

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### *An Environmental History of Canada*

Laurel Sefton MacDowell

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012. 352 pp.  
\$49.95 paper.

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TO THE GROWING list of books on Canadian environmental history, University of Toronto historian Laurel MacDowell's new textbook, *An Environmental History of Canada*, should take a prominent place. The evolution of this field of study indicates both a rapidly maturing branch of history and the need for a solid textbook for undergraduate upper division courses. Along with the first book in the field, *Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History* (1995), edited by Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield; David Freeland Duke's edited volume, *Canadian Environmental History: Essential Readings* (2006), which is essentially a nicely arranged course packet; and Graeme Wynn's *Canada and Arctic North America: An Environmental History* (2007); we can now add MacDowell's fine textbook,

*An Environmental History of Canada*. I would heartily recommend it be adopted, and I suspect it will be in high demand.

After a short, but essential, introduction regarding definitions and directions in environmental history, MacDowell divides the textbook into four parts. The first, "Aboriginal Peoples and Settlers," has a couple of chapters entitled, respectively, "Encountering a New Land" and "Settling the Land and Transforming the 'Wilderness.'" Part 2 treats various facets of "Industrialism, Reform, and Infrastructure," which includes topics on urban history, conservation, mining, and consumerism. The third part, "Harnessing Nature, Harming Nature," examines the important topics of energy, water, and food/agriculture. The final part is entitled "The Environmental Era." It has chapters on the Canadian environmental movement, parks and wildlife, coastal fisheries, and the North and climate change. Each chapter ends with an excellent list of important works devoted to the topics covered (and nicely divided into subtopics) – an extremely useful tool for students. A conclusion rounds out the textbook, but it is rather short, at only four pages, and perhaps could have been

expanded to thematically unite some of the various dimensions of Canadian environmental history dealt with throughout the book.

A word about style and layout: Both MacDowell and UBC Press should be congratulated for designing a model textbook. It is loaded with excellent illustrations and photos, has in every chapter a variety of engaging sidebar stories (although some readers might find some of these a bit too short and superficial), and makes use of numerous maps, graphs, and diagrams. The map on Canada's ecological regions (42), however, should have appeared earlier in the book in order to provide some geographical context, and it should have been reproduced in a larger and more colourful format. But all of these features make for an enjoyable reading experience, breaking up the narrative and providing a great many points of departure for classroom discussions. And, unlike *Consuming Canada* or *Canadian Environmental History*, MacDowell's book, thankfully, delves deep into twentieth- and twenty-first-century topics, especially in terms of natural resources and environmental politics and activism. These current issues are important for students to understand; and the historical grounding provided in the book, along with corresponding lectures, will help them to do so. As MacDowell explains the goal of the book: "This environmental history of Canada brings to light the grave consequences of the development ethos as it played out in Canadian history, not to condemn, but so we can develop strategies to create a livable, sustainable environment in the future" (6).

Some scholars south of the forty-ninth parallel may wonder how this text differs from its counterparts in American environmental history.

MacDowell explains right off that Canada "has a different climate [from that found in the United States], distinctive geographical features, such as the Canadian Shield, its own history, a parliamentary system of government and politics, and unique elements such as Crown lands" (4). These points are well taken, especially in her chapters on coastal fisheries and the environmental history of the far North. Instructors in the United States could benefit from adding this textbook to their own courses on North American environmental history. Indeed, it would be a welcome trend if Americans were to start seeing things more continentally. And, if they find themselves a bit behind on their knowledge of Canadian history, adopting this text will fill in the gaps and will be of much use to professor and student alike.

*Canadians and the Natural  
Environment to the  
Twenty-First Century*

Neil S. Forkey

Toronto: University of Toronto  
Press, 2012. 158 pp. \$24.95 paper.

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*University of Alberta*

THE FIELD OF Canadian environmental history has blossomed over the past two decades. Consequently, instructors of Canadian environmental history courses are becoming increasingly spoiled, having so many good options from which to choose for course readers. In all of this new scholarship, however, a short synthesis of Canadian environmental history was absent. Neil Forkey's

recent work, *Canadians and the Natural Environment to the Twenty-First Century*, fills this gap.

Forkey has arranged his book chronologically, with each of the five chapters addressing what he sees as a dominant theme in Canadian environmental history. His thesis: Canadians have always expressed competing desires to both exploit and protect natural resources. Chapter 1, spanning the 1600s to the early 1900s, provides an overview of how Canada came to be conceived as, and its economy reliant upon, a storehouse of fish, furs, timber, agriculture, minerals, and hydroelectric power. He also examines Canada's importance as a place for scientific exploration and natural study. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the rise of conservation and preservation, respectively. Forkey focuses on the emergence of a state-centred environmental regime, which includes the creation of parks and other protected areas, and the concomitant marginalization of "rural" and Aboriginal people from these places in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Chapter 3, his discussion of the key differences between English-Canadian and French-Canadian nature romanticism deserves to be highlighted; it adds a dimension to Canadian environmental history that is lacking in other readers and is the most intriguing section of the book. Chapter 4 chronicles the history of the modern environmental movement in Canada. Arguably, it over-emphasizes the significance of literary writers such as Farley Mowat and Hugh MacLennan in spurring the movement, and pays too little attention to environmentalist organizations (perhaps reflecting the relative dearth of historical scholarship in this area) or government responses to environmental activism. Chapter 5 is dedicated to a short discussion of how

Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals have cooperated on issues of the environment (e.g., the Hudson's Bay Company and the Cree with regard to beaver conservation) as well as to defending the important caveat that "modern environmentalism is replete with stories of dispossession and exclusion of Aboriginal peoples" (114). This latter argument is made by offering such examples as the appropriation of Aboriginal identities via the notion of the "Ecological Indian" as well as by highlighting the rifts that have emerged between environmentalists and First Nations during protest events.

Forkey's book, part of the Themes in Canadian History series, delivers on the series' promise to provide titles that are accessible to non-specialist readers and to offer broad overviews of the main themes of particular subjects. The book's brevity necessitates some unfortunate omissions. There is no discussion of environmental history methodology or theory, and there is no historiographical debate (though Forkey states that this is beyond the scope of his work). That being said, one will find the most influential environmental historians in Canada, and many of those abroad, cited in Forkey's bibliography. The absence of maps or images – two integral components of any introductory text – is much more problematic. Nonetheless, in a classroom setting these shortcomings could easily be addressed by pairing Forkey's work with either of two relatively recent edited collections: David Freeland Duke's *Canadian Environmental History: Essential Readings* (2006) and Alan MacEachern and William J. Turkel's *Method and Meaning in Canadian Environmental History* (2009). Forkey deserves credit for producing an engaging and jargon-free text that will appeal to students and that instructors

can use as a foundation for introductory environmental history courses.

*Why Canadian Forestry and Mining Towns Are Organized Differently: The Role of Staples in Shaping Community, Class, and Consciousness*

Louise Dignard

Lampeter, Wales: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2011. 284 pp.  
\$39.95 cloth.

ROGER HAYTER

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CANADA'S single-industry towns (SITs), especially resource towns, continue to be the focus of considerable academic and policy attention. Canada's population may be highly urbanized, indeed urbane, with the major metropolitan and even medium-sized urban regions increasingly self-identifying with creative city mantras that emphasize jobs that research, develop, engineer, entertain, design, and communicate rather than process. Yet staple commodities (resources and primary manufacturing) continue to dominate Canada's visible exports and perceptions of the country's global role. Indeed, as revealed by recent debates over the economic and environmental (local, national, and global) impacts of Athabasca's oil/tar sands, resource exploitation has become highly controversial and a priority of public policy. As the focal points of resource extraction, these debates are grounded in resource towns. Moreover, resource town Canada is a highly varied space, differentiated by evolutionary dynamics, geographical realities, staple type, forms of business

organization, different policy contexts at the provincial level, and the human resources and skills they foster. Further, resource towns are not simply nodes to facilitate broader goals of development and geopolitics but, rather, the homes of workers and their families as they develop routines, identities, and shared communities. Louise Dignard's book focuses on these latter differences in Canada's resource towns, or SITs, to use her preferred acronym.

In general terms, Harold Innis's panoramic view of Canadian staple history across space and time provides the foundation for Dignard's analysis. For Innis, resource town experience was always problematical. Resource towns were often dependent on distant decision makers and boomed and busted in response to the vagaries of "metropolitan" demands, first by the United Kingdom, then by the United States, and now by Asia, especially China and Japan. Innis emphasized both the distinctive nature of Canadian staple development and the variation in the evolutionary geographies among staples. Dignard's contribution is to show how staple type is vital for understanding SITs. She particularly compares Canadian forestry and mining SITs that exploit, respectively, extensive renewable resources and point-based non-renewable resources. Her approach is entirely based on comprehensive interdisciplinary literature reviews, particularly those that focus on the business organization, power and social structure, and consciousness of SITs.

Dignard begins with an insightful, if overlapping, classification of different approaches towards evaluating SITs – namely, as institutions, collectivities, gendered labour processes, and networks. While she briefly reviews SITs in terms of institutions and collectivities in separate chapters, as a sociologist

interested in daily routines Dignard is primarily concerned with comparing how the specifics of forest and mining staples shape, or “staple-ize,” labour processes and the role of women in srrts. She reveals that labour processes in general and women’s experiences in particular have developed in distinctive ways, featuring different class relations, attitudes, and experiences in the two types of towns. For example, mining srrts are more hierarchical and company dependent, with workers more inclined to be unionized, socially connected, and to have a stronger sense of rights and so on (see summary, 143-45).

While Dignard recognizes that her findings are not new, students of srrts will benefit from her critical reading, the synthetic scope of her comments, and her appreciation of the community impact of staple-izing processes. Admittedly, dependence on published studies conducted in various ways in different times and places inevitably constrains interpretation. In practice, time and place tend to be incorporated in an implicit, ad hoc manner, with the discussion rooted largely in central and eastern Canadian experience. In this regard, brief descriptions (e.g., staple type, community location, time period, data sources) of the srrts examined by Dignard would have provided useful context as well as more information on forestry and mining town structures. The presence of significant processing activities in forestry towns, for example, can bring them closer to the mining model of social life.

Further, the “datedness” of the discussion and the overwhelming focus on studies published before the early 1980s is disappointing. Even reference to “new” gender issues focusing on women’s experiences relies largely on discussions of older studies. Since the 1980s, however, resource town Canada

has become increasingly differentiated, driven by highly volatile markets and multifaceted processes of restructuring that have variously involved searches for employment, technological and organizational flexibility, downsizing, fly-in workforces, the decline of industrial unions, environmental and cultural conflicts, and the rise of ideas related to local and community economic development, sustainability, and resilience. These days, Canada’s resource towns are not only sites of boom and bust but also conflicted spaces that move in different directions beyond staple confines. In British Columbia, for example, resource towns cannot be properly discussed without reference to Aboriginal and environmental imperatives. Notwithstanding these limitations and silences, Dignard’s book provides an informative starting point to support her plea for more research into Canada’s increasingly diverse srrts, which are the locus of important multi-scalar policy challenges. Such research would especially benefit from a BC focus.

### *Ceramic Makers’ Marks*

Erica Gibson

Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2011. 146 pp. \$27.95 paper.

LORNE HAMMOND

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FOR THOSE WORKING to identify ceramic shards, this slim and well-designed identification guide focuses primarily on nineteenth-century American and European manufacturers of ceramics. Despite the back cover’s reference to “North American sites,” it only draws upon

material found within California. Over fifteen years, Erica Gibson, as the lab director of the Anthropological Studies Center at Sonoma State University, has examined some 250 collections.

Gibson draws upon the classic works by Geoffrey Godden, Arnold and Dorothy Kowalsky, and Lois Lehner. Ceramics literature has evolved out of connoisseurship and museum collections consisting of complete forms of ceramics. It is a field of study that involves a great deal of interplay between practitioners and disciplines. Specialists move freely between museum and private collections, archaeological digs, technical conferences, London and Hong Kong auction houses, and the studios of contemporary potters, some of whom sit literally atop historic production sites in Staffordshire or Fusan. I have heard Godden speak joyfully about getting down in the dirt and examining potsherds with staff at historical archaeology sites in pottery districts in London and Staffordshire. In this book we are dealing with the post-consumer end of the commodity chain.

Godden's influence is seen in the style Gibson uses for the entries. However, her work with sites in California has a different emphasis, focusing on the archaeological problem of fragmentary and rare evidence. This melding of approaches gives the book its strength as a practical and useful tool for persons working with ceramic fragments, and it represents a synergy between traditional approaches and today's fieldwork.

The organization of the book is straightforward. In her brief and concise introduction, Gibson dispels web-perpetuated myths about trademark act and country-of-origin marks and dating (11-12). Over the next 123 pages, we find discussions of 343 ceramic marks. This represents 112 manufacturers,

primarily English or Scottish and a very small number of French (four) German (one), and American (seven). There are none from Spain, Mexico, China, or Canada. The marks are presented alphabetically by name of manufacturer, one to three per page, with notes for each. A delightful cautionary note discusses how easy it is to confuse the mark of John Wood with that of Josiah Wedgwood as Wood used his initial (Josiah did not) and left no space between his middle name (Wedg) and his surname (136).

The majority of the marks have a photographic illustration, which Gibson's colleagues prefer over pencil. Economics likely limited the photography to black and white, an area where the internet has a great advantage (<http://www.thepotteries.org/pottery.htm>). Many marks have colour variations.

A great subtheme of *Ceramic Makers' Marks* is the presentation of a tremendous range of the possible conditions of marks. The book successfully illustrates the typical real-world problems faced by archaeologists seeking to identify ceramics. The broken examples include missing shards, a mark poorly applied or badly fired, or a plate subject to heavy crackling. This is the experiential teaching aspect of the volume – a subtext that imparts field experience to the reader and instills analytical confidence.

Given her expertise, I wish the author had discussed the materials themselves, both clays and glazes, and the agents that act upon them: physical shock, fire or smoke, chemicals or earth stains, water, evidence of heavy use, and patina and crackling.

The book's excellent two-page bibliography lacks only Robert E. Röntgen's detailed and useful *Marks on German, Bohemian and Austrian*

*Porcelain, 1710 to the Present* (Schiffer, 1997). The index uses categories: city, country or state, (design) element, mark type (impressed [or printed] and colour), word, and maker. There is no entry under “Country or State” for Germany, and only one for California (142), yet the introduction lists one and two examples, respectively (10). This results from the decision to limit the index to the physical mark itself.

Well researched, tightly organized, and inexpensive, Erica Gibson’s work will prove a great regional resource in British Columbia, where European ceramics are commonly encountered in museum collections and archaeological digs alike. The size suits a field camp; however, unlike plant identification guides or silver mark books, it is too large for pocket use. I applaud the book’s utility for the teaching of visual analytical skills. The author has made a useful addition both to historical archaeology fieldwork and to the classroom. This is a useful reference tool for the ceramics fraternity.

*Russian America: An Overseas  
Colony of a Continental Empire,  
1804-1867*

Ilya Vinkovetsky

Oxford and New York: Oxford  
University Press, 2011. 270 pp.  
\$54.95 cloth.

STEPHEN HAYCOX

*University of Alaska Anchorage*

IN THIS important book, Ilya Vinkovetsky of Simon Fraser University places the story of Russia’s American experiment fully within the history of colonialism. Russian America

was a unique colonial adventure, he argues, in which the tsar’s government supported, if it did not encourage, exploitative policies that served the profit orientation of the Russian American Company, while at the same time implementing progressive measures meant to recognize the humanity of the indigenous population and to impress other nations with the humanitarian character of Russia’s imperialism.

Distinguishing sharply between the Siberian merchant and *promyshlenniki* (contract fur-trade worker) beginnings of the colony – before formation of the Russian American Company and its later administration by the Russian Navy – Vinkovetsky posits that the many circumnavigation voyages, without which the colony would have been unsustainable, transformed the nature of the American venture. These brought it to a level of organization and professionalism borrowed, in part, from other nations’ imperial networks, but they were also the result of innovations that were responsive to the colony’s unusual ecological and economic character. Though the Siberian *promyshlenniki* were familiar with Subarctic conditions, negotiating the formidable seas between Kamchatka and Alaska took a significant toll on men and material. Supply from the many circumnavigation voyages largely overcame that obstacle. But that was possible only because the Russian population of Alaska and California (Fort Ross, eighty miles (128 km) north of San Francisco) never exceeded nine hundred. The number of “Creoles,” mixed-heritage offspring from indigenous women and Russian men, was generally twice that number. Profit from the sale of fur peltry was the only reason for the Alaskan venture

(never was it the establishing of a new society).

The small Russian population relied on both Creoles and Native people for labour, management, supply, and companionship; accordingly, both Creoles and Natives were given codified legal standing under Russian law. Building on their rudimentary, elementary colonial education, a number of Creoles received further training in Russia and became important functionaries in the Russian American Company.

Drawing on an impressive command of both Russian- and English-language sources, Vinkovetsky provides intriguing insight into the sustained effort Russians made to “Russify” the indigenous people with whom they had constant contact. Managers directed policy towards generating among the Natives an appreciation of the efficiencies and predictability of order, with the design of rendering them more accepting of Russian authority. Education played a significant role in that policy, as did conversion to Russian Orthodox Christianity. Vinkovetsky provides a particularly salient analysis of the work of Ioann Veniaminov, Bishop Innocent, who contributed substantially to the Russification effort by providing evidence, in his *Notes on the Islands of the Unalaska District*, of Native people’s capability and adaptability. They should be viewed, he argued, not as an impediment to the achievement of colonial aims but, rather, as an asset.

The Russian experience in North America proved valuable as the Russian Empire expanded into the Asian Far East after the 1850s, an area of much more interest to Russia than was Alaska. Following on the Alaska experience, the tsar’s government treated the area as a colony rather than as an expansion of Russia proper.

Given the eventual decision to sell Alaska, Vinkovetsky describes the American venture as a failure. But that conclusion seems inconsistent with his argument that the Russians manifested substantial adaptability in the colony and elsewhere utilized the lessons they learned in doing so. His demonstration of this thesis will make the book very useful to historians and anthropologists alike.

*Pacific Connections: The Making of the US-Canada Borderlands*

Kornel Chang

Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012. 264 pp. \$29.95 paper.

*Chasing the Dragon in Shanghai: Canada’s Early Relations with China, 1858-1952*

John Meehan

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012. 260 pp. \$32.95 paper.

*Orienting Canada: Race, Empire, and the Transpacific*

John Price

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011. 464 pp. \$34.95 paper.

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THE HISTORY of Canada’s Pacific relations has long been a neglected subject. The general consensus was that Pacific relations were not central

to understanding the history of the country and its place in the world. In their own way, the three offerings under study here repair this imbalance.

Read together, they form a sort of triumvirate. Even though they take different approaches and explore different issues, at least two of them converge on questions of temporality; on place and the construction of borders; on racism and its impact on relationships in multiple contact zones; and on the significant and tangible bonds that were forged between Canada and the Pacific for centuries. Together, these three books provide a rich tapestry upon which to trace the multitude connections that shaped relations between Canada and the Pacific and, in the hands of these authors, the very nature of Canada and the Pacific since the mid-nineteenth century. At the same time, they all move beyond narrow investigations of Canada's Pacific World to suggest how Canada's Pacific relations can inform the historiography of border studies, colonialism, imperialism, racism, and international relations more broadly.

Kornel Chang's book is an innovative exploration of the dual processes of globalization and border formation on the Pacific coast of North America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Contrary to conventional studies that focus on the history of particular groups in motion between different parts of the Pacific Rim, Chang focuses on the Pacific Northwest (loosely defined but assumed to encompass British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon). He slices a thin wedge of the region's temporal history to consider how different groups experienced the region and how the responses of local, national, and imperial authorities were informed by global phenomena. Chang argues that

the "connections and transformations wrought by a globalizing world kindled a countermovement to solidify national borders among white settler societies in Canada and the United States, who together elaborated new forms of sovereignty in an attempt to control Asian migration across the Pacific and across landed borders in North America" (3). In his rich analysis, Chang documents the manner in which Chinese "managerial elites" benefited from the supply of Chinese labourers to North American markets, the politics of white union activists and how they flowed along imperial circuits, the confluence of interests between labourers and South Asian activists under the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and how migrants' successful evasion of growing immigration regulations led to greater state surveillance and intervention in their lives. Chang's studies of the role of migrant elites in bridging various interests, as well as the impact of illegal migration in shaping the character of the Canada-US border, build on interventions made previously by Lisa Mar in *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) and Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). However, Chang covers important new ground in his efforts to delineate a geographic space in which to tease out the paradoxical, contradictory, and twinned dynamics of globalization and the establishment of national borders.

John Meehan also takes a stab at the "spatial turn" by exploring the history of Canada's experience in Shanghai from

1858 to 1952.<sup>1</sup> In a lively read, Meehan documents the wide range of people who made their way to Shanghai and lived and worked there both during its heyday and at the lower ebb of its history. Meehan is interested primarily in filling the gap in the historiography on Sino-Canadian relations, turning to an earlier period than the standard *Reluctant Adversaries: Canada and the People's Republic of China, 1949-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991, ed. Paul M. Evans and B. Michael Frolic), to investigate the relationship. The result is a twinned analysis. On one level, Meehan looks at the Canadians – loosely defined as “those who were born in Canada, those who came from there directly, or, in certain cases, those whose ties were more tenuous” (9) – who lived, worked, and visited Shanghai. On another level, he traces the parameters of Canada’s formal relations with successive Chinese governments over nearly a century of turbulence and conflict on the Mainland. The two-pronged approach offers readers significant insights into Canadians in Shanghai as well as various efforts to establish formal relations between the two countries. In his conclusion, Meehan suggests that the story of Sino-Canadian relations in the years he documents demonstrates a kind of parallel “coming of age,” though in a vastly different guise. He suggests that, over time, Canadians came to distance themselves from the “Shanghai mind” (the sense of superiority ascribed to many Western residents of Shanghai in this period) “particularly as their own nationalism developed during

the interwar years” (180). Yet how this translated into Canada’s formal relations with China, if at all, remains at the margins of Meehan’s analysis. This is partly due to the fact that Meehan draws back from engaging fully with the question of racism in Canada.

What Meehan leaves unspoken, John Price makes patently clear. In *Orienting Canada*, Price places questions of race and racism at the core of Canada’s relationship with Asia from 1907 to 1954. Rather than focusing on bilateral relations, Price addresses the sweeping political and cultural connections between Canada and Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and China. Through an analysis of major events in the region, Price argues eloquently that Canada’s transpacific (a term never clearly defined) relations were informed by notions of racial supremacy and changing ideas of empire. Price persuasively demonstrates how Canada supported the United States in the “remilitarization of the Pacific” (7). During this process, Price suggests, the interests of Asian leaders were marginalized in favour of efforts to carve out an American sphere of influence. In each chapter, Price documents the history of major events in Asia before exploring the history of Canadian engagement and participation with events in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. Price convincingly demonstrates not only that issues in Asia played “a foundational role in Canadian and world politics” (2) but also that it was the upheaval in Asia that lay the groundwork for America’s imperial ambitions and inspired Canadian diplomats to actively encourage the United States to take on this role (128). Price’s masterful intervention fundamentally alters understandings of Canada’s engagement with Asia, pairing it with notions of racial superiority as

<sup>1</sup> Although the spatial turn tends to refer to the use of GIS technology (beginning in the 1990s) to map historical spaces of inquiry, I use the term more generally here to reference efforts to pursue translocal or local histories that inform discussions of the nature of globalization.

well as the expansion of the American Empire.

These three books situate British Columbia's history of entangled relations with the Pacific within broader questions of globalization and empire. Of the three, Chang is the most forthright about making connections between the history of places and the circulation of notions and practices of imperialism. It is troubling, therefore, that Chang mentions the presence of First Nations peoples only twice. The Pacific Northwest was not an empty region upon which the politics of empire were played out on the backs of migrants alone. Moreover, as Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua have suggested, all immigration needs to be understood as a form of settler colonialism.<sup>2</sup> Chang's thoughtful analysis of the dynamics that shaped the trajectory of the Pacific Northwest and its place in the larger Pacific World neglects this important issue, and his analysis therefore invites further study. Questions of how to account for the particularities of place, structural racism, and the impulse for encounters between Canada, Canadians, and the Pacific World remain provocative ones. These three works make a substantial contribution to expanding the horizons of the pursuit of such scholarly inquiries.

*Above Stairs: Social Life  
in Upper-Class Victoria,  
1843-1918*

Valerie Green

Victoria: Sono Nis, 1995; reprinted  
by TouchWood, 2011. 240 pp.  
\$19.95 paper.

*More English Than the English:  
A Very Social History of Victoria*

Terry Reksten

Victoria: Orca, 1986; reprinted by  
Sono Nis Press, 2011. 232 pp.  
\$19.95 paper.

KATIE LOUISE McCULLOUGH  
*University of Guelph*

IN "TRACING the Fortunes of Five Founding Families of Victoria" (*BC Studies* 115/16 [1998-99]), Sylvia Van Kirk reveals the mixed cultural background of some of Victoria's most important settler families (the Douglasses, Tods, Works, McNeills, and Rosses), whose patriarchs settled their families on Vancouver Island after retiring from Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) service. With the notable exception of Van Kirk's article, recent academic social histories of British settlers in Victoria are few and far between. Popular social histories, on the other hand, are plentiful. Authors such as John Adams, Kathryn Bridge, Valerie Green, and Terry Reksten sell extremely well to audiences, both academic and non-academic. However, with the exception of the Douglas family (James Douglas, as the governor of the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, is worthy of attention), the other mixed-heritage

<sup>2</sup> Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua, "Decolonizing Anti-Racism," *Social Justice* 32, 4 (2005): 120-43.

HBC families seem almost absent from the popular historical imagination.

British settlement to British Columbia, as a diasporic phenomenon, is an understudied topic in general. Until recently, Canadian historians were reluctant to include Canada in “the new imperial history” pioneered by J.A. Pocock, Kathleen Wilson, Catherine Hall, and others, but this is slowly being rectified (see Nancy Christie, ed., *Transatlantic Subjects: Ideas, Institutions, and Social Experience in Post-Revolutionary British North America* [Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press], 2008). We are now gaining the tools with which to properly place British North America within the Atlantic World, including its crucial relationship to the United States. But we do not have a clear picture of where the British settlers in Victoria fit as peripherals of the British Empire.

Vancouver Island, as the site of an ambitious and significant colonial experiment orchestrated by the HBC and the Colonial Office, was acted upon by imperial forces and, in turn, influenced domestic British culture through the familial, political, cultural, and intellectual ties its settlers established between the Island colony and Britain. Ideas about where Victorians sat within the imperial imagination reflected their contact with Aboriginal peoples and other groups that settled alongside the British in smaller numbers in the nineteenth century, including Chinese, Hawaiian (“Kanakas”), African-American, Sikh, Jewish, German, Canadian, and Japanese migrants. The ideas and imaginings of the British settlers in Victoria reinforced racial hierarchies and assumptions of white (or Anglo-Saxon) superiority in opposition to the many “others”

encountered on this North Pacific island.

In Valerie Green’s *Above Stairs: Social Life in Upper-Class Victoria, 1843-1918* and Terry Reksten’s *More English Than the English: A Very Social History of Victoria*, the reader is given a glimpse into the lives of some of the more notable British (and Irish) settlers in Victoria during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Through the use of diaries, letters, and newspaper articles, Green gives us a taste of the daily lives of some of the notable upper-class Victorian families. The parties, picnics, plays, and other social gatherings of the Douglas, Pemberton, Skinner, Crease, O’Reilly, Trutch, Rithet, and Barnard families – “an elite and powerful group of settlers who became the aristocracy of Victoria” (13) – were attended by much of the colonial gentry, including officers of the Royal Navy. These interactions cemented the far-flung colony’s British connections and, as the ruling “elite,” these British colonials reinforced ideas of white superiority through the social networks they maintained.

Reksten, on the other hand, provides a more general overview of Victoria in this period, but she never intended the book to be a comprehensive, or “academic,” history; rather, it was “written for those who might not usually find pleasure in reading about the past” (9). And this is certainly the case. This book is accessible and interesting and will appeal to anybody interested in Victoria’s past. Many of the scandals – such as that relating to Alice Douglas, who, with her three children, fled to England in 1870 to escape her husband Charles Good, her father’s private secretary, to whom she had taken “an inconceivable dislike, ... so much so she could hardly bear to see him” (129) – and the notable characters of this small but vivacious colony are

expertly woven into a broader narrative. Of particular note in this reprinted edition is an updated list of sixty-one historical sites, with maps, that enable the reader to visit the remaining stately homes and other historical points of interest, which, according to Reksten, “represent Victoria’s real, rather than imagined, past” (208).

However, both authors agree that Victoria never became the “Little England” envisioned by some of its earlier settlers; rather, the settlement occupied a space between British colonial outpost and North American frontier. For the most part, these books tell of the men and women who tried to make Victoria a white British settlement, and we must take them for what they are: stories of some of the people who settled in Victoria at the height of the British Empire. Until the new imperial history brings Victoria into the fold, we must turn to popular historical works for our basic regional history. We must ask ourselves: What can a settlement like Victoria tell historians of the British Empire and those interested in diaspora studies in general? For now, however, we have these two well-researched and well-written books by English-born authors who, like many of their historical subjects, settled in Victoria. As a native Victorian, I enjoyed these books very much indeed, finding them to be important sources for future scholarly inquiry.



*The Spencer Mansion: A House,  
a Home, and an Art Gallery*

Robert Ratcliffe Taylor

Victoria: TouchWood Editions,  
2012. 216 pp. \$19.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT  
*Cambridge University*

ROBERT RATCLIFFE Taylor’s *The Spencer Mansion: A House, a Home and an Art Gallery* is, as the title suggests, really two books. One half considers the “life and times” of the five families who made Gypeswyk – the Old-English name for the Suffolk town of Ipswich – their home. The other half follows the transformation of that home into a civic art gallery. In doing these two things, Taylor takes his readers through the social, cultural, political, and architectural history of European settlement in twentieth-century Victoria.

Gypeswyk was designed by the local architect William Ridgway Wilson and was built by George Mesher in 1889. As Taylor puts it, the Italianate villa was “constructed of gold dust” (2). Victoria owed its expansion to a series of gold rushes. Gypeswyk’s first owner, Alexander Green, made enough money in the Australian and American goldfields to set himself up as a banker in Victoria. And the house’s last owner, David Spencer, whose family occupied Gypeswyk from 1903 to 1951, was lured to British Columbia from his native Wales by the discovery of gold in the Cariboo. Though Spencer may never have made it to the goldfields, by 1863 he had opened a dry goods store in Victoria. By the time of his death in 1920, succeeding members of his family were operating stores throughout the province.

It was not just business that drove the early owners of Gypseywyk. The Greens, the Spencers, and the other families who occupied the house were civic-minded late-Victorians who sat on the boards of charitable institutions, hosted evening musicals, and supported fundraising events. It was this spirit of philanthropy that prompted David Spencer's daughter, Sara, to give what was by then known as the Spencer mansion to the City of Victoria as a centre for the arts in 1951. Some members of Victoria's City Council were not "overly anxious to take possession" (135) of the mansion until the provincial government agreed to award the Victoria Arts Centre an annual grant.

The centre's inaugural exhibition in 1951 featured eighteenth-century portraits alongside contemporary works by Quebec's leading abstract painters. The centre's first director, Colin Graham, continued this eclectic approach. A native of Vancouver, Graham attended the University of British Columbia, then Cambridge and Stanford universities before taking a job in San Francisco's Civic Art Museum. In 1951, he moved back to British Columbia in order to become the Victoria Art Centre's first director. During his long association with the centre – it lasted until 1980 – Graham built a permanent collection encompassing Canadian, American, and Asian art and hosted exhibitions from around the world. The centre also became a venue for musical and theatrical events, lectures, and art classes. Thanks largely to Graham's efforts – and to a hard-working group of volunteers – within ten years the centre's membership had the highest ratio per capita of population for any art gallery in Canada.

During the course of transforming Gypseywyk into a centre for the arts,

the mansion's graceful porte cochère was dismantled, the Minton tiles and delicate woodwork were removed from the fireplaces, the gardens fell into ruin, and, in 1958, an unsympathetic annex was attached to the north side of the house. Today the only original feature still intact is the beautifully panelled foyer, where the Greens and the Spencers once greeted their guests. With this rueful observation, Robert Ratcliffe Taylor ends his well-told story of how a stately villa became a centre for the arts.

*The Life and Art of  
Ina D.D. Uthhoff*

Christina Johnson-Dean

Salt Spring Island: Mother Tongue Publishing, 2012. 128 pp. \$32.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT  
*Cambridge University*

LIKE MANY female artists of her generation, Ina D.D. Uthhoff, née Campbell, had a difficult time sustaining a career as a professional artist. The daughter of middle-class Scottish parents, she did not lack opportunity. In 1905, the sixteen-year-old girl entered the Glasgow School of Art, then at the peak of international influence, where she came under the influence of the superb draftsman Maurice Greiffenhagen. Nor was Ina without talent. Following her graduation in 1912 she exhibited with the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts and the Royal Scottish Academy (though the author does not tell us how her work was received). Moreover, Ina was adventurous. In 1913 she travelled to British Columbia to visit friends who were homesteading at Crawford Bay on

the east side of Kootenay Lake.

During her year in British Columbia, Uthhoff captured the Creston Valley landscape and the cityscape of Vancouver in sharply defined pen-and-ink sketches. And she met homesteader Edward "Ted" Uthhoff. The couple's ensuing romance was interrupted by the outbreak of the Great War. Ted crossed the Atlantic with the 54th Kootenay Battalion and saw action at Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele. Ina returned to Glasgow, where, after qualifying as an art teacher, she taught at elementary schools and even had a solo exhibition of her Canadian work. (Again, we are not told how that work was received.)

The couple married at the end of the war and returned to the Kootenays, but things were never the same. Ina found it difficult to cope with the physical work on the ranch, especially after she became a mother – by 1922 there were two children. Mentally damaged by his wartime experiences, Ted as well as the children needed Ina's support.

After relocating to Victoria in the mid-1920s, Ina gave private art lessons and taught at public and private schools. She designed and administered a correspondence course in art. She became an art critic for the local newspaper. She helped establish the Little Centre – the forerunner of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, of which she later became a board member when it opened in 1951. And she established her own art school: the Victoria School of Art, which ran from 1926 to 1942.

Johnson-Dean admirably demonstrates the extent to which Uthhoff was an inspiring teacher and competent art administrator. The book shows how she helped shape the cultural history of the city and, equally, how she never fell down on the job as

mother. What Johnson-Dean does not do, however, is tell us enough about the development of Uthhoff's art.

It is not enough to quote from newspaper reviews, or simply to list the contents of an artist's work, or to expect illustrations of the paintings and drawings to speak for themselves. Uthhoff's stunning wartime painting, *Girl Welder at Work* (1943), deserves comparison with other artists who worked in munitions plants. We need to know why the artist made the occasional foray into non-objective painting when she was clearly unsympathetic to that genre. I would have liked Johnson-Dean to have taken a stab at dating the works; to have shown the extent to which Uthhoff's training at the Glasgow School of Art underpinned her vision throughout her career; and, above all, to show the degree to which Uthhoff's work was derivative of Emily Carr and the Group of Seven, among other artists.

The book prompts us to venture further into counter-factual history. Would Ina Uthhoff's paintings have been any different if she had lived in central Canada? Or even in Vancouver, where she would have come into contact with more artists and more ideas? What if the constraints of teaching, reviewing, and raising a family had given her more time to devote to her work? Or was she doomed, like most female artists of her generation, to the tasks of teaching and reviewing and making a living as best she could? These are some of the questions prompted by Christina Johnson-Dean's valuable biography, the answers to which could have enhanced our understanding of Uthhoff's work and the process under which she created it.

*Wrong Highway:  
The Misadventures of a  
Misplaced Society Girl*

Stella T. Jenkins and  
Mark E. Smith

Surrey, BC: Hancock House, 2011.  
360 pp. \$24.95 paper.

CAMERON DUDER  
*Vancouver*

*Wrong Highway* is the memoir of Stella Jenkins, a middle-class mother of four from Victoria who, in 1948, recently divorced, formed a relationship with Bob Smith, a trapper and labourer. Stella left Victoria with her two younger children and joined Bob in Smithers. They married in July 1949, had one child, and lived and worked in various parts of the BC Interior and the Yukon before returning to Victoria in 1953. *Wrong Highway* is the story of their life together until Bob's death from an accidental gunshot wound in 1956.

Jenkins's memoir provides a glimpse into small communities, work, gender, social relationships, and Aboriginal stereotypes in the BC Interior and the Yukon in the decade following the Second World War. Jenkins provides detailed accounts of the terrain and of the trapping and fishing life, which give the reader a good sense of life in rural British Columbia in this period, and the characters are quirky and humorous.

*Wrong Highway* details Bob Smith's outdoorsman skills, trapping techniques, and his building their log cabin in Clinton. He trapped and worked as a labourer but dreamed of owning a hunting lodge, while Stella took work where she could find it. The most interesting parts of the book deal with her employment, most notably a

contract as section cook at a railway camp in the Yukon, where she not only cooked for the men who worked the track but was also responsible for requisitioning the supplies, notifying other section houses when a train was on the line, dispatching rolling stock, keeping equipment records, and getting the mail ready for pickup by the next train.

Jenkins was not the only slightly rebellious middle-class woman to strike out into a very different world after the war. *Wrong Highway* gives us a good sense of what some of those women actually *did*. However, despite her new work roles, constrained financial circumstances, and peripatetic life, Jenkins was never very far from her urban origins. At times she resorted to sending her children back to "better" circumstances in Victoria, and some of her comments demonstrate that her basic attitudes remained. For example, she remarks about one couple: "They were living common-law. I was quite put off and thought do we really have to be with people like this all the time? By now it was obvious that the north was a sinkhole for drifters, runaways and illicit relationships" (128). It seems not to have occurred to her that she and Bob might have been described using these very terms.

Unfortunately, the insight Jenkins provides does not extend to Aboriginal people who, when mentioned at all, are portrayed in stereotypical and largely negative ways. We read: "It was while we were in Smithers that the Indians obtained their franchise and were allowed into licensed parlours. They came in droves at first but couldn't handle their liquor" (60). Later, Jenkins informs us: "In 1952, the inhabitants of the valley tended to fall into groups: ranchers, sawmill people, hotel people, government staffs, merchants and

Indians – the latter very much in evidence in the pubs on Saturday” (281).

Jenkins implies that her attitudes changed over time. In describing a warm greeting between a white woman and a group of Aboriginal women in Whitehorse, she reflects: “My own view of Indians at the time was that they were okay as long as they behaved in a civilized manner, but of course most of them didn’t, couldn’t or wouldn’t. It never occurred to me to meet them like this woman, on their own terms” (122–23). Such views were the norm among white people in British Columbia in the mid-twentieth century, but that they should be so unproblematically expressed in a book published in 2011 demonstrates just how much work we still need to do to eliminate stereotypical depictions of Aboriginal peoples.

*Wrong Highway* will be of interest to anyone seeking to know more about how people lived outside the larger cities of British Columbia and, particularly, how women’s lives did and did not change after the Second World War. Jenkins seems at pains to depict herself as having lived a rebellious life. In some respects she is indeed an example of how some women rejected the norms of the period. Nevertheless, in reading *Wrong Highway* I am reminded that we are rarely as rebellious as we like to think.



## *Unbuilt Victoria* Dorothy Mindenhall

Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2012.  
248 pp. \$29.99 paper.

LARRY McCANN  
*University of Victoria*

WHAT IF? Ah yes, that perennial question. What would a city look like if the “unbuilt” were actually built? *What if* a municipality’s proposed plans were followed “to a T”? Sometimes the rejection of a questionable proposal results in an improved counter-proposal, even a successful outcome. Other times, sensible schemes are scuttled because the economy is in a tailspin. Or they are cast aside for sheer lack of political will. In a related way, “what if” questions can fairly be asked of any historical study that examines the role of the “unbuilt” in the city-building process. *What if* the choice of unbuilt projects had been widened by plan and building type, by number of case studies, or in geographical scope to give a more complete portrayal of the city-building process? And *what if* the author had probed more deeply into archival sources to reveal why the “unbuilt” actually remained, well, unbuilt?

*Unbuilt Victoria* is part of a new series sponsored by Toronto’s Dundurn Press. *Unbuilt Calgary* has just been published. Judging from the contents of both books, the apparent approach is as follows: the author selects a range of unbuilt projects that she or he deems important and that, if built, would have had a significant impact on a city’s built environment. We are indebted to Dorothy Mindenhall for introducing us to a cast of buildings and plans that at one time took centre

stage in local newspapers and municipal council chambers. Regrettably, though, a number of Mindenhall's "biographies" of buildings and plans remain unbuilt, their full story incomplete, unresolved.

For Dorothy Mindenhall, the choice of unbuilt schemes focuses heavily on public places and institutional buildings, with less attention given to commercial and residential projects. Thus, Victoria's waterfront landscape, including the Songhees district and legislative precinct (all united by an egregious mid-1960s transportation plan), draws considerable attention. Building projects include Victoria's City Hall, the provincial Parliament Buildings, a convention centre, a civic art gallery, several cathedrals, and the University of Victoria. The City of Victoria's urban landscape garners most attention. The suburban districts of Greater Victoria are largely shunned. *Unbuilt Calgary*, by contrast, has much more to say about suburban development and residential housing.

Mindenhall's choices receive varying degrees of discussion and supporting research. She relies heavily on newspaper accounts to tell stories of the unbuilt. When possible, especially for the recent past, these accounts are supplemented by interviewing a cast of actors, mostly architects, once associated with a scheme. These sources do yield important insights into why certain projects were never built but, too often, reveal only part of the story or gloss over the precise reasons for failure. Government records – for example, municipal land use and zoning files, and City Council minutes – are seldom examined by Mindenhall. Even readily available published research is sometimes ignored. The controversial Reid project of the 1960s and early 1970s, its proposed high-rise buildings looming large over Victoria's waterfront

and historic "Old Town" district, receives detailed attention. It is an important story, entertainingly told and well illustrated. But, in the end, why did Dave Barrett's provincial NDP government eventually purchase the land, bringing closure to the scheme? Also informative is the story of the various convention centre plans and the equally numerous choice of sites "around town." The spatial variety of desirable building sites is an unspecified but nonetheless underlying theme of *Unbuilt Victoria*, at least to this reviewer. But again, important questions remain unanswered. For example, why did the site adjacent to the Empress Hotel – shunned in the 1950s – regain favour as the convention centre's final resting place? Would files in the CPR archives in Montreal yield the reason? Or a planning report in the City of Victoria Archives? Mindenhall claims that John Blair, the designer of Beacon Hill Park, is "a shadowy figure about whom little can be confirmed." Yet in *The Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, W.A. Dale offers details of Blair's career.

Other discussions seem to "tail off," never fully resolved. Although the Bay Village scheme at the heart of the James Bay neighbourhood is wisely chosen for discussion, we are never told about various other proposals for the site, such as a thirty-story, mixed-use tower proposed by the developer J.A. Mace (he of an unrealistic convention centre proposal at the corner of Bay and Government streets). Nor is it explained how changes in provincial planning legislation and shifts in Victoria's policies towards limiting the height of high-rise residential towers throughout the city brought a close to the dreams of Mace Homes and Investment Limited. In fact, the final building, James Bay Square, is much smaller than is indicated by the scheme

illustrated in the book. Similarly, the discussion surrounding the money-raising development aspirations of the University of Victoria in the vicinity of the campus contains a number of errors. It was the proposal to build a large complex of apartments on what is now the parking lot of Camosun College that enraged the residents of Oak Bay's Lansdowne Park neighbourhood, not the apartment area north of Cedar Hill Cross Road. These money-making development schemes were essential before the provincial government of W.A.C. Bennett finally decided, in 1964, to provide direct financial support to British Columbia's several universities.

Despite these caveats, Dorothy Mindenhall's *Unbuilt Victoria* is important because it brings to our attention many forgotten features of the city-building process in the province's capital city. It's a shame, though, that suburban schemes in the Capital Region District (once known as Greater Victoria) failed to win more attention: schemes like the many "paper" subdivisions promoted during the early twentieth-century land boom era, or a high-rise apartment project envisioned to sit atop scenic Gonzales Hill, or the Eaton's department store that might have anchored Saanich's Broadmead Village. Ah yes, *what if* her publisher had offered Mindenhall more space to round out the story of unbuilt Greater Victoria?



*Making Headlines: 100 Years of  
the Vancouver Sun*

Shelley Fralic with Kate Bird

Vancouver: The *Vancouver Sun*, 2012.  
183 pp. Illus. \$36.70 cloth.

JOHN DOUGLAS BELSHAW  
*Vancouver*

THE *Vancouver Sun* turned one hundred in 2012. To mark this event, reporter Shelley Fralic compiled a (roughly) chronological account of goings-on in the city and at the paper itself. It is not so much a life-and-times approach as a run-and-gun account of the town rag and the ink-stained wretches who produce it. There are critical assessments of the newspaper business in Vancouver: this is not one of them. *Making Headlines* is a self-described "celebration," a souvenir that will find a place on many BC shelves because of the memories it evokes. There are some very good photos, some of which are gratifyingly unfamiliar. The writing is tight enough and suitably journalistic. Fralic has a natural nerdy understanding of the way technology (re)shapes process and product over a century.

As accounts of the past go, however, this one is extremely problematic. Some warts are revealed and some of the underlying assumptions of the newspaper are laid bare, but *Making Headlines* reinforces rather than challenges many outdated notions about news, journalism, and society. The title of this volume is apposite: the newspaper *manufactures* news. Stories don't "make" headlines, journalists do. If we can agree that newspapers do write the first rough draft of history, ought we to shy away from saying, "Well, you got that badly wrong, didn't you?"

By way of example, take the Doukhobor story, a long and complex one that wends its rather sad way from the 1920s through the 1970s. The press generally approached the Sons of Freedom with the kid gloves off and a taste for the sensational; newspaper accounts shaped public opinion on the sect and tailored the list of options available to authorities. In short, the press is culpable for many things that went amiss. To retell it, as Fralic does, as though it all starts and ends in 1961 with Simma Holt is to do a great disservice and to perpetuate harm (91).

Or take Fralic's hubristic praise of the team that covered the "Missing Women" case, though only after an arrest was made. Descending on the police like jackals in 2002 is nothing like getting out into the alleyways and doing the journalistic digging that might have led to a break in the case a decade earlier (168-69).

Fralic is better when it comes to gender issues. She is realistic about historic contexts and she draws attention to the glass ceiling (placed just above the windowless basement) confronted by female journos. If, however, "the 1950s was the era of the housewife" (71), who made it so? The *Sun* depended on advertising revenue from the consumer goods industry that filled homes with all mod cons, including washers, dryers, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators. Despite the enormous wealth that thus flowed from serving up visions of ideal feminine domesticity, the newspaper's "women's department" couldn't catch a break: male journalists referred to it, "derisively, as the 'ovary tower'" (100).

There are, as well, errors and a serious oversight. The Lions Gate Bridge was not under construction in 1912 (16), "situations wanted" is not advert-speak for "a place to rent" (17), and Pierre Trudeau was no more

a "Frenchman" than Joe Clark is an Englishman (164). Landy didn't "inexplicably" do a shoulder check on Bannister: he had been doing them rhythmically over the final one hundred yards – which telegraphed to Bannister (and photographer Charlie Warner) exactly when to sprint (78).

On Warner's iconic "Miracle Mile" photo, Fralic smartly reports the conflict it engendered. Warner said he owned the iconic picture because he was off-duty when he snapped the shutter; the *Sun* disagreed and kept the rights and revenues. Too bad this parsimony is reproduced throughout *Making Headlines*: photographs are, with few exceptions, not labelled with the names of their creators.

The daily newspaper is as integral to the idea of the modern city as property taxes. It is a sponsor of civic culture and commerce, ostensibly above the fray and grubby materialism in its pursuit of the truth. Fifties-era publisher Don Cromie was at the helm when the *Sun* proclaimed itself "a Newspaper Devoted to Progress and Democracy, Tolerance and Freedom of Thought," all of which would have come as a surprise to readers whose sexual orientation, ideology, ethnicity, aspirations, or creed were regularly criticized, chided, and/or ignored by the *Sun*. Newspapers are, generally and universally, pulpits for perspectives that range from the relatively benign to the downright malign. In short, the print media is part of the society on which it reports, and notions of an arm's-length relationship are simply too foolish to entertain. This book reveals a Vancouver daily happy to stir the pot and then, when everyone is suitably agitated, offer up a "Here, let me hold your coat."

*Selwyn Pullan: Photographing  
Mid-Century West Coast  
Modernism*

Barry Downs, Donald Luxton,  
Kiriko Watanabe, and Adele  
Weder

Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre,  
2012. 160 pp. \$45.00 cloth.

BILL JEFFRIES  
*Vancouver*

ARCHITECTURE has been a key site in the evolution of cultural Modernism; the elevator is often cited as an important early Modernist manifestation, and the idea that function creates its own form is a key Modernist precept. Images of architecture are a good entry point into assessing what Modernism has actually bequeathed to us. Architectural photography, however, while appearing to be a straightforward pictorial medium, does contain hidden complexities. It is not the same as “photographs with architecture in them.” In “architectural photography,” the building is the primary subject, its designer named in the caption or title; in photographs with buildings, architecture is present, but coincidental, and architect anonymity is the rule. There is also the question of whether an architectural photographer is “the architect’s eye,” as was mooted at a panel discussion in London last summer. Panelist Simon Allford went so far as to state: “If the photograph is not good then maybe it is not a very good building.” A respondent replied: “The image that is distributed to the public *is* the building.”

These considerations play into the current interest in West Coast Modernist architecture, its representations, and the lifestyle that it offered. Coast

Modern has found a public through books on Julius Shulman’s Los Angeles and via the film *Coast Modern*, which played to large audiences in Vancouver last summer. The BC version may now be seen in this revelatory monograph on the commercial photographer Selwyn Pullan, co-published by the West Vancouver Museum and Douglas and McIntyre. It depicts British Columbia’s best mid-century Modernist architecture at the moment when it was designed and built.

The book is published on the occasion of Pullan’s second exhibition at the West Vancouver Museum, and Pullan himself, now ninety years old and living in North Vancouver, emerges here as the latest discovery in British Columbia’s photographic history. His photographic training, coincidentally, was in the same California milieu that Shulman made famous. In the late 1940s, Pullan attended the Art Center School in Los Angeles, where he studied with Ansel Adams, among others. While Shulman captured California houses by Frank Lloyd Wright and Richard Neutra, Pullan worked locally from the 1950s on, his images now strengthening the case that buildings by Barry Downs, Arthur Erickson, Ken Gardiner, Fred Hollingsworth, and Ron Thom can hold their own in the global history of Modernism.

In Pullan’s residential images, the 1950s and non-Hippie 1960s seem coolly seductive; they depict local Modernist aspirations, now seemingly a lost world of creative idealism. The house of mirrors that is architectural photography emerges when one considers hanging it at home as art, as many have. I could imagine purchasing a Pullan to hang in my living room; if I did, what would that say? I’d create a loop in which some photographs have houses in them and some houses have

photographs in them. The photograph on the wall could hang in the house pictured in the photograph; or it might end up in a craftsman cottage, perhaps as a sign of the inhabitants' yearning for a less cluttered life. In Pullan's images the minimalist interiors also mirror Vancouver's virtually empty urban streets, and this looping cultural history encompasses a medium (photography), a profession, built forms, landscape, and the interpretation of those elements as examples of humanity aspiring to design truly stunning structures.

Encountering these sumptuous images of Coast Modern homes, theory can easily go out the Modernist window, as one simply wishes to have the experience of living in one of the spaces pictured. Even if such a quasi-austere space is not for you, there is little doubt about the importance of this amazing book; the pictures and the houses themselves are special. Texts by Barry Downs, Don Luxton, Kiriko Watanabe, and Adele Weder shed new light on the era and the aesthetic that Pullan documented, that of postwar confidence in which it was hoped architecture could actually make the world a better place. A labour of love, the book results from hundreds of unseen and unmentioned hours spent cleaning, restoring, and scanning old negatives undertaken by staff at the West Vancouver Museum. This is British Columbia at its best: the photographs are good, so the buildings must be as well.

*Dalton's Gold Rush Trail:  
Exploring the Route of the  
Klondike Cattle Drives*

Michael Gates

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,  
2012. 304 pp. \$24.95 paper.

CHARLENE PORSILD  
*University of New Mexico*

ALTHOUGH THE Chilkoot Trail is the most famous trail to the Klondike, there were a wide variety of other routes that gold seekers used to reach the interior of the Yukon between 1896 and 1900. The historic Tlingit trading route that became known as the Dalton Trail was one of them. It was not the shortest. It was not the easiest. But it was an alternative to the steep, mountainous terrain and heavy traffic found on the main routes. Most of all, it was a route conducive to moving livestock.

In this volume, Yukon historian Michael Gates weaves his own contemporary backcountry experiences with historical documentation about the now largely forgotten route known as the Dalton Trail. Whacking through muskeg bogs and clouds of mosquitoes, Gates takes us through the bush and along some of the most remote and unpronounceable rivers in the north – the Takhini, the Kaskawulsh, the Dezadeash, the Tatshenshini, the Klehini, and more – and through some of the most spectacular wilderness to be found anywhere.

Gates tells us the story of Jack Dalton, a temperamental American guide and outfitter, whose first forays into the North were to the Yukon interior from the Pacific coast with Frederick Schwatka in 1886. Dalton, though an adventurer, was first and foremost a businessman, and he was forever

dreaming up the next big get-rich-quick scheme. Thinking the Yukon was surely the “next big thing,” he hired on with Frank Leslie’s *Illustrated Newspaper* in 1890 to accompany a group wanting to penetrate the interior of the Yukon from the Alaskan coast. From there, he dreamed up numerous business schemes to get rich by assisting others to make their way to the northern interior, all of them ill-fated.

While Dalton’s trail to the Klondike never became the highway (or the railway) its namesake hoped it would, the trail was significant for several years and had its own Mounted Police post and customs house. Jack Dalton also deserves a place in northern history for several other reasons. First, in 1890, he and his partner Edward Glave were the first non-Aboriginal adventurers to find and map the Tatshenshini River from the interior to its outlet at Dry Bay on the Alaska coast. Second, his route allowed numerous other entrepreneurs to bring over twelve thousand head of livestock (cattle, oxen, reindeer, goats, horses, and sheep) into the Klondike district through the summer of 1898, thus averting a food shortage in Dawson the following winter. Finally, he is a splendid example of a man with questionable ethics who challenged the Tlingit monopoly over a coastal pass only to replace it with a monopoly of his own.

Gates has been exhaustive in his research on the history of this much-overlooked trail, offering information from many new sources and documents. Northern borderlands history has its own challenges, but the author managed to examine sources in Juneau, Seattle, Whitehorse, Calgary, and Regina during his quest. His painstaking research, combined and interwoven with personal experiences and insights, makes this an unusual but valuable

contribution to the growing list of high-quality studies on Klondike history.

*Tse-loh-ne (The People at the  
End of the Rocks): Journey  
Down the Davie Trail*

Keith Billington

Halfmoon Bay: Caitlin Press, 2012.  
256 pp. \$22.95 paper.

ROBIN RIDINGTON  
*University of British Columbia*

KEITH BILLINGTON has had a long career as a nurse in British Columbia and the Yukon as well as being band manager for the Fort Ware Sekani/Kaska band (later known as Kwadacha Nation). The first part of the book is a frank, sometimes humorous, but unvarnished account of his experiences as band manager. He describes both the amazing bush skills of the people as well as the failings of some due to alcohol, isolation, and the trauma of residential school. Billington provides a thorough review of the sometimes confusing history of the former Fort Graham and Fort Ware communities following the disruptions and dislocations caused by the Bennett Dam. Fort Graham, now under water, was initially relocated near Mackenzie until a determined group of Sekani took it into its hands to find a more suitable site at the mouth of the Finlay River. The band was finally recognized as Tse Keh Dene (which for some reason Billington spells “Tse Keh Dena” as in “Kaska Dena”) with help in litigation from tribal chief Ed John.

Billington has spent a lot of time on the land and is familiar with travelling by dog team and on foot. That experience prepared him, as well as

possible, for the trek along the 460 kilometres of the Davie Trail through the Rocky Mountain Trench. Atse Davie was a Sekani leader in the early twentieth century and the patriarch of a strongly independent band. Diamond Jenness describes Davie in his 1937 ethnography. The trail named for him passes through the Rocky Mountain Trench, a corridor once thought to have commercial potential but now one of the most isolated areas in British Columbia. Many Kwadacha band members were familiar with portions of the trail from their winter trapping, but few had walked it in the summertime. Two of these were Charlie Boya and his wife Hazel, who had a trapping cabin at Terminus Mountain about halfway between Kwadacha and Lower Post, the trail's southern and northern ends. The expedition began as a way of showing continued use of a traditional hunting and trapping area further to land claims negotiations. It went on to be an adventure as well. Billington describes the country they encountered in the kind of detail that is only available if one travels through it on foot. There were creeks and rivers to cross, once by raft, and more than one encounter with bears.

The book is well illustrated with archival and contemporary photographs of the people mentioned, and it also offers a map showing Sekani territory. Caitlin Press has a distinguished record of publishing authors with intimate knowledge of people and places in British Columbia, although an index would have been of value here. The book is a good read as well as an important contribution to BC First Nations history.

*Hearts and Minds: Canadian  
Romance at the Dawn of the  
Modern Era, 1900-1930*

Dan Azoulay

Calgary: University of Calgary  
Press, 2011. 300 pp. \$34.95 paper.

MEGAN ROBERTSON

*Simon Fraser University*

IN *Hearts and Minds*, Dan Azoulay includes part of a 1913 letter from a young woman lamenting her lack of companionship: "Although I like Vancouver very much I am not acquainted with many people, and there are times when I feel very lonely" (10). Reading this plea for a suitable male correspondent with an eye to eventual marriage, I find myself drawing parallels with our contemporary age of mediated communications. While a century has passed since "Lonely in Vancouver" penned her request, navigating the complicated world of social and individual expectations in pursuit of a life partner remains a challenge.

*Hearts and Minds* provides a well-structured typology of the characteristics of the ideal partner, rules of courtship, and challenges to romance between the start of the twentieth century and the beginning of the First World War. A brief scholarly context, informed largely by recent feminist and gender studies inquiries into historical interactions between men and women (as well as two canonical texts dealing with early twentieth-century Canadian relationships – Veronica Strong-Boag's *The New Day Recalled* and Sandra Gwyn's *Tapestry of War*) sets the stage for the examination of primary material: a series of epistolary columns that appeared in two Anglo-Canadian

publications between 1904 and 1929. Readers from across the country sent missives to “Prim Rose” at the *Family Herald* or the editor of the *Western Home Monthly* with the hope that their words might appear in print and reach an interested party who could contact the editor for a mailing address.

The typological approach works well here because of the difficulty in conceptualizing “romance.” Here, Azoulay uses this term to refer to what Canadians were looking for in a marriageable partner and the socially accepted steps that were to be followed to the altar. From his systematic review of more than twenty thousand letters, Azoulay can speak with some authority about what the everyday Canadian of the pre-war era might have looked for in a heterosexual partner (with women hoping for good providers and men of high moral character, and men desiring domesticated and “feminine” partners). And this, perhaps, is the key strength of Azoulay’s work: while he does not necessarily advance a complex or nuanced thesis, his work does add colour to the “historiographic gaps” (9) of the commonplace experience of life in the early twentieth century and leads to a richer understanding of popular Canadian history.

While the penultimate chapter draws heavily on epistles from Vancouver Island University’s Canadian Letters and Images Project, and addresses the tremendous upheaval in all aspects of life during the 1914–18 conflict, the final chapter seems limited as the popularity of the two romance and relationship columns waned through the 1920s.

What limits this work for me is a lack of context in certain key areas. For example, Azoulay notes that he “discovered” the collections of letters from the two periodicals “a few years ago” (9), but we are not provided insight

into how Azoulay formed his approach: Did the collections spur him to ask questions about romance? Or did he arrive at a concern for romance and then begin to seek primary material? *Hearts and Minds* relies heavily on two archival sources, and it would have been valuable to reproduce an occasional letter to provide a sense of the material context with which readers and writers were familiar at the time. Azoulay does point out the challenges that researchers face when locating historical material related to personal understandings of largely private matters, but I feel that this could have been emphasized in such a way as to give further pause to considering how contemporary exchanges of romantic (electronic) messages might be investigated in the future. The open, accessible, and engaging prose throughout the work encourages reflection – a task that not all scholarly writing achieves.

*Militia Myths: Ideas of the  
Canadian Citizen Soldier,  
1896–1921*

James Wood

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010. 308 pp.  
\$32.95 paper.

PATRICK A. DUNAE

*Vancouver Island University*

THE CANADIAN SCOTTISH (Princess Mary’s) Regiment recently celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. Popularly known as the Can Scots, it is the only militia unit on Vancouver Island. The regiment had previously been honoured with the freedom of the City of Victoria, and so it marched through the provincial capital with bayonets fixed, drums

beating, and banners flying. During the anniversary parade, the marchers wore the ceremonial uniforms of Scottish Highland regiments and were attired in kilts, tunics, and busbies, with spats, sporrans, and sgian-dubhs. The parade carried emblems of the regiment's historical connection to British Columbia. Regimental drummers wore cougar-skin capes, with a growling cougar head hanging from the back of the cape. The regiment's predecessor, the 88th Victoria Fusiliers, used the image of a growling cougar on its badge when it was organized in 1912. A fierce-looking cougar features on the badge of 39 Canadian Brigade Group today. This formation comprises eleven army reserve units, including the Canadian Scottish Regiment, based in British Columbia. The brigade group badge incorporates a familiar motto: *Splendor Sine Occasu*.

The Canadian army militia has played a prominent part in the history of British Columbia. Defence was a major concern in the colonial era, and militia outfits like the Seymour Artillery Company helped to allay jitters caused by Fenians and other potential threats. Military matters were priorities when British Columbia entered Confederation. A provision for the militia appears in Article 5 of the Terms of Union, well ahead of the better-known Article 11, which relates to the construction of a railway. During protracted and potentially violent disputes in Nanaimo, Rossland, and Steveston, the militia was called upon to provide an aid to civil power. (Labour historians who vilify the militia for intervening in these disputes overlook the fact that rank-and-file militiamen were themselves ordinary workers when they were not in uniform.) The militia was the foundation for many BC battalions in the Canadian

Expeditionary Force of the First World War.

This well-written study derives from the author's PhD dissertation and relies rather heavily on material published in the *Canadian Military Gazette*. That journal, as other reviewers have remarked, expressed opinions of the military establishment in the Dominion and not the views of ordinary Canadians. However, the author has consulted many other sources, as fifteen pages of endnotes attest; and he has identified historical themes that helped shape public attitudes and opinions regarding military service across the country. A major theme concerns the public's preference for part-time volunteer militiamen and a prevailing view that, in times of war, those men would provide an adequate core for larger combat units. The book argues that "the ways in which Canadians responded to the call to arms in 1914 were largely determined by the values and beliefs of a pre-war military culture that employed the citizen soldier as its foremost symbol. This symbol became a powerful myth, and in 1914-18 it helped raise an army" (272).

Some readers of this journal may be disappointed that the book does not devote more attention to British Columbia. Storied militia regiments based in the Interior of our province, such as the Rocky Mountain Rangers (1908), are not mentioned; militia units in Victoria are scarcely acknowledged; the militia presence in Vancouver, as represented by distinguished regiments like the Seaforth Highlanders (1910), are mentioned only in passing. But the author is an expert on the militia's role in this province, as he demonstrates in a recent essay on the BC militia before the First World War (*BC Studies* 173) and the larger, national concerns that

he discusses in this book are pertinent to British Columbia.

Military historians will be drawn to this book, but educational historians should look at it, too, because it provides a good overview of a program endowed by Lord Strathcona for promoting physical training in the public schools of Canada. British Columbia was the second province (after Nova Scotia) to accept the terms of the Strathcona Trust (1909) and engage militia personnel as physical training (PT) instructors. The author does not identify instructors by name, but, had he done so, Sergeant Major A.C. Bundy, who was in charge of PT in Vancouver public schools, would likely be in the first rank. He was a tall, barrel-chested man who sported a large, waxed moustache. (A photograph of Bundy in his dress uniform appears in *The First Fifty Years: Vancouver High Schools, 1890-1940* [n.d.], 138.) Young female schoolteachers would sometimes swoon when he suddenly appeared in the doorway of their classroom, with his swagger stick tucked under his arm. In a booming voice, he would order pupils to “fall in” and follow him outside to the school playground/parade square, where he would conduct a physical training drill according to the Syllabus of the Strathcona Trust.

Sergeant Major Bundy was a member of the Duke of Connaught's Own Rifles, which is now part of the British Columbia Regiment. The oldest military unit in Vancouver, the BC Regiment (Duke of Connaught's Own), a.k.a. the Dukes, is based in the splendid Beatty Street Drill Hall (1901), a national historic site. The Bay Street Armoury (1913) in Victoria, home of the Canadian Scottish Regiment, is also listed on the national heritage register. This new book by James Wood should of course be in every armoury reference library. But the book will have a wider

appeal because it helps to explain the historical significance of militia armouries in British Columbia and the character of primary reserve units, like the Can Scots and the Dukes, who have trained within their crenellated walls.

*Train Master: The Railway Art of Max Jacquiard*

Barry Sanford

Kelowna: Sandhill Book Marketing and National Railway Historical Society, 2012. 176 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

IAN POOLEY

*Kelowna*

*Train Master: The Railway Art of Max Jacquiard*, the new book by the noted transportation historian Barry Sanford, looks at BC railways from 1925 to 1955, as depicted in ninety-nine paintings by Jacquiard. The scenes, painted with great attention to detail and historical accuracy, often show a station or an aspect of railway right of way (sometimes a bridge or tunnel) seen in the context of the local landscape. Each painting is generally given a page with an accompanying page of text by Sanford, describing the location, its history, engineering features of the rail line, and railway operations in the area at the time. The text, as Sanford points out, is intended for the general reader. Occasionally Sanford has added a photograph to complement the painting. Unfortunately, the data pertaining to Jacquiard's art (painting dimensions, medium, date, and title) are not given.

The book, as might be expected, devotes a generous amount of space to the Canadian Pacific Railway's (CPR's) mainline from Banff to Vancouver

as well as its southern line through the Crownsnest and Coquihalla. To some extent, the Jacquiard CPR scenes echo themes of the picturesque as well as railway engineering in the mountains presented by renowned CPR photographer Nicholas Morant and others. *Train Master* also gives significant space to the Canadian National Railways' (CNR's) mainline from Jasper to the Coast. However, as Sanford notes in his introduction, Jacquiard has painted few of British Columbia's less important railway lines. Thus there are only two scenes of the Pacific Great Eastern, one of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo, and, with the exception of a single painting of the station at Prince George, no scenes of the CNR line from the Yellowhead Pass to Prince Rupert.

The paintings, with their puffing locomotives, tidy railway stations, and glimpses of small-town streets, evoke a nostalgia for what Sanford calls the "golden age" of railroading. And the book, with its gorgeous scenes, is a celebration of and a lamentation for the era when railway mileages in North America peaked, when steam engines evolved to their ultimate technical capability, and when railways played a part in people's lives in ways that have vanished.

The book leaves some lingering questions. Sanford does not explain why we should especially care about Jacquiard's art, nor are we given clues about how Jacquiard's twin themes of trains and mountain landscapes might have come together, or how his treatment of his subject matter evolved. And, although Jacquiard's paintings could be securely placed within the discourse of tourist art and contemporary understandings of nostalgia, Sanford, who is not an art historian, does not take us in this direction.

*Backspin: 120 Years of Golf in  
British Columbia*

Arv Olson

Victoria: Heritage House, 2012. 432  
pp. \$28.95 paper.

(First published in 1992 by Par Four  
Publishing as *Backspin: 100 Years of  
Golf in British Columbia*)

ELIZABETH JEWETT

*University of Toronto*

ARV OLSON'S second edition of *Backspin* expands readers' acquaintance "with accounts of some of the people, places, and events" that shaped the 120 year history of golf in British Columbia (11). A journalist and golf enthusiast, Olson writes for a popular audience that seeks detailed, anecdote-driven prose. The book's chapters begin with brief, focused synopses and then turn quickly to chronologically and thematically arranged local tales about individual courses, players, and professionals from around the province.

The first chapters survey the geographical distribution and transformation of golf courses in British Columbia, beginning with the Victoria area and then moving to Vancouver and the Interior. In these regional stories, Olson highlights the unique "personalities" of certain golf courses. For example, early in the history of the Victoria Golf Club, the golf season had to fit around the grazing needs of sheep and cows (23). The expansion of the golf course at Port Alice eventually led to its encirclement of St. Paul's Anglican Church (78). Throughout these individual histories, Olson traces common trends, including golf course expansion, the financial ups and downs of individual golf clubs, the role of local

environments, and the importance of local professional and amateur players in propelling the regional growth of golf.

Later chapters in *Backspin* focus on BC golf personalities (such as Stan Leonard and the Black family) and on golf tournaments that brought together golfers from around the world. A welcome addition to this edition is a brief chapter on caddies and on architects, including Arthur Vernon Macan, that introduces the reader to two important aspects of the sport that Olson argues have been overlooked (269). Broad themes include the establishment of a community of golfers and enthusiasts and the complex social, economic, political, and environmental realities of the BC golf world, which are intimately connected to a wider narrative of Canadian transformation. However, these complexities are never discussed to their fullest extent. For example, his narrative often broaches the influential role of Scottish-Canadian heritage in the establishment and expansion of golf in the province, especially among golf professionals. Olson, at times, observes the hindrances and successes of non-Anglo-North American golfers throughout the province's golfing history, including the career of Victoria Golf Club's first Chinese golfer, Sung Wai; the ethnic discrimination witnessed by Ben Colk as head pro at Langara on the eve of the Second World War; and the success of Eugene Wong, who was named as PAC-12 Men's Golfer of the Year for 2012. Yet the reader is left to ponder the deeper meanings behind the racial barriers and social exclusion that existed within British Columbia's golfing history. In a similar vein, Olson tells the stories of several white women (like Violet Pooley Sweeny) who helped

bolster golf in the province, but issues of gender are never explicitly analyzed.

Throughout the text, Olson's love of golf shines through. His narrative is supported by detailed research and his stories are brought to life with well chosen images. Olson's acknowledgments speak to his familiarity with the people and subjects detailed in the book. Scholars might desire to know more specifically where Olson collected this fascinating material, but the book's emphasis is on the players and their compelling stories, and *Backspin* is a welcome addition to a growing number of Canadian regional golf histories. Olson brings a valuable local perspective, which, when coupled with national narratives such as those by James Barclay, provides useful insights – for the sport historian and golf buff alike – into the complex and lively history of golf in both British Columbia and Canada.

*Raising the Workers' Flag:  
The Workers' Unity League in  
Canada, 1930–1936*

Stephen L. Endicott

Toronto: University of Toronto  
Press, 2012. 442 pp. \$75.00 cloth.

RON VERZUH  
*Simon Fraser University*

**T**HE STRUGGLE to build trade unions in the extractive and manufacturing industries of Canada – mining, forestry, fishing, clothing, furniture, and others – was meteoric, and its demise was equally rapid. *Raising the Workers' Flag* provides a welcome history of the organization that was at the heart of that struggle, detailing the saga of political infighting and courageous

field organizing that marked this stunning bid to found unions that dared to challenge capitalist economic imperatives during the Depression era.

Few historians have tackled their subject with more enthusiasm, insider insight, and eye-popping detail than Stephen L. Endicott has done in this first book-length treatment of the Workers' Unity League (WUL). Aided by newly opened Soviet archives and secret police spy reports, the Toronto historian has recreated the atmosphere of fear and desperation that spurred the call for industrial democracy in the era preceding the Congress of Industrial Unions (CIO) in Canada. Leading that call were young men and women, often Communists, who were employed at meagre pay to organize the unorganized masses. Noted for using a strike strategy to foster militant industrial unionism, the WUL blazed across Canada leaving in its wake bitterly fought strikes, police-induced violence, and years of jail sentences for its young organizers.

Endicott enlivens his history with portraits of several of these relatively unsung heroes. Central among them is Arthur "Slim" Evans, leader of the famous On to Ottawa Trek of 1935. Also taking a prominent place is Harvey Murphy, the self-proclaimed "reddest rose in the garden of labour" (101). Evans did the early spade work in the Alberta coal-mining region known as the Crowsnest Pass and went to jail for his troubles. Murphy picked up where Evans had left off, working with the WUL's Mine Workers' Union of Canada. He, too, went to jail for his efforts. Becky Buhay's role in building women's labour leagues is also thoroughly explored, as is the WUL's promotion of a greater role for women's auxiliaries. J.B. Salsberg, the WUL organizer in southern Ontario; Annie Buller, who went to jail for her role in the Estevan coal

miners' strike; and J.B. McLachlan, the venerable Nova Scotia mine workers' leader, also play significant roles in Endicott's recounting of the five-year life of the WUL.

Always on the front lines, these leaders aggressively engaged in the fight for workers' rights, the creation of unemployment insurance, demands for living wages, and health and safety improvements. They also shared a strong belief in women's equality as well as an undying devotion to rank-and-file democracy. Yet traditional labour historians have seldom dedicated more than a few pages to this trade union phenomenon. Even the Communist Party of Canada's own history leaves much unsaid about its offspring.

Endicott revisits WUL-led events like the 1930s Relief Camp Workers' Union strikes; the furniture workers' strike in Stratford, Ontario; the lumber workers' strike in Port Arthur, Ontario; and the brutality of the Copper Mountain and Anyox strikes in British Columbia, providing rigorously researched background for each. And Endicott does not shy from examining the union's strategic and tactical mistakes or avoid criticizing the party brass, exposing the reasons they abandoned a successful organizing powerhouse like the WUL in the winter of 1935-36.

With *Workers' Flag*, we gain an intimate and well-documented account of a Communist-led union that pushed its affiliates to look beyond bread-and-butter issues to the broader field of social unionism in a society that was edging towards world war. The organizers ultimately failed in that bold initiative "but they led the way," Endicott argues, and WUL members rejoined the mainstream of the labour movement "enriched by their experiences in the Red unions" (327). It is a union portrait that contains pertinent lessons for both

labour historians and today's labour movement.

*The Art of the Impossible:  
Dave Barrett and the NDP in  
Power, 1972-1975*  
Geoff Meggs and  
Rod Mickleburgh

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,  
2012. 368 pp. \$32.95 cloth.

ALLEN SEAGER  
*Simon Fraser University*

THIS BOOK IS a splendid work of popular political history, biography, and related media study, which co-authors Geoff Meggs (a former communications director to Premier Glen Clark) and Rod Mickleburgh (a veteran of the west coast press corps) are well-placed to make. The impact of Watergate, for example, is neatly woven into their narrative of the life and death of British Columbia's first New Democratic Party (NDP) administration, whose damn-the-torpedoes style, all evidence suggests, would have been far better suited to the zeitgeist of the 1960s than to the 1970s. Social democrats, especially of the Canadian Prairie stripe, have long scratched their collective heads over the foibles of British Columbia's 1972-75 regime – from its apparent lack of clear priorities to its inattention to issues in the extra-parliamentary wing, which eventually boiled over in a major way (see Chapter 9, “The Life of the Party”). Meggs and Mickleburgh, however, clearly belong to what used to be called the “grin and Barrett” school of thought and draw more inspiration from the story than simply a cautionary tale. From a twenty-first-

century perspective, of course, there is much to be admired in the record of a government that “got things done” and in leaders who did not relish power strictly for its own sake. Much policy-making history is embedded in the book, and the authors have usefully mined the archives of the so-called BC Project, a political science research project that promised to produce a multi-volume study of public administration in Victoria between 1972 and 1976 but never did so. The project's senior researcher, the late Walter D. Young, had little time for Dave Barrett and said so pretty plainly; but, with the passage of time, it is now possible to see how large a legacy Barrett left to the BC state.

An oft-cited example of this legacy is the Agricultural Land Commission, which (in principle) has remained untouched over forty years of steadily escalating land values and land-use demands in key regions of growth. Its story, as the authors relate, is anything but a simple tale of social democratic innovation. During the 1960s, preservation of British Columbia's small and shrinking stock of agricultural land from the problems associated with “suburban sprawl” became a cause for a very loose coalition of new-model urban planners, environmental romantics, and more traditional pro-agrarian types. (Harold Steves, a youthful champion of the cause, who got elected for the NDP in a fairly right-wing, semi-rural district in 1972, best represented all three strands of the coalition.) Just before his fall, Premier W.A.C. Bennett had significantly tossed the farmland preservers a bone in the form of a \$25 million commitment for a hazy “greenbelt” scheme while reining in a bureaucratic sparkplug named Sigurd Peterson, a policy analyst in the Department of Agriculture who

rocketed to a deputy minister's role with the change of regime in 1972. Though thoroughly impractical, Peterson appears to have understood the political problems embedded in the battle over farmland. No matter how dressed up, the preservationist movement was a clear assault on British Columbians' most cherished civil liberty: the right to make money through real estate.

The new NDP minister of agriculture, David Stupich, had his own reasons for a combination of interest and concern. So it was that a Peterson-Stupich policy line very quickly emerged that aimed to protect the speculator and shield the government from charges of Soviet-style confiscation by having the government somehow either "buy" farmland or compensate rural landowners for lost development rights. How hypothetical capital gains would be calculated or how much a compensation package might cost the treasury were questions they did not care to answer directly. Meggs and Mickleburgh find it odd that Stupich, a professional accountant, dodged these questions. He was either dissembling or driven by his inner light as an unreconstructed Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF)-era political dreamer – in the words of an old song, "farmer, labour, socialist" – marching arm in arm towards a New Dawn.

Most dangerous were the tactics used by Stupich in pursuit of an objectively *impossible* position. Bennett evidently did not want to know what it would actually cost to compensate landowners affected by greenbelt policies, while Barrett found that ballpark estimates began at about \$1 billion in pre-inflationary 1970s currency. Stupich's tactics included leaking bits and pieces of strictly confidential news from unresolved cabinet debates and urging organized farmers to rally at the

legislature in support of his ministry's (not *the* ministry's) plans. In Barrett's absence, he bulldozed cabinet into approving an end-of-1972 land freeze by order-in-council, thus adding a procedural dimension to a political fire over "awesome, sweeping powers" assumed by the government, a fire that would never be extinguished, no matter what the issue du jour happened to be. But at least Stupich forced action on the legislative front, even if the end result was not exactly to his taste. As the compensation hobbyhorse hobbled off into the oblivion it deserved, Barrett would make more general commitments about compensatory measures – preserving "the family farm," supporting home production, and so on – that, forty years on, are still ideas that demand attention. The creation of the farmland reserve, of course, was but one piece of a bigger, essentially urban puzzle. In hindsight, the Barrett government's plans on related housing and transportation issues had a good deal more logic to them than did those of future regimes, even if concrete results were inevitably limited within such a short time frame.

Meggs and Mickleburgh's key motif is a rhetorical question that Barrett asked his ministers on day one of their deliberations: "Are we here for a good time, or a long time?" In plainer terms, something like a one-term revolution was imagined, though it is also clear that no real consensus existed on this point. If it had, the ministers might have made a blood pact to keep the leader's finger off the electoral button, and the ministry could have soldiered on into calendar year 1977. At its demise in 1975, the NDP left a huge to-do list, some items fairly doable. The regime had such a large and loyal parliamentary majority that there was never any danger of its losing a confidence motion;

nor did it have to whip key votes in an embarrassingly anti-democratic fashion. As is explained in Chapter 11 (“Back to Work”), a hardy band of dissenting backbenchers – Steves, Colin Gabelmann, and Rosemary Brown – made some history of their own in reasoned arguments against a tangled skein of collective bargaining decrees that, for the labour-backed NDP, was potentially most explosive for the “life of the party.”

By this time (October 1975) it was dawning on Premier Barrett and his one-man brain trust (Bob Williams, a C.D. Howe-like minister-of-everything whom Meggs and Mickleburgh refer to as “The Godfather”) that the NDP’s worst nightmare – a restoration of the Bennett dynasty – was beginning to materialize. While the more dovish Barrett dragged his heels, lest he be seen to be stomping on the backs of working-class leaders who opposed his measures (not all were so opposed), the more hawkish Williams soon got his way. Gambling that W.R. (Bill) Bennett was not yet ready for prime time, Barrett called and lost an election in early winter, the most gruesome campaign season. The authors well describe the “faintly Hitlerian” atmosphere of 1975, when sliding fortunes seemed to energize Barrett, a quite remarkable orator and one-of-a-kind campaigner when in full flight. Without the RCMP security detail that Barrett most reluctantly accepted at the time, it is remotely possible that the story could have had another and more tragically significant ending – like the assassination of “Kingfish” Huey Long in Baton Rouge back in 1935.

There are number of stories (none substantiated) about Barrett’s admiration for, or emulation of, Long, a highly controversial historical figure he would have learned about from his Jesuit teachers during the American

1950s. This is a true riddle of Canadian politics: Barrett was never so foolish as to talk about Huey Long in NDP circles, let alone in the public realm, but Meggs and Mickleburgh have finally found the smoking gun. Mention of Barrett’s musings about “what ‘Old Huey’ would say if he were alive in BC today” surface in the extraordinary four-hundred-page journal of Barrett staffer Peter McNelly – a document they heavily consult (120 [“A Note on Sources”] and 341) – and this does set him apart from a more mainstream Canadian socialist tradition: as late as 1975, we learn, members of Canada’s Left Coast movement more typically channelled the ghosts of people like the saintly J.S. Woodsworth (d. 1942). More work on “the Northern Kingfish,” as the authors dub Barrett, is perhaps needed now that almost everyone, including David Mitchell, the major chronicler of the Bennett dynasty, agrees that the more menacing moniker for Barrett (“The Allende of the North”) gets us nowhere in interpreting the man and his times (333).

The Huey Long of Barrett’s imagination, one hastens to add, was clearly the populist hero who battled Standard Oil or improved conditions for convict labour, not the fascist sympathizer of the American 1930s. Jewish by birth and the product of a strangely mixed marriage in Eastside Vancouver (mother, pro-Stalinist; father, a Harold Winch-line CCFer), Barrett continues to fascinate. This book is by no means iconography, and we meet Barrett on some of his lowest days, like when he made the worst kind of news by harassing a female reporter whom he regarded as a “venomous bitch,” or the day he booted Frank Calder (his only pipeline to the fast-emerging world of modern Aboriginal politics) out of cabinet for personal

indiscretions and telling “a lie.” But the Calder episode could have been worse: any member of the Long machine in Baton Rouge would have used the same police-sourced goods that Barrett had on Calder to try to blackmail the “Little Chief” into line. Calder lived to fight another day, and some of the more purely personal political hatchets described in the book were publicly buried before Calder and others died.

In a sustained (though not tedious) argument against David Mitchell’s *W.A.C. Bennett and the Rise of British Columbia*, Meggs and Mickleburgh are most thought-provoking in stating that postwar modernity was something of an illusion in British Columbia. Key elites in business, government, or the media were trapped, they say, in a “time warp” whose all too public symbols were people like Bennett the elder, Reverend Phil Gaglardi, and any number of CCF/NDP figures that Bennett and Gaglardi liked to kick around. Tom Berger, an archetypical and very brilliant “New Party” man of the 1960s, tried to turn things around but was effectively purged from provincial life by the fear-mongering right-wing politics of the time. Fortunately, Berger had plenty of other things to do. The authors find Gaglardi’s open backstabbing of Bennett when he sought an unprecedented seventh term as premier in 1972 (the straw that finally broke the camel’s back) “inexplicable” (38). I don’t: such aging warriors were objectively losing their minds. Time-warped individuals in the new NDP government included Eileen Dailly, whose personal priority at the Ministry of Education – abolishing the strap – would have been relevant when she was first elected in 1966. The culture clash between people like Dailly, Barrett appointed as deputy premier, and

those with new feminist tendencies is sensitively sketched in this book.

Space precludes further commentary, but I would mention, as a teaching tool, the Meggs and Mickleburgh’s list of “partial and subjective” legacies of the Barrett regime. They list ninety-seven items, ranging from the creation of the Nisga’a School Board to the hiking of coal royalties from twenty-five cents to \$1.50 a ton. Behind nearly every one of these items is a lesson, story, or piece of unfinished business of some consequence to anyone interested in political economy, the emergence of the welfare state, Vancouver’s civic history, and so on. (I had not realized that, in the 1960s, nineteenth-century robber baron Robert Dunsmuir almost certainly paid a higher coal tax than did Kaiser Resources.) Not all, however, are really legacies. Some are simply memories of “possibilities” that would be lost during future, even darker, times. Though not on the list of ninety-seven points, the authors most carefully note the creation of the Fraser Institute, a major neoliberal think tank whose informal mottos vis-à-vis the 1972-75 experiment might be “Never Again” and “Keep It Simple, Stupid” – a motto that used to hang on W.A.C. Bennett’s office wall.

*In Flux: Transnational Shifts in  
Asian Canadian Writing*

Roy Miki

Edmonton: NeWest Press, 2011.

288 pp. \$24.95 paper.

JANEY LEW

*University of British Columbia*

THE TWELFTH and most recent volume in NeWest Press’s

Writer as Critic series, Roy Miki's *In Flux: Transnational Shifts in Asian Canadian Writing*, like others in the series, approaches writing as praxical intervention. Beginning with the central argument that Asian-Canadian subjectivity is formed in the interchange between racialization and performance, Miki goes on to trace "Asian Canadian" as a sign that undergoes and produces shifts in meaning within the national imaginary, through Asian-Canadian cultural and critical productions, and in transaction with rapidly transforming global body politics. In the collection's nine essays, Miki offers nuanced and attentive analyses of a wide variety of texts, including the multidisciplinary work of artist-poet Roy Kiyooka, historical materials relating to anti-Oriental policies and popular opinion, the poetry of Rita Wong, and Northrop Frye's canonical essay entitled "Conclusion to *A Literary History of Canada*." The essays in *In Flux* develop two sets of tightly woven arguments: the first, a set of political and historical propositions about Asian-Canadian writing as an exemplary site in which to track changes in national and transnational subject formation from the postwar period to the present; the second, a set of critical and theoretical calls for developing reading practices and cultural engagements that spur ethical acts and reflection.

Few voices carry as much weight as Miki's in the emergent field of Asian-Canadian literary studies. The essay "Asiancy: Making Space for Asian Canadian Writing," from Miki's *Broken Entries: Race Subjectivity Writing* (2000), has arguably set the tone for scholarly production in the field. In "Asiancy" (and more generally in *Broken Entries*), Miki critiques centralist narratives of Anglo-Canadian canonization and suggests Asian-

Canadian writing as a potential site for resisting white, hetero-patriarchal ideologies underlying nationalist literature. *In Flux*, to a large extent, picks up where *Broken Entries* leaves off, rehearsing some of Miki's familiar critiques of Canadian multicultural discourse as an assimilative cover for Asian-Canadian difference over a history of official racism. In *In Flux*, Miki widens the scope to account for the effects of increasing globalization and commodification on the neoliberal subject, asking: How are the effects of Asian-Canadian racialization articulated in an increasingly transnational context? In what ways is Asian-Canadian writing being mobilized? In what ways can it be? And how can Asian Canadian as a critical methodology move towards unsettling a "settler consciousness" (249)?

*In Flux* arrives at an opportune time in the institutional trajectory of Asian Canadian Studies. Miki's scepticism about institutionalization follows his line of thinking about embodiment: as universities become increasingly corporatized, fields of difference like Asian Canadian Studies are likewise susceptible to *incorporation*, or assimilation into the corporate body. With inaugural programs in Asian Canadian Studies recently announced at the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia, Miki's pointed questions about developing a rigorous critical pedagogy are not only urgent but also prescient. In the wake of poststructural arguments that seemingly textualize the human out of existence, *In Flux* is essential reading for those interested in reintroducing ethics into cultural praxis.

*People's Citizenship Guide:  
A Response to Conservative  
Canada*

Esyllt Jones and Adele Perry

Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring, 2011.  
80 pp. \$14.95 paper.

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*People's Citizenship Guide: A Response to Conservative Canada* is just that. It uses *Discover Canada*, the new Canadian Citizenship Guide, as a launch pad for critiquing the current federal government's ideological leanings – leanings expressed in *Discover Canada's* emphasis on the British monarchy, the military, and the rule of law. The usual centrist suspects, Jack Granatstein and Rudyard Griffiths of the Historica-Dominion Institute, appear in the acknowledgments, but so, too, do Desmond Morton, Margaret MacMillan, and Jim Miller. We cannot know how well *Discover Canada* reflects their contributions, but with respect to indigenous peoples, Quebec, and “ethnic diversity,” a progressive view of Canadian history, as represented in books like Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel's *History of the Canadian Peoples*, runs through the text. Women and labour do less well. A statement about gender equality is followed by the assertion that Canada does not tolerate “barbaric cultural practices” such as spousal abuse, ‘honour killings,’ female genital mutilation, forced marriage and other gender-based violence,” thus denouncing sexism while simultaneously invoking a history of Western racialization and xenophobia (9). Responsibilities appear more prominently than rights, and nowhere does the federal guide indicate

that Canadians have the right to, for example, join a union. A *Maclean's* editorial praised *Discover Canada* for reinforcing “the responsibilities of all Canadian adult citizens: including jury duty, getting a job and obeying the law,” suggesting that, despite the open acknowledgment of Canada's long history of inequality, *Discover Canada* validates anti-immigrant and anti-social welfare stances. Equally disconcerting to progressive centre and left Canadians is the emphasis on Canada's link to the monarchy and the military (8-9).

The *People's Citizenship Guide* offers an interesting and engaging counterpoint to the current rebranding of Canada's once peaceful, rights-championing image (although scholars quarrelled with that orthodoxy too). Penned by historians Esyllt Jones and Adele Perry, the *People's Citizenship Guide* is a testament to the discipline's deeply political nature, especially where it concerns our understanding and interpretation of nation and state. It paints its own ideologically driven portrait, informed, as the title suggests, by the needs of the people rather than the objectives of the state. It is not a people's history so much as a history of the way in which the state has negatively affected the experiences of people living within the region now known as Canada. By choosing to counter the current government's messaging with a critique of the state rather than a record of everyday experiences, the *People's Citizenship Guide* reminds us that Canada's progressive left is overwhelmingly social democratic. Where *Discover Canada* characterizes the tools of the Canadian state as enabling “ordered liberty” (8), these historians see the state as a potential tool for ensuring full equality. The book documents how it has failed to do so.

The *People's Citizenship Guide* oversimplifies the Conservatives' representation of history, especially as it appears in *Discover Canada*. The commemoration of the War of 1812 shows us that the current government can get its history wrong, but *Discover Canada* at least does not "exclud[e] whatever facts and experiences complicate its nostalgia for a simple past that never really was" (6). Nevertheless, the *People's Citizenship Guide* offers something valuable and rare: an opportunity to bridge the gap between the kind of history produced in academe and the general public. As *Discover Canada's* counterpoint, the *People's Citizenship Guide* seems particularly targeted for new immigrants and would make an excellent text when teaching English as an additional language. It can also be read by everyday Canadians and young students of history. It is a strong reminder that history is about the present, not the past.

*Ghost Dancing with Colonialism:  
Decolonization and Indigenous Rights  
at the Supreme Court of Canada*

Grace Li Xiu Woo

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012. 360 pp.  
\$34.95 paper.

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IN THIS BOOK, Grace Li Xiu Woo, a retired member of the BC Bar, steps away from a standard case law analysis and instead analyzes Supreme Court decisions related to Aboriginal and treaty rights based on certain indicia of what she deems colonial and postcolonial legality (104). She wisely stresses that her purpose is not to provide

an authoritative analysis but, rather, to "introduce an analytical methodology that might facilitate discussion" (102). In an area so fraught with misunderstanding, misinformation, and deeply conflicting values, such discussion is sorely needed. So, too, is the calm, measured, and knowledgeable tone Woo takes throughout.

Woo marshals a formidable number of carefully researched and disparate resources to set up her analysis, including Thomas Kuhn's scientific theory of paradigm change, an interesting historic review of Anglo-colonial law, snippets of international law, Canadian constitutional law, the backgrounds of Supreme Court judges, and several examples of lived Aboriginal experiences within Canada. The analysis itself becomes repetitious fairly quickly and does not cover a lot of new ground. Nevertheless, the take-away points are important ones. There is a deep democratic deficit in both past and present Canadian legislation affecting Aboriginal peoples, and legal decision makers are even less representative. Canadian court decisions continue to ignore both Aboriginal social orders and the fact that Canada's existence as a nation – and the courts' own authority – are rooted in the historic denial and destruction of those social orders. There is a clear cognitive struggle afoot to reconcile the constitutional aspirations of equality and recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights with a history and present reality that do not match this postcolonial self-perception. Most important, and here Woo does a nice job of bringing these to light in a matter-a-fact manner, there are the consequences of all this in the lives of real people. For example, Woo describes the aftermath of the *Mitchell v. MNR* decision regarding the administration of a border crossing in the Mohawk

community of Akwesasne. She lists several incidents that demonstrate that the decision did not result in certainty or peaceful resolution for the community but, rather, left the problems unresolved, generating more “court cases, stress and life-threatening violence” (176). This lived reality is just one of many others in which the Canadian justice system, regardless of intent, appears to have had effects counter to Aboriginal peoples’ basic human needs, including for safety and social order. The challenge this poses to the very rule of law in Canada should not be underestimated.

I was curious as to the practical solutions Woo might suggest and was a bit disappointed to see that the final chapter did not go far beyond the typical academic suggestions of acknowledging Aboriginal sovereignty, re-examining fundamental assumptions and underlying premises, and recognizing a multiplicity of possibilities for social order. To be sure. But more is needed to navigate the “untenable position” the court finds itself in at this point in history (228). The reality on the ground today is too pressing to indulge in endless intellectual deconstruction and too complicated for recognition of sovereignty to be simply reiterated or regarded as a panacea. We are all in need of concrete, constructive ways forward. Still, for legal practitioners and decision makers who are unfamiliar with Aboriginal realities and perspectives, Woo’s book should provide food for thought, and it could also be a good starting point for productive, respectful discussion about colonialism and Aboriginal and treaty rights in Canada. As the current Idle No More movement demonstrates, such a discussion, and constructive ways forward, are long overdue and

will become increasingly pressing for all Canadians.

