrow words from David Ricardo Williams). There was the austere prejudiced Roman Catholic (Cornelius Hawkins O'Halloran), the absentee Gordon Sloan (who made a cottage industry of chairing public policy commissions instead of judging), and, at least well into the 1980s, a preponderance of Scottish-named justices. In the twenty-first century the court achieved gender parity, a policy that began with Chief Justice Nathan Nemetz, no doubt urged by his wife Belle, and expanded under the current chief justice of British Columbia, Lance Finch. *The First Hundred Years* offers a one-page numerical group portrait for each decade's justices: for the first decade, eight out of ten came from Ontario, all were identified with one of the two political parties and averaged nineteen years in law practice before appointment, and most had undergraduate but no law school degrees. And for the most recent decade, the majority are from British Columbia, and all have law school degrees, no registered political affiliations, and average over

twenty-two years in practice (all but one in Vancouver).

If the actors on the bench came from the same backgrounds, and the actors at the bar are ignored, one can understand why the Court of Appeal's judgments privileged narrow legal formalism, at least before the 1980s. *The First Hundred Years'* first "typical" case, involving the *Komagata Maru* (1913), is featured for effectively shutting Canada's doors to South Asian immigrants until at least 1947, while entrenching judicial authority for non-reviewable parliamentary supremacy. In its second decade, in the *Gonzalves* case (1924), the Court of Appeal confirmed the eviction of settlers from the Stanley Park reserve – settlers who had claimed a prescriptive right to residence since 1874. Then, in 1933, the *Richards and Woolridge* case forged anti-labour law into a weapon for BC employers, at least until Justice Ivan Rand's "formula" after the Second World War. For its first half-century, this Court of Appeal was very much in tune with the politically conservative anglophile elites who conducted provincial business out of the Vancouver Club (established 1889). Indeed, most were members.

The 1940s are represented by a lurid divorce case that, admittedly, "broke no new ground and created no important precedent" (95), just a lot of media attention, as did the chosen negligence case for the 1950s. In the latter, the court again sided with a corporation against a citizen, refusing to apply the widely accepted *Donoghue* duty-of-care principle to a publisher for a false story (*Guay v. Sun Publishing Company* [1951]) after the trial judge had awarded damages to Mrs. Guay. The Supreme Court of Canada agreed with the Court of Appeal.

The Court of Appeal's second half-century saw a quantum leap in legal

learning among its justices and in opening itself to a greater diversity of social issues needing legal definition and resolution. The 1960s case is *R. v. White and Bob* (1964), the first of many Aboriginal claims for enforcement of land title rights against assertions of Crown sovereignty. In 1975, the court upheld capital punishment, as did the Supreme Court of Canada (1977), while Parliament was abolishing it (June 1976)! But the times were changing the court's slavish devotion to strict constructionist legalism, which received its first jolt from Justice William McIntyre, who chose a rights-based jurisprudence (pre-Charter, based in the Canadian Bill of Rights 1960) and a pro-judicial review challenge to equally strict parliamentary supremacy. The book's leading case for the 1980s is another divorce case, in which Justice Peter Seaton cleared the way for legal clarity regarding equal division of property in the *Rutherford v. Rutherford* case. We end with another negligence case in the 1990s and then with the *Barbeau* case (2003) regarding same-sex marriage and Section 15 equality rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982).

Idiosyncratic as this law court history is, the narrative hangs together largely because of the richness of biographical resources and, for the last half-century, the systematic oral history interviewing of surviving actors by the researcher-writer committee's coordinator, Christopher Moore. However, if you want any sort of thematic, topical analysis of the Court of Appeal's legal significance, then you must return to *BC Studies'* Summer 2009 special issue, "The British Columbia Court of Appeal, 1910-2010." Guest edited by the province's celebrity legal historians (John McLaren, Hamar Foster, and Wes Pue), the volume targets how and

why, historically, the Court of Appeal has resolved key issues of criminal law sentencing, labour union status, civil liberties, Aboriginal claims, and corporate-commercial law. This special issue, taken together with *The First Hundred Years*, offers us a memorable map of how this court has become a leader in litigation-based law-making in Canada.

*Indigenous Peoples in Liberal
Democratic States:
A Comparative Study of
Conflict and Accommodation in
Canada and India*

Haresamudram Srikanth

Boulder, CO: Bauu Press, 2010. 243
pp. Maps and tables.
\$24.95 paper.

HUGH JOHNSTON
Simon Fraser University

THE AUTHOR IS a professor of political science in Shillong, the capital of the tiny hill state of Meghalaya in the tribal area of Northeastern India. This is a state whose population, by official figures, consists of over 85 percent scheduled tribes – indigenous people whose status is recognized in Indian national legislation. It is one of several states in Northeastern India that has been carved out of greater Assam since the 1960s in response to vigorous agitation by their tribal peoples. Srikanth is a student of the politics of this region, and, in an area of over thirty major tribal groups – racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse – he has a complex subject.

In 2005, Srikanth extended his research to Canada thanks to a Shastri

Indo-Canadian Institute Fellowship. His project has been comparative, involving a search for lessons that Canada and India could share in developing progressive policies to meet the demands of indigenous peoples. As he explains it, these are peoples who – contrary to past expectations – have not disappeared but have survived the onslaught of the market economy and the invasion of external values and who have increasingly made their presence felt over the last half-century. He conducted his research in Vancouver at Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia, where, to complement his earlier studies in India, he focused on policies affecting First Nations peoples. *Indigenous Peoples in Liberal Democratic States* is the result, and he has signalled his purpose by publishing with an American press that specializes in activist research on indigenous issues, both American and global.

Reflecting his research opportunities, Srikanth has attempted to narrow his Canada-India comparison to British Columbia and the hill regions of Northeastern India. But because, in each country, major policy directions and decisions have come from the national centre as well as the outlying region, he has devoted considerable space to broader national pictures. He has also taken a historical view, whose starting point is the nineteenth century. Here, he emphasizes the break between the colonial and postcolonial periods, which has a clearer, more definitive meaning in India than in Canada. This is a weakness of his chronological framework. And because he has had much to master in the course of his Canadian research, one cannot take his account as authoritative in every detail. There are slips that will be obvious to many readers. Nonetheless, if one

accepts his notion of 1867 or thereabouts as the end of the colonial period in Canada, then his judgment that First Nations in British Columbia suffered much more under colonial rule than did the hill communities of Northeastern India is both striking and convincing.

When one comes to the last forty years, to developments since the 1960s, Srikanth shows the global context of the agitation of indigenous peoples and of the accommodating responses of various governments. In this book, he is more optimistic about what is happening in British Columbia – in the negotiation of treaty rights and in progress towards indigenous self-government – than he is about what is happening in Northeastern India. Neither story has run its course, however, so it would be interesting to have his reassessment after another ten or fifteen years.

*Cultural Grammars of Nation,
Diaspora, and Indigeneity in
Canada*

Christine Kim, Sophie McCall,
and Melina Baum Singer, eds.

Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier
University Press, 2012. 284 pp.
\$49.95 paper.

GABRIELLE LEGAULT
University of British Columbia

*Cultural Grammars of Nation,
Diaspora, and Indigeneity in Canada*
is a valuable contribution to an emerging
discourse within the field of indigenous
studies. It furthers a multidisciplinary
dialogue by exploring the relationships
between transnationalism, diaspora,
and indigeneity in Canada, while

interrogating the value of postcolonial theory as a lens for working through these topics. With the objective of “[making] discernible the language rules governing our critical choices and the conceptual frameworks we mobilize, consciously or not” (9), *Cultural Grammars* challenges existing notions of nation, home, nostalgia, and authenticity, and it explores the linkages between the respective histories that shape transnational and indigenous identities.

Chapters focused on indigenous experiences indicate a contemporary movement from positions of resistance to positive transformation and reconciliation. “Canadian Indian Literary Nationalism?,” written collaboratively by Kristina Fagan, Daniel Health Justice, Keavy Martin, Sam McKegney, Deanna Reder, and Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, critiques various aspects of indigenous literary nationalism, questioning how indigenous literary nationalists can continue to assert sovereignty, yet honour the diversity that exists within their nations while working within a broader system that considers viability equal to ideological homogeneity. Renate Eigenbrod’s analysis of Wagamese’s fictional work highlights a broad literary shift from narratives of dispossession to writing about the transformation and adaptation of indigenous values to new contexts.

Much of *Cultural Grammars* investigates diaspora in order to understand transnational mobility and indigenous deracination (physical relocation and cultural dislocation). The archetypal Jewish diaspora is reconceptualized not only as “an interpretative device for literary and cultural analysis, but also a powerful organizing prism that excludes particular identity formations” (99).

Writing from the context of Métis identity politics, Sophie McCall argues that applications of diaspora theory risk promoting generalizations that ignore the diversity inherent in indigenous experiences. Because not all indigenous peoples have been displaced, indigenous relationships to land are complexly mediated, constantly changing, and never static.

“Breaking the Framework of Representational Violence” is particularly relevant to indigenous experiences in British Columbia. Julia Emberley explores representations of violence towards Aboriginal women in the Pickton Trial, questioning “how testimonial practices might contribute to a fundamental transformation in how Indigenous women’s bodies are viewed as objects of violence” (66). Similar to other chapters in this book, Emberley challenges the meaning of decolonization by focusing on consolidation, healing, and positive transformation.

Deena Rymhs’s “Word Warriors” has a similar tone as she explores the deracination of indigenous peoples incarcerated throughout Canada who deploy pan-indigenous identities to engage in processes of cultural renewal and colonial resistance. Rymhs argues that the stance of the texts created by these Word Warriors are “postnational” as they advocate intertribal identities, put forth notions of sovereignty, and engage international communities. Rymhs explains that, “in adapting the meaning of warrior to address their present, immediate contexts, and to encompass their personal healing and political activism from prison, Indigenous prisoners invent new ‘cultural grammars’ of their own” (237).

Cultural Grammars is highly sophisticated, intensely theoretical, and, due to the specificity of some of

the literary analysis, can be difficult to apply across disciplines; however, these concerns are perhaps inevitable when engaging in complex conversations involving multiple overlapping discourses. While the audience may appear narrow, there are moments of insight in each chapter that encourage a broad array of readers to reflect on the nomenclature and theoretical frameworks employed in their own work.

*Sister and I: From Victoria
to London*

Emily Carr, with a foreword by
Kathryn Bridge

Victoria: Royal British Columbia
Museum, 2011. 112 pp. \$24.95 cloth.

LAURA ISHIGURO
University Campus Suffolk

IN 1910, THE WRITER and artist Emily Carr travelled with her sister Alice from Victoria, British Columbia, to London, England. Crossing Canada by train, then the Atlantic Ocean by steamer, the women encountered porcupines, antique shop swindles, and seasickness on their six-week journey to Europe. *Sister and I* narrates their adventures and misadventures through a full-colour, high-resolution scanned reproduction of Carr's journal of the trip. The left-hand pages contain colourful descriptions and stories, while the right-hand pages feature caricatured drawings of the women on their travels. The book also includes a foreword by Kathryn Bridge as well as a useful glossary of misspelled and rare words. Bridge does an excellent job of situating the journal within the context of Carr's life. Although primarily a positive exploration of her life and work, the

foreword also briefly acknowledges the "ethnocentric prejudice" (14) that at times characterized Carr's journal and letters. Especially in relation to this complex issue, it would have been valuable to have had more critical analysis of the journal and its wider historical context in the foreword. Nonetheless, Bridge offers a lively and careful introduction to the journal, and she opens the door for fruitful future analysis of this and other matters.

Overall, *Sister and I* is a delight for academic and non-academic readers. There is charm and immediacy in the scanned journal, complete with misspellings and worn pages that underline the materiality and visibility of Carr's writing. The combination of text and image also highlights her gift for incisive and witty observation of both the mundane and the unusual. For scholars interested in transborder histories of British Columbia, the journal offers an example of the kind of personal links forged between the province and Canada, the Atlantic world, and Britain in the early twentieth century. *Sister and I* also includes material for scholars concerned with a range of topics, including siblinghood and travel writing. It raises intriguing questions, too, about the idea of a "funny book," as Carr called it, and the ways in which historical humour can shape our experiences as readers and researchers.

Although it has much for scholars, then, *Sister and I* will appeal to a much wider audience, including adults and children. In this sense, it is perhaps best described as a short, engaging, amusing, and informative read for anyone interested in Emily Carr, early twentieth-century Canada, or trans-Atlantic travel narratives. I read *Sister and I* on a flight between British Columbia and England, so

it particularly resonated with me as I reflected on the changes and continuities in travellers' experiences of place, distance, and companionship. I was only disappointed when the journal ended abruptly with the sisters' arrival in London – what felt like only the beginning of their adventures. But of course the archive has its limitations as well as its joys, and Carr's "funny book" offers both in colourful and thought-provoking form.

*Thrown: British Columbia's
Apprentices of Bernard Leach
and Their Contemporaries*

Scott Watson, editor

Vancouver: Morris and Helen
Belkin Art Gallery, 2011. 304 pp.
\$60.00 cloth.

MARIA TIPPETT
Cambridge University

Thrown, British Columbia's Apprentices of Bernard Leach and their Contemporaries has its origins in an exhibition at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia. Although every item in the 2004 exhibition appears in this new volume, *Thrown* is much more than an exhibition catalogue. It pays homage to the influential English potter and writer Bernard Leach. It chronicles the experiences of those BC potters who apprenticed, during the 1950s and 1960s, with Leach at his pottery in St-Ives and/or with Reg Dixon and David Lambert at the Vancouver School of Art. It offers excerpts from the writings of the Japanese and English art critics Sōetsu Yanagi and Herbert Read. There is a learned discussion on the techniques of pottery making and the role that

high-fired ceramics played in the studio pottery movement. *Thrown* gives the potters themselves an opportunity to discuss their work and to consider the milieu in which it was created, either in St-Ives or British Columbia. And the book's large format allows for generous illustrations of pots, potteries, and potters. (Hornby Island potter Wayne Ngan gets a two-page colour spread lounging in an open-air bathtub.)

Divide and rule has become the mantra of most exhibition catalogue editors – dividing the responsibilities and ruling out nothing. This can lead to an uneven and dated publication. For example, many of the chapters – Doris Shadbolt's informative essay on Wayne Ngan, not to mention the insightful musings of Read, Leach, and Yanagi – were published many years ago. More recent essays, penned by the province's most celebrated potters, are uneven in length and quality. The printed correspondence between them is not suitable to the large format. Lengthy footnotes might have been incorporated into the text. And difficult-to-see snapshot illustrations of every item exhibited in the 2004 exhibition do an injustice to the work.

Even so, there is much to learn from this anthology. *Thrown* makes it clear that Bernard Leach and his English and Japanese contemporaries were not the only sources of inspiration for nascent potters in British Columbia. Long before the first potter apprenticed with Leach, the University of British Columbia's Extension Department was offering classes in pottery making. Vancouver's New Design Gallery was showing pottery alongside non-objective paintings. By the early 1960s, public institutions like the Greater Victoria Art Gallery and the Vancouver Art Gallery included potters in their exhibition programs. And by the 1970s,

pottery societies and pottery magazines – *The Western Potter* and *Craft Contacts* – appeared alongside such commercial outlets as the House of Ceramics.

By the late 1970s, however, the momentum had gone out of the studio pottery movement. Michael Henry's "aching back" forced him to quit making pots in 1973 (117). Before the end of the decade, Glenn Lewis and Gathie Falk had moved from pottery making into fine art. Following his apprenticeship with Bernard Leach, Ian Steele set up his studio in Nanoose Bay, and later in Britain.

For many potters, Bernard Leach's example of making functional pots for everyday use at modest prices was difficult to sustain in a society in which concerns for aesthetic and individual expression – and reward – took precedence over the modest lifestyle of the unknown craftsman and craftswoman. Nevertheless Charmian Johnson and Wayne Ngan, along with a few others, continue to make pots. And, thanks to Scott Watson, curator of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, much of what they and their contemporaries produced has been made available to a new generation of British Columbians through this volume.

Vancouver Noir: 1930-1960

Diane Purvey and
John Belshaw

Vancouver: Anvil Press Publishers,
2011. 224 pp. \$25.00 paper.

VANESSA COLANTONIO
Vancouver

IN THE AUGUST 1946 issue of the French cinema studies journal *L'écran français*, French critic Nino Frank used

the term "film noir" to describe a new generation of American crime films only recently allowed into France after the war. This new wave of films, which included *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *The Glass Key* (1942), and *Double Indemnity* (1944), featured claustrophobic urban settings, morally conflicted heroes, and ruthless but attractive women motivated by expediency and greed. A product of their time, these films expressed the anxiety and disillusionment of those who had lived through both the Great Depression and the Second World War.

Frank's use of the term "film noir" fits the timeline of *Vancouver Noir* perfectly, occurring at almost the exact median point of the thirty-year period covered. Diane Purvey and John Belshaw examine the city during the mid-twentieth century using the cinematic conventions pioneered in film noir. Together, they shine a light into the dark corners of an all-but-forgotten era, illuminating Vancouver's seedy nightlife, urban strife, street violence, cynical political manoeuvring, and creeping paranoia about outsiders.

Much like a ride on the Giant Dipper rollercoaster at Happyland (the 1930s precursor to Playland), *Vancouver Noir* is chock full of informative thrills, spills, and chills. We meet underworld figures such as racketeer Joe Celona. We learn about self-appointed moral crusaders such as the former Vancouver mayor Gerry McGeer and his right-hand man, Chief Constable Colonel W.W. Foster. We see the work of photojournalist Ray Munro, a former *Province* reporter consumed with righteous anger over shady politics and double-dealings. *Vancouver Noir* also features a large cast of more surreal characters, ranging from the "mysterious brunette in a veil" at the 1955 Tupper Inquiry into police corruption to the "Burrard Bridge Monster."

Vancouver Noir is unique among Vancouver history books in its detailed coverage of the city mid-century: no other book covers this period so comprehensively. Painting this underreported period in Vancouver history with a “noir” brushstroke has its merits. The stark black-and-white news and police photographs of the period evoke a city that used tawdry surface glitz to hide its dangers and decay. Descriptions of the pessimistic mood of the Depression and war years are also spot on.

However, Purvey and Belshaw’s book falters somewhat when using noir elements (a hardboiled, detective narrative) to describe the more complex postwar climate in the city. By the late 1950s, the classic film noir era was drawing to a close with films like *Touch of Evil* (1958), *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959), and *Blast of Silence* (1961), with their shades-of-grey modernist subtext. In Vancouver, as in many other North American cities, people were leaving the mean streets downtown to look for homes in sparsely settled neighbourhoods in the suburbs. The landscape downtown, meanwhile, was being transformed into a form more familiar to us today, with the building of new office towers, high-rise apartments, and underground malls. The dynamics between subcultures such as youth, new immigrant groups, and settled ethnic communities were also changing. People were settling down as the collective psychological trauma that informed the noir period subsided.

This is not to say that the old fears do not still haunt us: the mysterious “other” stalking us in the night, authorities who punish criminals with one hand, then pocket the proceeds of the crime with the other. *Vancouver Noir: 1930–1960* reassures us, somewhat uneasily, that

we are not the first to feel these fears, nor will we be the last.

Fred Herzog: Photographs

Fred Herzog, with contributions by Douglas Coupland, Sarah Milroy, and Jeff Wall

Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre,
2011. 224 pp. \$60.00 cloth.

BILL JEFFRIES

Simon Fraser University

VANCOUVER photographer Fred Herzog has rapidly emerged from photographic obscurity over the past decade and now, after almost sixty years of picturing the Vancouver scene, finally has the book that he, and his images, deserve. Herzog has reportedly taken over 100,000 photographs since 1953, mainly Kodachrome slides. It is his use of colour slide film that distinguishes his urban street photography from that of other documentarians of the postwar era. Herzog was not actually the first to adopt Kodachrome. Its initial use came in the period from 1938 to 1948, when several Farm Security Administration photographers in the United States documented the rural American scene in colour. By the 1950s and 1960s, slide shows were easy to make, but making good Kodachrome prints was an issue until Cibachrome was perfected in the late 1970s.

A decade ago the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) Acquisition Committee, and subsequently its curators, was alerted to Fred Herzog’s existence. This led to the 2007 VAG Herzog exhibition, with its catalogue going into three printings, and then to the Equinox Gallery’s representing Herzog’s work. The success of his exhibitions, as well as

catalogue and print sales, paved the way for *Fred Herzog: Photographs*, which is beautiful enough to be a reasonable substitute for, and alternative to, owning the prints themselves.

The roughly 180 images here are the largest representation of Herzog in print to date, and all but twenty-eight, by my count, are of Vancouver; the others show us the Herzogian eye in Mexico, San Francisco, Saint John's, and Portland, among other places. The comparisons between cities are intriguing, with similarities seen through Herzog's 'eye' revealing continuities and the differences between places often being not as great as one might expect. Photographically, Herzog falls between the Pictorialist practice of the pre-war period and the "New Topographics" that emerged in the 1970s; his key affinity is with the American documentary photographers who worked for the Farm Security Administration (FSA). If John Vanderpant was both Vancouver's best Pictorialist and its best proto-modernist (think of Charles Sheeler's photographs), Herzog, by contrast, is linked to, in addition to the FSA, New Yorkers like Sid Grossman and Dan Weiner, the Chicago School (Yashiro Ishimoto, Harry Callahan), and Walker Evans and Ralph Steiner and their ways of using a camera to capture and carve urban space.

Photographs contains essays by Douglas Coupland (Vancouver was filthy back then), Jeff Wall (the city was wonderful back then, and the current city of glass is terrible), Sarah Milroy (framed by the insight that Herzog "views humanity with an eye that is unsentimental yet deeply affectionate – a delicate balance of salt and sweet" (7)), and Claudia Gochmann ("Herzog's work exists between the two poles of classic documentary project and emerging possibilities of the

colour medium" (2)). All four essays illuminate Herzog's world, but it is Jeff Wall's essay that stands out because of its critique of Vancouver as it is today. Speaking of the evolution of the city that is his home, he says: "what replaced those objects of affection are objects that cannot elicit that kind of feeling because they do not contain it" (21). Wall thinks that now, because of the change in the makeup of the city, we probably can't have a photographer like Fred Herzog. For Wall, there was "until 1970 ... something called old Vancouver," with "wide streets free of heavy automobile traffic" (21), that emptiness was one of the minor miracles of this city, then on the cusp of becoming the developer's dream world that it has been ever since. Herzog's images of Greater Vancouver need to be seen. The subtext of *Photographs* is that there is a crying need for the digitization of all Herzog's pictures that he deems worthy of reproduction. Those images are our most significant trove of local photographic colour and a publicly accessible catalogue of his images would provide an extraordinary public benefit, giving Vancouverites something to discuss far into the future. The appetite for the "selected-so-far" Herzog images seems insatiable; the question is, what about the rest of his photographs? Digitization is the only way to realize Douglas Coupland's contention that Herzog is "a man who ... set out to document transient moments with the expectation that they contained the eternal" (26). The world Herzog pictured is now largely gone, replaced by a taller "city of glass," to use Coupland's own phrase, so whatever was imagined to be eternal has proven to be anything but. Hence the serious need for a digitization project that matches Herzog's seriousness about the state of the world.

*At the World's Edge: Curt Lang's
Vancouver, 1937-1998*

Claudia Cornwall, with
foreword by David Beers and
introduction by Greg Lang

Salt Spring Island, BC: Mother
Tongue Publishing, 2011. 228 pp.
\$29.95 paper.

BILL JEFFRIES
Simon Fraser University

THE HISTORICAL photography section of the Vancouver Public Library (vpl) is one of Vancouver's unexplored treasure troves. Among many other gems, it holds the prints and negatives produced by seven photographers under the auspices of a 1972 Local Initiatives Programme (LIP) Grant called "The Leonard Frank Memorial Society." Of the seven, Curt Lang was either the most prolific or the most generous in handing over the fruits of his photographic labours: the vpl has 8,400 Curt Lang negatives from the project. That quantity would be a life's work for many photographers, including Lang's photographic mentor, Fred Douglas; for Lang, it was perhaps the smallest component in a life lived large.

Lang is a serious candidate as Vancouver's Renaissance Man of the 1960 to 1990 period. High culture, however, wasn't handed to him on a Vancouver platter, so he sought it out. Claudia Cornwall's biography reads a bit like a Russian novel in which the protagonist's search for a life in art continually leads to new adventures. One could posit that Lang's life started in idealism and ended in a capitalism that was, at best, marginally successful. In lieu of fortune, and even fame, he had what British Columbia offered between 1960 and 1990: adventures.

At the World's Edge is a labour of love that involved years of research and fact checking. Claudia Cornwall herself was present for some of the adventuring that emerged from Lang's hydra-headed quests. Her research was aided by her husband's having been a business associate and friend of Lang's. In business, Lang had brilliant ideas. Profit would have pleased him, but acting like a normal businessperson was not possible, and the serious profits for his companies only materialized after his death – one firm was sold to Boeing for \$14 million.

If you've never heard of Curt Lang it may just be that you travelled in different circles. There is teenage Curt, at the beach with Al Purdy in 1954; soon after, he and Purdy are visiting Malcolm Lowry in Dollarton and Purdy is having his poems assessed by Lowry; then he and Purdy are hitchhiking to Montreal to start a grand tour of Europe, where they will stay in Paris and Mallorca; a few months later he's in Montreal working in a hospital emergency ward. All this by age eighteen. Then came the years of running a log salvage business up and down the BC coast, commercial fishing, and running a fish-buying boat that had well over a million dollars in cash on board – in 1960s dollars – for purchases.

Cornwall's book lucidly covers those and many other adventures and misadventures and has a generous sampling of Lang's photographs. The locations of many have now been identified through the efforts of Lang's brother, Greg, and of Gordon Cornwall. Technologies such as "street view" are Curt Lang's types of technology; in the 1970s he began imagining and creating new ways of using software and computers to address opportunities in the business world. His understanding of both basic and applied science,

when combined with everything else that he undertook, is what qualifies him as a Renaissance Man. I can't think of anyone else who did the physical, mental, corporate, creative, and cultural work that Lang did: his life seemingly recapitulates the history of this province in the late twentieth century, evolving from manual labour, to resource extraction, to art, and to software. Cornwall's book tells that story as well as it can be told. It sheds new light on the history of BC business, especially where it overlapped with Beatnik life.

*Bruce McDonald's
Hard Core Logo*

Paul McEwan

Toronto: University of Toronto
Press, 2011. 131 pp. \$16.95 paper.

MARK HARRIS
University of British Columbia

ALTHOUGH IT'S one of the three major production sites in Canada, surprisingly few memorable movies have actually been made in Vancouver. Even lonely Winnipeg has fared better in this regard, with cinematic mythologizer Guy Maddin alternately mocking and celebrating his home town in film after film. As for Toronto, it has served as the backdrop, acknowledged or unacknowledged, for most of Atom Egoyan's and David Cronenberg's most feted productions, while the fabric of Montreal is more or less inseparable from the oeuvre of Gilles Carle, Pierre Falardeau, Alain Forcier, Denys Arcand, and dozens of other *cinéastes*. Occasionally, a Canadian cult hit (*The Grey Fox*; *My American Cousin*) will be associated with British

Columbia, but the action will almost always unfold in the hinterland, *not* in the province's largest city. Indeed, Robert Altman's American entry *That Cold Day in the Park* (1969) might still be the best-known Vancouver-centred motion picture ever lensed (and it's not all that good, either).

The above summation would seem to suggest that the Lower Mainland is even more a hewer of wood and a drawer of water than either Toronto or Montreal, but that's not necessarily the case. In all three cities catering to US producers – especially US TV producers – is what keeps the local artisans and technicians gainfully employed. What's more, as each edition of the Vancouver International Film Festival amply demonstrates, independent features *are* made here every year, but very few of these films will commercially travel as far as Granville, never mind Yonge or Ste-Catherine (obviously, I'm talking metaphorically here as big city main drags are no longer the primary locus of film viewing anywhere in Canada). Essentially, these home-grown products are confined to the film festival circuit, where they attract rather less attention than, say, Iranian neorealist dramas.

All of which brings us, via a circuitous route, to the cultural significance of *Hard Core Logo*. Technically, a road movie about a defunct punk band's doomed attempt to resurrect itself in the mid-1990s, the action theoretically sprawls between the West Coast and Winnipeg, although, in reality, just about everything was shot in Vancouver and environs. The source novelist (Michael Turner) might be a native British Columbian, but the director (Bruce McDonald) was born in Ontario. By these narrow auteurist standards, *Hard Core Logo* should be considered as, at best, a pan-Canadian

production. Ironically, even with this provincial chauvinism in mind, *Hard Core Logo* might still qualify as the quintessential Vancouver fiction feature (this distinction is vital since, in the more esoteric fields of animation, documentary, and experimental cinema, the Lower Mainland has been far more successful).

Vancouver has a habit of dealing with its pivotal moments long after the fact, if at all. Thus, those seeking cinematic representations of the city's famous flirtation with the Summer of Love are pretty much stuck the early works of Larry Kent and Sandy Wilson's *My American Boyfriend* (1989). To appropriate an early title by Milan Kundera, onscreen life seems to be elsewhere in this neck of the woods.

As for Paul McEwan, the author of the monograph under discussion, the only data I have on him is that he teaches at Muhlenberg College (presumably the one located in Allentown, Pennsylvania). In other words, I don't know whether he's a Vancouverite, a British Columbian, or even a Canadian (which could be a blessing; this review is regional enough as it is).

What I can say is this: he takes his responsibilities seriously. Too often books of this kind turn into vanity projects for authors who are famous for other things – Barry Gifford's *Brando Rides Alone* comes to mind, in this regard – but McEwan analyzes McDonald's film in a manner that expertly mingles rigour, order, comprehensiveness, and accessibility.

Typical of this approach is the author's appropriation of the concept of "star text." In *Hard Core Logo*, Bruce McDonald plays a documentary filmmaker named Bruce McDonald, whose past work is identical to that of the man whose name rides above

the tile even though he's actually a fictional character. McEwan elaborates on this metafictional conceit in a manner that permits him to reflect on the trajectory of the director's career while simultaneously reconfirming the film's inscription in the subgenre of mockumentary and providing an opportunity to remember the big names in Vancouver's punk past with spare elegance. That he used jargon in this instance is not coincidental since this is something that McEwan rarely does, employing it only when it leads to greater clarity, not less.

If only all scholarly film writers thought this way. Without in any way being vulgar or excessively populist, *Bruce McDonald's Hard Core Logo* is also informative and entertaining. This westernmost addition to the University of Toronto's admirable Canadian Cinema Series might well be the most readable yet (and I mean this in the best possible way).

Brian Jungen

Daina Augaitis

Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre,
2010. 176 pp. \$40.00 cloth.

GEOFFREY CARR

University of British Columbia

THE BOOK PROVIDES an overview of the career of the artist Brian Jungen, and it consists of essays by Daina Augaitis and four other notable curators – Cuauhtémoc Medina, Ralph Rugoff, Kitty Scott, and Trevor Smith. The text also includes the transcription of a recording of a series of discussions in 2005 between Brian Jungen and British artist Simon Starling, in addition to 373

full-colour images of Jungen's work. Without doubt, this monograph will be of use to general readers, students, and academics studying Jungen, an "art star" whose rise is confirmed by his winning numerous prestigious prizes and by exhibiting at the National Gallery of Canada, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, and the Tate Modern. Both the critical essays and the interview material help to convey the profound tensions and ambiguities that form part of Jungen's inventive art. The artist cleverly transforms ready-made consumer goods into evocative objects – Nike Air Jordans into Northwest Coast indigenous masks, IKEA file boxes into birdhouses, plastic serving trays into minimalist sculpture. In the process, Jungen's hybrid forms reveal the fraught relationship between consumer culture, flows of global capital, and the idolatry of the star system – conflating, for example, the iconic brand of a slam-dunking Michael Jordan and the exploitation of cheap labour in sweatshops abroad. Perhaps more notably, Jungen's work also throws into high relief the connections between the commodification of art and the fetishization of indigenous identities, display cultures, and ritual objects.

This is a paperback edition of an earlier hardcover edition published in 2005, which has the unfortunate consequence of preceding two major historical events that have shifted the critical terrain in no small way. First, the global economic meltdown beginning in 2008 revealed much more pernicious features of globalized capitalism than the fetishistic consumption of material goods – that is, opaque financial instruments (subprime mortgages, credit default swaps, derivatives) that have since undermined the stability of national economies across the

world. In light of massive wealth loss and the subsequent rise in protest movements, critical essays on playful reconfigurations of consumer products seem to offer less of an incisive critique on globalization than they once did.

Second, the authors' interest in exploring hybrid cultural identities – significantly, Jungen was born in Dawson Creek to a Dane-Zaa mother and Swiss father – is complicated by a recent turn in Canada towards a politics of recognition of indigenous cultures. The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement of 2007, the official apology by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2008, and the ongoing investigations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, with varying degrees of sincerity, signal a struggle to understand the scope and consequences of the official subversion of indigenous cultures. In this new context, the monograph's occasional applause for cultural hybridity feels somewhat out of step as the hybridization of culture, especially in a colonial setting, always emerges unevenly. This sense is echoed in recent critical literature concerning cultural hybrids. In fairness to the artist, his notion of hybridity (naturally occurring in plant species) differs in meaning from the cultural hybrids described in several places in the text, underscoring the value of Jungen's contribution in the discussion section.

At some point in the text it would have been helpful for one of the curators to substantively explore the role of museums and publications, of which this book is one, in sustaining a fetishistic appetite for the consumption of indigenous artefacts and art. The white cube (those official, sacred spaces of art display and viewing) and art monographs seemingly share some uncanny similarities with Northwest

Coast treasure boxes, in which the totemic power of ritual objects was traditionally preserved.

One final critique: the design of the book is for the most part effective, though in places images of artworks mentioned in the text are either too difficult to find or were not included. Considering the abundance of illustrations, this problem could have been avoided.

Despite these concerns, the text offers valuable formal and critical evaluations of Jungen's work. In tandem, the contributions of the curators, the discussions between the artist and Simon Starling, and the collection of illustrations provide readers with a solid grounding in Jungen's practice, both his already iconic Prototypes mask series and his more recent explorations into modern architectural design, shelters for animals, and minimalist sculpture. This monograph should be included in the collection of every academic library.

