

BOOK REVIEWS

*Home Truths: Highlights from
BC History*

Richard Mackie and Graeme
Wynn, editors

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2012. 460 pp. \$26.95 paper.

J.I. LITTLE
Simon Fraser University

AS CO-EDITORS of *BC Studies*, Richard Mackie and Graeme Wynn surveyed all the articles published in the journal since it first appeared in 1968 before deciding to focus on what they concluded were two dominant and complementary themes for this volume of “highlights” – namely, the search by newcomers for a home and the concomitant struggle by Aboriginal peoples to resist dispossession in the face of the colonialist onslaught. Reflecting the fact that *BC Studies* is an interdisciplinary journal, the majority of the eleven chapters in *Home Truths* were not written by historians, but – in keeping with the subtitle – the approach in most cases is a historical one.

To begin with the four chapters on Aboriginal history, Cole Harris’s skilfully written “The Fraser Canyon

Encountered” relies heavily on archaeological and ethnographic studies, as well as on the reports of the Sproat and McKenna-McBride commissions, to describe the rapid transition from a densely settled canyon in the early nineteenth century to one in which the Indigenous population was radically reduced in size as well as culturally dislocated. Daniel Clayton, also a historical geographer, shifts the focus northward to the lower Skeena, examining how the Coast Tsimshian “became ordered as objects of discourse” in the three major settlements of Fort Simpson (a fur trade post), Metlakatla (a missionary settlement), and Port Essington (a salmon-canning town). That discourse shifted from an interest only in Aboriginal peoples’ collective economic motivations to an expressed desire to change their daily lives as individuals and, finally, to attempts to subject them to government regulation.

With Michael Thoms’s chapter on fishing and colonialism at Pennask Lake, we have a worthy example of the exciting work being done by the province’s environmental historians. The story Thoms relates is not only one of the displacement of a traditional Native food fishery by a group of wealthy American sport fishers in 1929 but also

of the hubris involved in attempting to engineer the lake to produce larger fish for the fly rod. The displacement theme shifts to Vancouver, with Jean Barman's article on the "unsettling" of Kitsilano and Stanley Park. She describes how the Squamish families on the eighty-acre (32 hectares) Kitsilano Reserve (known as Snaug) were essentially cheated out of their land by the provincial government in 1913, and how the Kwakiutl totem poles erected on Brockton Point in 1923 marked the removal of the last of Stanley Park's Aboriginal residents as well as replacing what Barman refers to as "indigenous Indigeneity" with a sanitized Indigeneity imported from elsewhere. It is rather ironic, then, that the Squamish recently decided to generate revenue by erecting giant commercial billboards on the ten acres (4 hectares) they reacquired from the Canadian Pacific Railway under the Burrard Bridge.

In choosing the theme for the other part of this collection, the editors were inspired by George Bowering's literary essay, included in the volume, which argues that the "unifying and informing symbol" for this province's culture is "Home, or more specifically, the attempt to find or make a home" (53). This would seem to be a given for any colonization zone, but Bowering himself points to what I (as an "immigrant" from eastern Canada) feel is more characteristic of the non-Indigenous population of this mountainous continental fringe – namely, a sense of rootlessness. Referring to the principal characters in the novels he examines, Bowering writes: "People in BC are less likely to feel trapped in their families than to be several thousand miles from them or working with them on a patch of land out of sight of the next family" (54). Implicit in this statement is the sense that – unlike the early nineteenth-

century Irish and Scots who migrated in kin groups to the eastern part of the country as economic refugees – many of those coming to British Columbia were seeking to escape the confines of "Home." The fictional characters whom Bowering discusses may be looking for a home, but it is generally one that is utopian or Arcadian in nature and, therefore, not attainable.

The utopian theme is central to the Finnish settlement of Sointula on Malcolm Island, though Mikko Saikku's article describes how that ideal was eventually abandoned by those who sank roots there. As we learn from Nelson Riis's article on Walhachin, the environment proved to be even more challenging for the genteel English settlers who attempted to create an Arcadian orchard economy in the arid Thompson Valley prior to the First World War. Victoria's Chinatown was certainly no Arcadia or Utopia, but the article by Dunae, Lutz, Lafreniere, and Gilliland applies GIS technology to demonstrate that, in 1891, it was also far from being the insular ghetto of popular imagination. In their words, it was instead "a transactional space for social and commercial interactions between Victoria's Chinese and non-Chinese residents" (212). Twenty-five percent of the city's Chinese residents lived outside Chinatown, presumably motivated by the same desire for home ownership that made Vancouver what Deryck Holdsworth's article describes as a low-density suburban landscape. The frequency with which Vancouver addresses were changed, however, suggests that owning a house did not necessarily bring an end to the sense of dissatisfaction and rootlessness.

And the sense of rootlessness was particularly marked among the men described in this volume's final two articles. Megan Davies studies the

problems faced by, and posed by, the “lonesome prospector,” as well as the many unmarried loggers and fishers, once they reached old age. She suggests that the state provided relatively generous assistance to these old men in recognition of their pioneering role in the province’s extractive industries, but she also finds that it began to play a more intrusive role in their lives with the professionalization of social work in the late 1930s. Finally, we have Peter Harrison’s first-hand sociological account of the summer he spent in a logging camp on Haida Gwaii in 1979. The key elements of the subculture he found there were an emphasis on toughness, or “manliness,” the insistence on a degree of freedom or independence at work; and the sense that work was central to the men’s self-identity. The older men, in particular, expressed little interest in the search for “home,” at least if one defines it as life with a wife and children in a permanent or semi-permanent residence. In fact, there is not a single article in this collection that focuses on the theme of family or domestic space.

In short, while I can agree with the editors’ claim that “the struggle to belong, to overcome the sense of homelessness, has been particularly acute” (42) in British Columbia, I would add that there is considerable evidence in these articles that the newcomers also placed a high value on independence and material gain, and that many continued to feel restless and dissatisfied long after arriving here. In fact, one inescapable feature of this province, surely, is the degree to which owning a home outside the First Nations reserves has represented a speculative investment in real estate. But the editors are to be congratulated for selecting essays that not only provide broad geographic coverage and create a

strong sense of time and place but also stimulate readers to think about the cultural identity of this province.

*Discovering Indigenous Lands:
The Doctrine of Discovery in the
English Colonies*

Robert J. Miller, Jacinta Ruru,
Larissa Behrendt, and
Tracey Lindberg

Oxford: Oxford University Press,
2012. 320 pp. \$US40.00 paper.

DANIEL CLAYTON
University of St. Andrews

THIS BRILLIANT volume of comparative law is written by four distinguished Indigenous legal academic specialists, from the United States (Eastern Shawnee Tribe), New Zealand (Maori – Ngati Rawkawa and Ngati Ranginui), Australia (Eulayai/Gammilaroi), and Canada (Cree – Neheyiwak). It is concerned with the historical and ongoing significance of the Doctrine of Discovery in European, and principally English, colonialism, and each of the authors has two chapters on his or her respective country. Historians have written much about how the legal armature of European conquest and colonization in the New World and elsewhere shaped and served processes of “othering,” with Indigenous peoples deemed to lack what Europeans possessed – Christianity, law, government, civilization, ideas of private property, and a commercial (profit) ethic. In the Introduction, Robert Miller shows that the Doctrine of Discovery was (and remains) at once a legal tenet and an ideological (ethnocentric and racial) façade at the

heart of these processes. The volume examines the evolution of the Doctrine from the fifteenth century onwards and how it provided Europeans with commercial and property rights in the lands of Indigenous peoples, even while recognizing their continuing right to occupy and use land. Miller sees the definition of the Doctrine in the 1823 US Supreme Court case *Johnson v. M'Intosh* as a legal milestone in this regard (3-6, 52-58). Yet title and ownership rights construed on the basis of the Doctrine were not developed in identical ways in different parts of the English colonial world, and the authors argue that differences between the Indigenous contexts in which Discovery arguments were deployed played a key role in fostering variations in the Doctrine's application.

For me, the two core and compelling contributions of the volume are, first, its fastidious historical recovery of similarities and differences in the application of the Doctrine in English settler colonies and, second, its comparative attempt to find patterns in the development of this body of law over time. The authors identify ten "constituent elements" of the Doctrine – first discovery, actual occupancy, pre-emption, Native title, Indigenous limited rights, contiguity, terra nullius, Christianity, civilization, and conquest – and argue that "the comparative framework illustrates graphically just how deeply rooted the legal fictions of Discovery are in our legal systems" (265). They see more similarities than differences in the legal systems of the four countries studied. Indeed, they seem unsurprised that the Doctrine is "still today part of the property and constitutional regimes of all four of our countries" (23, 265). I found Miller's analysis of the ties (despite appearances) between American and English law

particularly eye-opening. In the Canadian context, Tracey Lindberg's two chapters are richly documented and politically salient reminders of "the degree to which presumptions of infidel/Indigenous inhumanity were captured and perpetuated in Canadian law," running roughshod over both Indigenous legal sensibilities and contemporary Canadian multicultural rhetoric (124).

I was hoping for a fuller evaluation of the relations between the legal cultures and commercial and geopolitical orders of empire (the type of analysis pioneered by historians such as Anthony Pagden and Lauren Benton). Much more could also have been said, following the work of historians such as John Darwin and James Belich, about the specificity of legal regimes in English settler colonies qua those in British India, the West Indies, and Africa. The chapters on New Zealand come closest to this kind of discussion. But these limitations do not detract from the volume's many and considerable scholarly and analytical achievements. *Discovering Indigenous Lands* brings the duplicitous legality of English settler colonialism into full view, and it is a very significant contribution to a comparative legal understanding of how Indigenous peoples were dispossessed.



*Mystery Islands: Discovering
the Ancient Pacific*

Tom Koppel

Suva, Fiji Islands: University of the
South Pacific Press, 2012. 373 pp.
\$25.00 paper.

CHRIS ARNETT

University of British Columbia

DRAWING ON experience gained from travel writing assignments, Salt Spring author Tom Koppel tackles an ambitious subject, the peopling of the Pacific Ocean, with a book of interesting anecdotes and information set within a larger, less successful narrative culled from his study of the archaeological and historical literature on the South Pacific. While he does an admirable job of sketching out the parameters of current archaeological knowledge, the text frequently wanders from its subject into areas in which a better grounding in the anthropological and historical literature, particularly the work of Marshall Sahlins, Ranginui Walker, Rawiri Te Maire Tau, and numerous others would have helped him avoid some of the unfortunate stereotypes of Polynesian culture that surface with jarring regularity throughout the text. The great body of Polynesian oral traditions is all but ignored, and Polynesian whakapapa (genealogies), the fabric that unites the Polynesian universe, are barely mentioned.

Koppel's interest in the South Pacific was sparked by his first book, *Kanaka: The Untold Story of the Hawaiian Pioneers in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest* (1995), an important contribution to the historiography of British Columbia that drew upon archival research and interviews with

community members. Unfortunately, in his latest work, Koppel explores the peopling of the Pacific Ocean from the essentialized perspective of cultural tourism, in which Indigenous culture is crafted for the consumer. The reader of course is not told this directly (except in the acknowledgments) but soon surmises. Typically, clients observe and participate in activities associated with the tour that may be "traditional," but only in the context of what these tour companies actually are: local businesses that cater to the demands of twenty-first-century tourists. The tour guides, as in the New Zealand example recounted by Koppel, are authentic natives; they dress in early nineteenth-century native style for the tourists, and their stories are locally authoritative and culturally specific. But a three-hour tour is not good cultural data outside of its twenty-first-century localized representation, no matter how emotionally engaged one is with the guide.

Koppel's brief encounters with contemporary Christian elements of Polynesian society predispose him to think that Indigenous people adopted the religion without any coercion, but he ignores the insidious, pervasive effects of colonialism articulated by Hawaiian scholars such as Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa. Force was not always overt (if one can say the effects of demographic collapse are not overt), but to understand how people would accept such change requires an explanation more nuanced than fickleness or the desire to be free of the "routine savagery" (235) that Koppel believes characterized daily life in the ancient Pacific, contrary to other received versions of history. Gross generalizations are inappropriate for such a culturally diverse area.

Anthropological fieldwork, which includes archaeology, seeks

to understand and disentangle the outward appearance of culture to reveal something of its moment in historical process. Travel literature/writing is not anthropology, but this is not to say that it should not aspire to a similar rigour.

Discovering Totem Poles: A Traveller's Guide

Aldona Jonaitis

Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre,
2012. 112 pp. Illus. \$19.95 paper.

ALAN HOOVER

Royal British Columbia Museum

THIS WELL-illustrated and modest in size guidebook presents totem poles that a tourist could see on a trip from Seattle, Washington, to Juneau, Alaska. The focus is not on totem poles as art objects displaying carved crest figures but, rather, as objects that reference an interchange between Indigenous peoples and the invading colonizers. Jonaitis argues that her book differs from what one finds in the extensive literature on totem poles because she does not confine herself to a discussion of aesthetics and iconography but, rather, presents information that places poles within a "broader social, cultural" context. She begins her discussions in Seattle by looking at three poles that were stolen by whites from supposedly abandoned villages. Two of the poles have since been returned from the Burke Museum under the aegis of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which was passed by the American Congress in 1990.

An interesting example drawn from the upper Skeena River involves the late anthropologist Wilson Duff and

the people of Gitanyow. In order to get the chiefs of the village of Gitanyow, formerly known as Kitwancool, to permit their totem poles to leave the village for preservation, the museum in Victoria carved replicas of each pole removed and returned them to be erected in Gitanyow. But the unique aspect of the agreement was that the Gitanyow required the Province of British Columbia to publish a book that recorded the histories, territories, and laws of the people and that the subsequent publication be made available to students and teachers at the University of British Columbia. The result was Duff's *Histories, Territories and Laws of the Kitwancool* (1959, 1989).

Perhaps the most unusual pole that Jonaitis includes in her tour of the coast is the Sitka Wellbriety pole carved by Tlingit carver Wayne Price. Wellbriety is a neologism combining parts of the words "wellness" and "sobriety." It refers to a Native American recovery program that combines the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and Native spirituality. It honours all people recovering from the ravages of addiction and abuse.

Although Jonaitis gives more emphasis to totem poles that document "intercultural" relationships, earlier publications have not completely ignored such poles. Viola Garfield and Lin A. Forest, in *The Wolf and the Raven: Totem Poles of Southeastern Alaska* (1948), discuss the history of the two Tlingit poles that commemorate events involving the US revenue cutter *Lincoln* and Secretary of State William H. Seward. George MacDonald comments in *Haida Monumental Art* (1983) on two carved figures atop the front corner posts of a house in Skidegate. They represent Judge Pemberton of the Victoria Police Court and George Smith, the Victoria city

clerk. They were placed there in the 1870s to ridicule them for their part in the jailing of a chief from this house.

Jonaitis recognizes that totem poles in a variety of forms predate European contact, but then she claims that “these earliest poles had a distribution limited to the Tsimshian and Haida” (ix). This statement appears to ignore the inside house posts drawn by John Webber in 1778 at Yuquot (Friendly Cove). It is a curious omission for someone who has published on the famous whaling shrine at the same location. Jonaitis must have meant that free standing memorial or house frontal poles first appear in late eighteenth century Euro-American records on the northern Northwest Coast and did not spread toward the south until later in the nineteenth century.

Jonaitis’s book is an excellent guide to totem poles in museums, an airport (Vancouver International), a ferry terminal (Horseshoe Bay), and various public outdoor and indoor locations in Seattle, Victoria, Vancouver, Duncan, Alert Bay, Prince Rupert, Ketchikan, Sitka, and Juneau. By including the Wellbriety pole (which references the great harm that accompanied colonization) and the Wooshkeetan pole in Juneau (which documents egregious bad behaviour by the agents of the colonial state), Jonaitis gives the reader a fresh understanding of totem poles as social documents.



*Seekers and Travellers:
Contemporary Art of the Pacific
Northwest Coast*

Gary Wyatt

Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre;
Seattle: University of Washington
Press, 2012. 160 pp. \$29.95 paper.

MARTHA BLACK

Royal British Columbia Museum

Seekers and Travellers is the final volume in a trilogy of popular publications by Gary Wyatt that showcase contemporary Northwest Coast art. It follows the format of the previous books, *Faces: Contemporary Masks of the Northwest Coast* (1994) and *Mythic Beings: Spirit Art of the Northwest Coast* (1999), pairing extended captions with excellent full-page photographs by Kenji Nagai and including an introduction by Wyatt. The text for each of the thirty-six works was written by, or with, the artist. This may be unusual for an art book, as Wyatt claims, but is a common strategy for exhibition labels. And the book’s resemblance to an exhibition catalogue is not surprising since Wyatt is a proprietor of one of the world’s foremost commercial galleries for contemporary First Nations art and the works presented were presumably shown at, and perhaps sold by, his Spirit Wrestler Gallery in Vancouver over the past fifteen years: the earliest work included is Joe David’s *Revered Enemy* from 1996, and most were made between 2000 and 2011.

Most of the works featured are masks, headdresses, and other wood carvings, but mixed media constructions, weavings (including Meghann O’Brien’s *T’lina Ravenstail Robe* and William White’s innovative cedar bark and wool basket), argillite

figure groups by Christian White, masterful bracelets by Shawn Hunt and Richard Adkins, and glass sculptures by Preston Singletary are here as well. Short artists' biographies contribute to the book's value as a reference. Wyatt's Introduction, however, is less useful. His accounts of early migrations and settlement, origins of the art form, European contact (which focuses on Alaska, perhaps for American readers of this co-publication with University of Washington Press), and even the section on contemporary Northwest Coast art are perfunctory. Most puzzling is the classification of works as Traditional, Cross-Cultural, or Contemporary. Similar works appear in each category and the thematic divisions seem arbitrary. Robert Davidson's *Shark Mask*, for example, is classed as Traditional, his comparable *Dogfish Mask* as Contemporary, while his *Butterfly Headdress* (*Sdla k'amm*) is for some reason Cross-Cultural. While *Ehwep Syuth* (*To Share History and Culture*) by John Marston commemorates a cultural exchange with New Guinea and is clearly cross-cultural in imagery, materials, and intention, other works appear to have been categorized as Cross-Cultural because of the artists' mixed ancestral influences. Is it imagery that has become associated with the repatriation of ancestral remains across cultural and national boundaries that makes Davidson's *Butterfly Headdress* Cross-Cultural? One wonders if it was Wyatt or the artists who made the categorizations.

My other questions concern contrasts between an artist's expressed intention and the results, the insistence on elaborate symbolism, the absence of critique, and the mechanics of the art market. Wyatt touches on the establishment of the Vancouver and

Seattle markets for Northwest Coast art in the 1960s and the roles of collectors in their subsequent development. It would be interesting to know specifics of this history. Because of the unexplained role of the Spirit Wrestler Gallery in the availability, and perhaps creation of, the works showcased here (Isabel Rorick, whose *Spring Emerging Purse Bag* was made for an exhibition at the gallery, is the only artist who mentions the connection), some insight into how Wyatt and other dealers work would be welcome as well. Perhaps Wyatt's next book will tell us more about the significant market that he helped to create and continues to develop, which has made this useful compendium of contemporary work possible.

*Company, Crown and Colony:
The Hudson's Bay Company
and Territorial Endeavour in
Western Canada*

Stephen Royle

London, UK: I.B. Tauris, 2011.

320 pp. \$115.00 cloth.

BARRY GOUGH
Victoria

IN ESSENCE, this is a study of Igovernorship, or governorships – Richard Blanshard to Frederick Seymour, with Sir James Douglas as the centrepiece of description. The addition of many charts and tables lend it an expectant aura of historical geography. The sources used are the Colonial Office papers, the printed *Parliamentary Papers* of the age, the files of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and various refugia such as Roderick Finlayson's histories and accounts of Fort Victoria and the

occasional letters found in the archives of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Online resources have been used, notably shorter biographies that appear from the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* – George Blenkinsop being one and Robert Dunsmuir another, though that of the quizzical Walter Colquhoun Grant does not appear. This book shows the depth of Vancouver Island's colonial history in documents, and that rich basis is a tribute to the systematic methods that Sir James Stephen, the permanent undersecretary of state for the colonies, devised in the years immediately preceding the grant of the Colony of Vancouver Island to the HBC (13 January 1849). Although one is hard pressed to think of documentary sources missed by the author, the reviewer is saddened, even horrified, to see the following not cited or referenced: Richard Mackie's extensive master's thesis on the topic, John Galbraith's prodigiously important *Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor* (1957), and the reviewer's own *Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast* (1971) and, particularly, *Gunboat Frontier* (1984), which examines Aboriginal rights, the Douglas Treaties, and above all – and significant to Royle's discussion of Blanshard and the Fort Rupert murders – the troubling events near that northern post of the HBC and the intervention of the Royal Navy under Blanshard's guidance.

As a student of imperial islands as places for historical study, Royle, who is professor of island geography and director of the Centre of Canadian Studies at Queen's University Belfast, has written about St. Helena and other outposts, but he does not express a strong appreciation of naval and maritime aspects of the imperial story. His view is that the HBC was coerced by the Colonial Office in undertaking the colonization of the

Island under the charter. In fact, as Galbraith explained, it had been the HBC that necessarily had to protect its trading monopoly under licence and needed to find a way to satisfy the Colonial Office of its suitability as a colonizing agent. The author accepts too readily the antagonistic views of James Edward Fitzgerald, but certain it is that Fitzgerald's proposal received far more attention than it deserved. Lacking capital, with no experience in colonizing remote regions, and having no knowledge of Aboriginal affairs or obligations, Fitzgerald was out of his depth even in making a suggestion along Wakefieldian lines. Royle's book turns so much on the personality, character, and circumstances of Governor Blanshard that Douglas is presented as a rival, which in a way he was, given the financial and managerial responsibilities of the latter and his reluctance to promote colonization. Ancillary persons nicely enter the account, notably the Reverend Robert Staines, James Cooper, and Edward Langford – all of them in opposition to Douglas during his governorship. The rivalry of Victoria and New Westminster as to the new capital on the occasion of the Union of the Colonies is covered and follows conventional lines, Governor Seymour being adequately treated as far as his official papers are concerned.

It is sad in a scholarly treatise to see so many errors. There are editorial lapses – incomplete or awkward sentences. There are misspellings – Herman Merivale, the famed Colonial Office undersecretary, is given incorrectly as "Merrivale." British "Colombia" appears at least once. The Admiral's name is Phipps Hornby. There is, sadly, no bibliography, which would have been useful to future students. One would have liked to see some discussion of

the smallpox epidemic of 1862. The labour difficulties at Fort Rupert need greater analysis. Bride ships are conspicuous by their absence. The Métis character of many of the early families is not addressed adequately, another feature reflecting lack of knowledge of published work. These matters give pause for concern.

This book is the first full-length study of the Colony of Vancouver Island. It adds considerably to our knowledge of the subject. It shows an excellent knowledge of documentary sources, notably those of the Colonial Office (305). Although copies of colonial correspondence exist in the British Columbia Archives in Victoria, Royle is absolutely correct in saying that the originals contain nuances of interpretation that the copies in Victoria cannot provide. As he explains, a certain in-letter would contain a folded-over corner upon which officials would write in cramped hand their views about what was happening in the distant colony. For instance, on one occasion Merivale remarked that he found Blanshard's complaints against the HBC an inconvenient habit – that is, a nuisance requiring more work in Whitehall. And on the back of a similar letter there was the wry request of the HBC for some other gentlemen to be recommended for the appointment as governor in Blanshard's stead. Needless to say, the appointment went to Douglas, where, perhaps, it should have been placed all along. By the way, we will never know what caused the Colonial Office to shy away from Douglas's candidacy to be made permanent, though it may be imagined that it was Fitzgerald's opposition (which had considerable nuisance value in imperial political affairs) that led to it. Fitzgerald may have had immediate satisfaction, but the effort in sending

Blanshard was doomed from the outset. This book is worth close attention, not least for the coverage it gives to the issues of colonial governorship.

*Gathering Places: Aboriginal
and Fur Trade Histories*

Carolyn Podruchny and Laura
Peers, editors

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010. 344 pp.
\$34.95 paper.

SCOTT P. STEPHEN
Parks Canada, Winnipeg

ACADEMIC publishers seem to be shying away from festschriften these days, but there are good reasons for UBC Press to buck that trend with this book. The long-standing academic tradition of a scholar's colleagues and former students contributing essays to a volume in her or his honour illustrates the web of personal and intellectual relationships that are integral to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. For thirty years, Jennifer S.H. Brown has fostered such relationships without regard to age, academic training, or disciplinary boundaries: all who have wanted to travel the path of critical inquiry have been welcome. And it is appropriate that this volume should be published by UBC Press, which originally published and recently reprinted Brown's now classic *Strangers in Blood*.

The articles collected here seek a balance between the fine details of everyday life and the broader brush strokes of the "big picture." The articulation and negotiation of identities are examined through the meanings and uses of partially denuded trees known as lobstersticks (Carolyn

Podruchny, Frederic W. Gleach, and Roger Roulette) and through burial dress and grave goods (Cory Willmott and Kevin Brownlee). Heidi Bohaker examines the social and political meanings of Anishinaabe totemic signatures on treaties, while Elizabeth Vibert explores the many meanings of food. Germaine Warkentin outlines former fur trader John McDonald of Garth's 1857 proposal for an independent federal union of First Nations in western North America.

The second half of the volume addresses even more directly two issues that have been key to the scholarship of Jennifer Brown and of many of her students. How do we know what we know (or what we think we know) about Aboriginal peoples? And how do we represent those peoples, both in the past and in the present? Heather Devine and Susan Gray discuss issues of subjectivity and personal relationships in research, while Theresa Schenk, David Miller, Laura Peers, and Bob Coutts examine representations of Aboriginal peoples in personal and governmental identification, in ethnographic writing, and in public commemoration. In all of these discussions, the boundaries between identities, between nations, and between categories or disciplines emerge as complex but often quite arbitrary. Brown makes the same observation in her fascinating afterword, in which she muses on her "academic ancestors."

Only Vibert's article on food and identity in the fur trade deals explicitly with the region now known as British Columbia; about half of the articles focus on the Anishinaabe/Ojibwa/Chippewa. However, all of the pieces have much to offer readers beyond their specific subject matter. The contributors use many kinds of "documents" – archival fonds, archaeological retrievals,

traditional knowledge, landscapes, material culture, and so on – to address many kinds of questions. Thanks in part to recent efforts to place Aboriginal peoples at the centre of scholarly inquiry, we now "read" such evidence with greater awareness of cultural and cross-cultural meanings, of issues of power (past and present), and of the complex forms and functions of language. The sophisticated and subtle – sometimes even intimate – ways in which the authors approach their topics illustrate the opportunities for analysis and storytelling that these very complex issues have to offer.

*Finding a Way to the Heart:
Feminist Writings on Aboriginal
and Women's History in Canada*

Robin Jarvis Brownlie and
Valerie J. Korinek, editors

Winnipeg: University of Manitoba
Press, 2012. 273 pp. \$27.95 paper.

FRIEDA ESAU KLIPPENSTEIN
Parks Canada, Winnipeg

AS RECENTLY AS forty years ago, Sylvia Van Kirk sat in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in London and asked a completely new question of the business papers of this iconic and long-standing company: "Where are the women?" It is difficult to imagine how audacious a question that was, inundated as we are today with popular and scholarly works exploring virtually every aspect of the topic. At the time, however, for Van Kirk to examine the North American fur trade in terms of the roles of gender, race, identity, and colonization was revolutionary, and the influence of the work was pervasive. How pervasive? The editors of *Finding*

a Way to the Heart effuse: "It is probably impossible to acquire an undergraduate history degree in this country without encountering some of [Van Kirk's] writings" (8).

The twelve chapters within this volume emerged from a forum in honour of Sylvia Van Kirk at the 2007 meeting of the Canadian Historical Association. With an eloquent introduction, editors Robin Jarvis Brownlie and Valerie J. Korinek provide historiographical context and introduce Van Kirk as advancing "the feminist project" (11). In an appropriate recognition, the volume's single photo of Van Kirk has her posed with her friend and colleague Jennifer S.H. Brown at the Orkney Islands in 1990 (2). Brown also contributes the first chapter, an engaging description of how her paths crossed and intersected with Van Kirk's over a period of almost four decades. The serendipitous meeting in 1972, the collaboration, and the dialogue between these two path-breaking scholars gave them courage in their pursuit and helped shape their work. Van Kirk's *"Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer) appeared to wide acclaim in 1980, as did Brown's *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: UBC Press).

Finding a Way to the Heart is a pleasure to read and is remarkable for the consistently high quality of the contributions. The chapters also have considerable range, most on work inspired by Van Kirk's subjects and methodologies. For example, Kathryn McPherson explores colonial societies after 1860 in terms of race and gender; Katrina Srigley presents a Northern Ontario case study to illuminate contemporary definitions and expressions of Aboriginality;

Patricia McCormack examines the persistent fur trade society of Fort Chipewyan; and Victoria Freeman and Angela Wanhalla extend the discussion of interracial intermarriage to the United States, New Zealand, and Australia.

This is, unabashedly, a tribute, and one that effectively portrays how Van Kirk's career went beyond academic contributions to matters of the heart. The subject matter, for starters, involves the intimate relationships between Aboriginal women and Euro-Canadian traders, which are characterized largely as bonding sexual and social unions of permanence and economic import. The heart is also involved in Van Kirk's working relationships with others within the university world, where, with her characteristically relational and non-competitive style, she won the respect of mentored grad students, academic colleagues, fellows on committees, and others. University of Toronto colleague Franca Iacovetta recounts lessons learned from Van Kirk, noting especially her patient, methodical work for change on committees and hiring boards. Speaking most directly on the theme of heart, Adele Perry speaks of the possibilities (and pitfalls) of a personal connection with research subjects and sources. She describes a "historiography that breaks your heart" and the possibility of scholars as vulnerable, empathetic observers within a "located, embodied, and empathetic scholarly practice" (81). Van Kirk demonstrated this in various ways, but especially in her passion for the "real people" of history, which recently includes various prominent, mixed-race families of colonial British Columbia, including the Connolly-Douglas family.

There is much here in these "feminist writings" to shake contemporary young

women out of their complacency. Even that such a simple premise – that there were women in the fur trade and that they mattered – could possibly have been revolutionary, begs us to question what else our contemporary blinders stop us from seeing.

*Craigflower Country: A History
of View Royal, 1850–1950*

Maureen Duffus

First published by View Royal
Historical Society, 1993; Victoria:
Town and Gown Press, 2011. 198 pp.
\$27.95 paper.

DEIDRE SIMMONS
Victoria

CRAIGFLOWER country was the area of greater Victoria between the waters of the Gorge waterway and Esquimalt Harbour. Today it is within the town of View Royal, to the northwest of the city. “Craigflower” was the name of the Puget’s Sound Agricultural Company farm established by Governor James Douglas in 1853 to provide fresh farm produce to the nearby Hudson’s Bay Company post at Fort Victoria. It also helped provision the naval establishment at Esquimalt. It was one of three farms (and later four) operated by the company in the area. Craigflower was successfully farmed from 1853 to 1866 by Kenneth McKenzie, twenty-two farm labourers, and their families, who arrived together from Scotland on the *Norman Morison* under five-year contracts with the company. With the fur trade fading and competition for land rights from the United States, the HBC was being directed by the Colonial Office in England to encourage

permanent settlement on the lands it had been granted on Vancouver Island. Craigflower Manor and Schoolhouse are now heritage sites managed by the Heritage Branch of the provincial Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations.

The “Stories and Reminiscences” section of *Craigflower Country* provides personal glimpses of the farms, livestock, cottages, characters, and First Nations people of the area – mostly from the first half of the twentieth century. Some of the storytellers were descendants of the first settlers, and some spent idyllic summer vacations with relatives and grandparents; others stayed and attended Craigflower School. The school bus, for some, was the milk van. A bit of a mystery to some Victorians is the site of the first sawmill established by the HBC in 1847 at the mouth of what was then called Rowe Stream. It is clearly marked on one of several helpful maps included in the text. The stream flowing into the northwest end of Esquimalt Harbour is now called Millstream, but the sawmill, with its later addition of a flour mill, has long since disappeared into the coastal rainforest. It was vital until 1860, with lumber being shipped from Esquimalt Harbour to Victoria and California. The area where the mill was located was also approached by the trail that ran inland to Victoria and later became the Island Highway. A bridge was built over the “stream” near the mill by one of the millwrights, who also built a hotel at the location. Parson’s Hotel became well known as a way station and a pub, the oldest in the province: Six Mile Pub. Another pub, closer to Craigflower and near the centre of town of View Royal, was the Four Mile Pub, which started life as a coaching stop. Both are still in operation to provide focal points for visits to the area.

Maureen Duffus prepared the first edition of *Craigflower Country* in 1993 to acknowledge the upcoming sesquicentennial of the purchase of land by Douglas by treaty with the Songhees First Nation in 1850. The second edition is enhanced with additional photographs, better-quality paper, and updates to the text and format. Her research and personal memories add to the reminiscences of current and former residents to provide a comprehensive exploration of a residential area that built up along the rocky shoreline of Esquimalt Harbour and on either side of the highway, which for many years was the only access to up-Island. Local histories such as the ones Duffus has written (*A Most Unusual Colony: Vancouver Island, 1849–1860*; *Old Langford: An Illustrated History, 1850–1950*; and *Beyond the Blue Bridge: Stories from Esquimalt*) provide the reader with an intimate and educational exploration of familiar territory.

*The Esquimalt & Nanaimo
Railway: The Dunsmuir Years,
1884–1905*

Donald F. MacLachlan

Victoria: British Columbia Railway
Historical Association, 2012. First
published 1986, Sono Nis Press.
168 pp. \$29.95 paper.

BRUCE HODDING
Victoria

ORIGINALLY, Robert Dunsmuir, the founder of the Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway (E&N), had intended the southern terminus to be Esquimalt and the northern terminus to be Nanaimo, as the name suggests, but before he had completed construction

in 1886, he extended it south to Russell's Station in Victoria West and north to his coalmine at Wellington. Immediately, people in Victoria petitioned for an extension from Victoria West, and on 29 March 1888 a passenger train rolled across the swing bridge and into downtown Victoria for the first time. The *Victoria Colonist* called it "a red letter day in Victoria's history – a day always to be remembered." Daily passenger service started at Wellington near Nanaimo in the morning and headed south, crossing around Cobble Hill with the passenger train heading north from Victoria. This service was everything people wish for today.

Donald MacLachlan's popular narrative of the E&N concentrates on the working history of the railway. Although he discusses the constitutional controversies surrounding its establishment – the 1871 Terms of Union between British Columbia and Canada required the completion of a railway to the Pacific seaboard – his focus is on the early day-to-day operations. MacLachlan's own private experience as a lifetime employee of the E&N, alongside that of his father and brother, coupled with his use of rare dispatcher's records and invaluable personal communications, creates an intimately detailed history. He fills his stories with the names and careers of engineers, conductors, and even baggage handlers. He has organized this account along topical lines suggesting a working and intimate history, such as "Survey and Construction," "Weather, High Water, and Wreck," and "E&N Presidents and Other Personalities." Regarding MacLachlan's discussion of the birth of the City of Duncan because of the railway station (47), I am able to add from my own research that Chief Charlie Quitgarten of Somena, who addressed Prime Minister Sir John

A. Macdonald, wanted the station at “Duncan’s” to benefit his own people. Anyone interested in the history of the E&N, Vancouver Island, or Canadian railways in general should read this book.

A work of this type has, of course, certain inherent drawbacks. MacLachlan makes no attempt to place the history of the E&N within a larger interpretive framework, whether of labour, railway, or Canadian history. Despite a short bibliography, the book lacks documentation and footnotes, but perhaps it is unfair to expect this of a non-academic work aimed at a local audience. The many wonderful photographs benefit from the book’s size, but, oddly, the designer has placed quotations in shaded boxes so that they appear to be sidebars rather than part of the main text.

In 2011, the E&N discontinued passenger service because of the condition of the railway, but it expects to restore passenger service some time later this year. We can only hope that the E&N will also restore daily passenger service in the morning heading south into Victoria as well as north from Victoria, as the schedule was originally established.

*Escape to Gold Mountain: A
Graphic History of the Chinese in
North America*

David H.T. Wong

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press,
2012. 256 pp. \$19.95 paper.

LILYNN WAN
Dalhousie University

telling history. Within three months of its official launch, David Wong’s *Escape to Gold Mountain: A Graphic History of the Chinese in North America* made the bestseller list of the Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia and the top seller position in three Amazon.ca categories. Wong joins a growing list of talented artists, including Chester Brown (*Louis Riel: A Comic Strip Biography*) and Willow Dawson (*Hyenas in Petticoats: The Story of Suffragette Nellie McClung*), who have published their interpretations of Canadian history in panels of illustration and minimalist text. Alyson King has recently pointed out that graphic texts convey history differently from written texts because they forefront “the physicality of actions, subjects and events.”¹ As such, graphic texts can be a more efficient way to convey to readers the highly complex premise that historical knowledge is embedded in materiality. This is particularly useful in telling histories of racism and oppression, where experience is tantamount to finding the balance between acknowledging oppression and attributing agency to the subjects of that oppression.

Escape to Gold Mountain offers a historically accurate, albeit selective, account of keystone events in the history of the Chinese in North America, which spans 170 years. The author describes his work as “a fictional story ... based on facts” (ii). Wong has taken creative liberties to weave a biographical story that follows three generations of one family’s journey in North America through this chronology. Nonetheless, the story is set in a rich and carefully researched historical context, the

GRAPHIC TEXTS are becoming increasingly popular as a way of

¹ Alyson King, “Cartooning History: Canada’s Stories in Graphic Novels,” *History Teacher* 45, 2 (2012): 212.

bulk of which is presented visually, through images. The meaning that these images can convey is immense, and it is refreshing to see Chinese people in the past portrayed in such a human fashion. Most of the images of the early Chinese in North America that exist in the archives – many of which Wong has cleverly incorporated into his own illustrations – are, in one way or another, distorted by a colonial lens. When these are the only images of the past that we see, even in a carefully contextualized academic context, they can become normalized. To be able to visually follow the characters in *Escape to Gold Mountain* through more than two hundred pages as fully formed and central actors in history is a highly entertaining and enjoyable step towards decolonizing our history. In addition to being of wide popular appeal to audiences of all ages, this book will make an excellent teaching tool in high schools and universities when used in conjunction with appropriate supporting material.

*Gateway to Promise: Canada's
First Japanese Community*

Ann-Lee Switzer and
Gordon Switzer

Victoria: Ti-Jean Press, 2012. 396 pp.
\$29.95 paper.

MASAKO FUKAWA AND
STANLEY FUKAWA
Burnaby

THE AUTHORS, Ann-Lee Switzer and Gordon Switzer, are both historians and writers with an interest in the Japanese-Canadian experience. *Gateway to Promise: Canada's First Japanese Community* is a rich history

of the Japanese in Victoria before the Second World War. With their expulsion in 1942, their history was forgotten, but it has now been revived and can be savoured with the publication of this book.

Excellent general histories of the Japanese in Canada have been written by Ken Adachi, Roy Ito, and Toyo Takata, and studies are available for Chemainus, Cumberland, Mission, Vancouver's Powell Street, and elsewhere, but this is the first comprehensive history of the Japanese in Victoria, which predated Vancouver as the main gateway to Asia. The Switzers left no stone unturned. They interviewed former residents, friends, and relatives. They corresponded by post and e-mail, conducted phone interviews, read old newspapers in both English and Japanese, and visited archives, libraries, and individuals in their homes. With numerous documents, anecdotes, and black-and-white photographs, the Switzers establish their claim that Victoria was Canada's first Japanese community. This book, a clear and definitive history of the Japanese community in Victoria, is also a pleasure to read.

Unlike Vancouver, Victoria had no "Japan Town." The Japanese were not concentrated in any particular area but lived in various districts of Greater Victoria. Their occupations included farmer, teahouse owner, merchant, boat builder, and fisher. Victoria's Ross Bay Cemetery, where the 150 Japanese pioneers are buried, reflects this integration: unlike cemeteries in Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Nanaimo, Cumberland, and Chemainus, there is no section specifically designated for Japanese graves.

The first section, "History: Japanese in Victoria," provides an overview of local, provincial, and international

events that affected the Japanese in Victoria. Chapters 8 to 17, "Public Space: The Japanese Influence," present specific topics, such as the non-Japanese residents who befriended the Japanese, the role of the Christian churches, the sports teams, the planting of the cherry trees, and the first shipment of *mikan* (Japanese oranges) to Canada. Of particular interest is the search for Manzo Nagano as the first Japanese immigrant. Or was he? We also learn that First World War veterans were exempt from evacuation (115) and that Mikuni Point on Saturna Island was named for Victoria entrepreneur Kisuke Mikuni, who was listed on a voter's list. The authors do not reveal, however, if the list was for a municipal or a provincial election (132).

Powell Street in Vancouver, which boasted Japan Town, was a destination for all things Japanese before the war, and, since 1977, it has celebrated annually with the Powell Street Festival. Less known is the fact that the tycoon Shinkichi Tamura, who established the Japan-Canada Trust and Savings Company and the New World Hotel, which is still standing in Vancouver, had his beginnings in Victoria working for Charles Gabriel, a friend of the Japanese. And although Hide Hyodo Shimizu is remembered as the first Japanese Canadian to be hired, in 1926, to teach in a public school in British Columbia, Annie Kiku Nakabayashi graduated from the Victoria Normal School five years earlier and was appointed as a teacher for public school education in the church-run Oriental Home. In 1942, the Oriental Home was closed and its eighteen Japanese children and two women sent to a church boarding home in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan (144). The last section, entitled "Private Space: Family Stories," contains detailed

accounts of twenty-one families and an additional eighteen shorter sketches of former residents. None of the 273 pre-war Japanese residents returned to Victoria.

It would have made a storybook ending had the Switzers been able to declare that Victoria-born Toyo Takata, eldest son of the family that built and operated the Japanese tea garden, had decided to return to the city he loved. Takata visited from Toronto at every opportunity before his death in 2002 due to his love for the classmates from his Esquimalt schooldays, but not even he moved back. Those who left Victoria unexpectedly in 1942, like Takata, found themselves exposed, in the rest of Canada, to communities that were not as rabidly anti-Japanese as were those in the Pacific province. BC politicians almost succeeded in leading the Canadian government to ethnically cleanse the province of all Japanese ("No Japs from the Rockies to the Sea" was the slogan of federal cabinet minister Ian Mackenzie). Many who moved to eastern Canada learned that they did not have to build up individual relationships to overcome an "inferior" racial status; rather, they were granted a social status that was based more on their occupational qualifications. Some Japanese vowed never to set foot in British Columbia again, and they died upholding their vow. Some questioned the intelligence of those who returned to British Columbia, where they felt racism continued to keep their people down. The influx of Japanese to Victoria in recent years suggests that times have changed and that there is now, in the twenty-first century, less racism to contend with than there was in the twentieth century.

The Switzers have written with warmth and humour about everything they uncovered about the Japanese

in Victoria, including a recipe for the cake served at the Japanese Tea Garden (200). What is missing in this readable and enjoyable book is an index, which would have been most helpful in locating the many nuggets that the reader might want to retrieve.

*Jewels of the Qila: The
Remarkable Story of an Indo-
Canadian Family*

Hugh J.M. Johnston

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011. 332 pp.
\$32.95 paper.

ALI KAZIMI
York University

Jewels of the Qila: The Remarkable Story of an Indo-Canadian Family, finds Hugh Johnston, the leading expert on early South Asian migration to Canada, on familiar terrain. This time Johnston provides a rare familial and social history of Kapoor Singh Siddoo, a Sikh man whose rise from a penniless immigrant in 1907 to lumber magnate in British Columbia is pieced together in a sprawling century-long narrative. Unlike most of his Punjabi compatriots who arrived in early twentieth-century British Columbia, Kapoor was well educated and fluent in English. He used his familiarity with Anglo culture and his innate business acumen to negotiate “the extreme prejudice and discrimination that he and other South Asians faced” (2). Systemically racist immigration laws kept the community to less than two thousand people, and few women were allowed. Kapoor and his wife were apart for sixteen years, until 1923, yet their deep cultural and religious values allowed them to rebuild their family. Their bright and tenacious

daughters, Sarjit and Jackie, went on to become pioneering Indo-Canadian doctors who fulfilled their parents’ dream of creating a hospital in their maternal ancestral village of Aur, in the Punjab.

A meticulous researcher par excellence, Johnston once again draws upon his voluminous knowledge of pertinent primary source materials, including family memoirs, newspaper and magazine accounts, and photographs. He also dips into his own archive, including transcripts of interviews, which he has gathered and collected from within Vancouver’s Punjabi community over four decades. He graciously acknowledges building on the research of his friend and community historian Sarji Singh Jagpal’s landmark *Becoming Canadian: Pioneer Sikhs in Their Own Words* (Harbour Publishing, 1994) and on the research of his own graduate students at Simon Fraser University.

While the book moves chronologically, Johnston deftly weaves personal stories of historical characters associated with the Siddoo into his main narrative, and he moves back and forth in time with these smaller stories. *Jewels of the Qila* is a rich and engrossing history that sheds light on the nature of interactions within the community as well as those with white Canadians. It is the latter that I found particularly fascinating: stories of Anglo-Canadians who rose above the widespread racism of the time and became employers, colleagues, employees, and good friends. A few fair-minded bureaucrats and politicians also provided support. Our much-vaunted Canadian values of tolerance and human rights are found in these uncommon individuals whose support and friendship made the lives of a beleaguered community tolerable. Johnston has done a great service by

naming and bringing to light the impact of these extraordinary white Canadians.

Johnston locates Kapoor and his fellow Punjabis squarely as settlers and pioneers, albeit on the margins of the white settler state. By placing this narrative within a nation-building framework, the book avoids dealing with the flip side of this process – the colonization and displacement of First Nations. Nor does it offer any insight into how Kapoor, who was committed to freeing British India, felt about Canada's colonial process. Naming and acknowledging this paradox would require an entirely different paradigm. Moreover, with little critique of the family or its values, the book veers towards the celebratory. And while we do learn of their stoic perseverance, we never learn how anyone in the family or community felt about the daily slights of racism that Johnston acknowledges they endured.

Johnston has again paved the way for more personal histories to be produced within, and documented for, the South Asian diaspora in Canada. One emerges from the book with a feeling of having been deeply immersed in an epic multi-generational drama that spans three generations, extends from the colonial to the postcolonial era, and moves effectively between Canada and India.



Epidemic Encounters: Influenza, Society, and Culture in Canada, 1918–20

Magda Fahrni and
Esyllt Jones, editors

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012. 204 pp.
\$34.95 paper

MEGAN J. DAVIES
York University

EPIDEMICS call out the ambulance-chaser in all of us, and for health historians, there is none more attention-grabbing than the 1918–20 influenza pandemic, mistakenly dubbed the “Spanish Flu,” the only infectious disease to stop the Stanley Cup playoffs.

In my second year introductory course on health, I use epidemics as a topic for my first lecture, tracing a broad historical brush from the Black Death to SARS. But it is the 1918–20 flu that anchors the class. Why is this? Because the disease illustrates the multiple facets of global pandemics that are so comprehensively covered in this fine volume: the role of the state; the professional picture; civic engagement with disease; the impact on families; the way in which infectious illness intersects with place, class, ethnicity, and gender; and the emotional terrain of sudden, unexpected death. The introduction, written by editors Magda Fahrni and Esyllt Jones, is a wonderfully comprehensive and thoughtful overview of the topic, set in national and global contexts. The chapter authors – historians, health geographers, and medical anthropologists – provide a range of interpretations and perspectives on the pandemic. *Epidemic Encounters* is thus a welcome Canadian contribution to a

burgeoning international scholarship on the 1918-20 influenza epidemic.

Some of the topics covered in this wide-ranging collection cover aspects of the epidemic familiar to most Canadian health historians: the shortages of hospital space and professional nursing care, the closure of churches and movie theatres, and the use of home folk remedies in the face of limited medical responses. But importantly, *Epidemic Encounters* also provides careful micro-histories that debunk accepted ideas about the pandemic as a “democratic” illness. D. Ann Herring and Ellen Korol’s meticulous mapping of the epidemic’s path through the City of Hamilton, for example, demonstrates the unequal social and economic impact of the opportunistic disease. Similarly, Karen Slonim employs the concept of syndemics to demonstrate how the legacies of colonialism facilitated the rapid and devastating spread of the flu through vulnerable Aboriginal populations. Epidemic disease, like serious accidents, leaves the survivors trying to find sense in trauma and tragedy. This work of “making meaning” of the train wreck of illness – a process poorly understood by most who formulate health care delivery – is the focus of chapters by Esvyllt Jones and Mary-Ellen Kelm. Sources for the study of the influenza epidemic as a cultural event will never be adequate to the task at hand, but the effort to interrogate the void between public forgetting and private grief is to be commended.

Do I recommend that *BC Studies* readers pick up this book? I think they should, but not because of the BC content; rather, I follow medical historian Charles Rosenberg’s argument that epidemics reveal the fault lines of a society. I am reminded here of a recent newspaper article detailing how warfare

in Mali is undermining efforts to thwart the spread of Guinea worm disease, a terrible parasitic infection. We should be following such stories and thinking about them in context. In this fashion, the chapters in *Epidemic Encounters* serve as a useful set of cautionary tales in the age of SARS, Avian Flu, political unrest, and growing global and domestic inequality.

*The Amazing Foot Race of 1921:
Halifax to Vancouver in 134 Days*

Shirley Jean Roll Tucker

Victoria: Heritage House, 2011. 224
pp. \$19.95 paper.

PEARLANN REICHWEIN
University of Alberta

THREE TEAMS left Halifax in a 5866 km (3,645 mile) pedestrian race to Vancouver in 1921. Amateur sportsman Charles Burkman was first to head west on 17 January, followed a few days later by Jack and Clifford Behan, a father-and-son team. Two weeks later, Frank and Jenny Dill joined the race. This book unabashedly frames the race as “a made-in-Canada adventure story with genuine Canuck heroes,” yet boastful promotion from the transcontinental marathoners holds much in common with trash-talking athletes. Colin Howell has highlighted interwar sports in Nova Scotia’s Atlantic borderlands with New England, such as the *Bluenose*’s races for the *Halifax Herald*’s International Fishermen’s Trophy in competitions initiated in 1920. The trophy races and the transcontinental hike flourished together as media events in postwar Canadian sports nationalism, yet this background related to the foot race

sponsored by the *Herald* is overlooked. The hike also positioned British Columbia as a distal Pacific border.

Hikers traversed Canada westbound along railway lines, while their reports to newspapers, fuelled by the *Halifax Herald*, circulated nationally. Raging winter storms, cougar attacks, wolves, and near misses with locomotives were published as staples of epic travel, along with generous home-cooked meals, footsore nights, and hockey games. Their stories were retold to listeners – in telegraph shacks, churches, YMCAs, Kiwanis clubs, and even on Parliament Hill – as the currency of travel. Mayors, sportsmen, MPs, veterans, and ladies' aid societies embraced the racers who "described minutely and vividly every feature of the hike" (202).

Racers hoped to best Beresford Greatland's 1895 record. Adding sizzle to newspapers sales, sports writers praised Burkman for his handsome physique and Jenny Dill as a "plucky" young heroine. Pace, strategy, and health were key factors in the marathon. The Dills gradually gained from the back of the pack, driven by the resolute Jenny, who dared to race with her husband.

British Columbia's role as a national terminus emerges throughout the story. It first appears as an impossible marathon goal, then, in a push to the Pacific, it becomes the finish line of a coast-to-coast sports narrative. Racers stopped at CPR stations at Hector on the Great Divide and, at Walhachin on the Thompson River, were welcomed by local railway agents who were Maritimers. On the stretch west from the Rockies, fatigued hikers found fewer free meals and less hospitality among Interior British Columbians who were, presumably, like their rural francophone Quebecois counterparts,

often operating outside a national sports media mill fed by the *Halifax Herald*.

Vancouver was the scene of the big finish in June 1921. The Behans were first crossing the line, but the Dills placed an unbelievable first for the shortest number of days to reach the Pacific. All records were smashed. Athletic Burkman was beaten but rose to a surprise new challenge at the end of the race – a rematch walk from Montreal to Halifax. Along with public acclaim, the hikers faced financial hardships on their return home. More epilogue and citation would extend research use of this readable book, which recaptures the news archives and drama of an amazing race.

Who Killed Janet Smith?

Edward Starkins

Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2011. 404 pp. \$24.00 paper.

JOHN McLAREN
University of Victoria

IN LATE July 1924 in a house in the upper-crust neighbourhood of Shaughnessy Heights, Vancouver, around midday, a Scots nursemaid was found dead in the basement by the Chinese "house boy" Wing Fong Sing. She had a gunshot wound to the head and serious fragmentation of the right side of her skull. In a comedy of errors of Keystone Kops proportions, members of the diminutive Point Grey Police Force, in a thoroughly incompetent examination of the *corpus delicti* and of the location of the body, hastily jumped to the conclusion that Janet Smith had committed suicide. Moreover, through a miscommunication, the body was sent to a funeral home where it was

embalmed rather than to the city mortuary for a post-mortem. With this inauspicious start, and the social, political, and cultural turmoil that would surround the case, as well as the profound disagreement that existed on the cause of death, the justice system proved unavailing in its attempts – assuming the Attorney General's Department was correct in believing this to be a case of murder – to identify the culprit or culprits.

As Ed Starkins demonstrates in his book (a reissue, under the banner of the City of Vancouver's Legacy Book Project, of a work originally published in 1984), the death of Janet Smith has lasting historical importance because of what it reveals about the political, social, economic, and legal realities of British Columbia and, especially, Vancouver during the 1920s. For one interested, as is Starkins, in putting the facts of the Smith case into their broader context, its byzantine twists and turns provide a rich record of events, institutional dynamics, individual and community attitudes and prejudices, and human frailties. During the year and a half that the case was in the public gaze it produced no less than: two coroner's inquests; one exhumation and a belated post-mortem; two abductions of Sing by private detectives (in what look like instances of domestic rendition); preliminary hearings on four separate kidnapping charges against the gumshoes, Point Grey police officers, commission members, a newspaper editor, and even a special prosecutor, and three resulting trials; a preliminary hearing and grand jury investigation into a charge of murder against Sing; and a trial of the newspaper editor on a charge of criminal libel. Its coils were to entwine and ruin the political career of Attorney General Alexander Manson,

until then a rising star in the firmament of provincial Liberal politics.

Using the various stages of the criminal justice process, the author provides a detailed and clear narrative of the human background of the case and its roller coaster progress. In doing so, he highlights the social, political, and economic climate in which the story unfolded, and the roles of the various groups and interests who both reacted to it and kept it alive. We learn of the immigrant community (especially the Scots and the United Council of Scottish Societies), which was fired by the belief that Smith was either murdered by Sing or was the victim of an upper-class conspiracy associated with drug dealing and use; of the elite Baker family, the owners of the house in Shaughnessy, and their wealthy friends who were concerned to stay out of the spotlight, claiming that the deceased had shot herself by accident; of the Chinese community, on the receiving end of the endemic and widespread racism of the time, which was anxious to protect one of its own; of the newspapers, given, at best, to speculation rather than sound investigative journalism and, at worst, to yellow journalism of the deepest dye; of a balkanized policing system (more fragmented than today), in which the line between detection and vigilantism was easily crossed and rough justice handed out in order to secure confessions; of a political arena, party-based but fissured as leading politicians jockeyed for position; and of a prosecutorial system, despite its claims of professionalism and competency, capable of egregious manipulation (in this case charging a man with murder

in order to lead to the real culprit) as desperation at lack of progress set in.²

Starkins has written an engaging and well-crafted popular social history of Vancouver during the ostensibly hopeful, materially buoyant “flapper era” between the end of the slaughter of the Great War and the onset of the Depression. He reveals the serious fault lines and profound anxieties of a community emerging in this decade from both its recent frontier past and a costly war and becoming a settled North American city. The social historical analysis is not invariably profound as it glosses over detail and context that a social historian would consider important (e.g., the fuller pattern of discriminatory legislation and regulation against the Chinese and other Asian immigrants, and the more precise character and effects of economic inequalities and class division in the latter years of Vancouver’s gilded age). On the legal side the systematic use of the word “attorney” in place of “lawyer,” “solicitor,” “barrister,” or “counsel” grates with a Canadian reader. The narrative, which is full of detail, begins to wear on the reader as the book runs to four hundred pages. This might have argued in favour of being more concise in relating the story and of including a chronological list or diary of major events as well as a *dramatis personae* of the major players in this complex human tale. The use of short bibliographical notes

in each chapter, rather than footnotes, is unfortunate for the reader who might well be interested in following up detailed aspects of the narrative. Those scholarly criticisms aside, this is a very worthwhile and informative case study, one that is likely to keep the conundrum in the title alive and to encourage further research on the topic.

And who did kill Janet Smith and why? Despite the author’s attempt to follow up as many leads as he could find, the answers remains elusive. Despite the presence of a smoking gun, whose hand pressed the trigger is still a mystery, although in an updated afterword Starkins warms to one explanation – an explanation that should remain, for now, a mystery.

*Bluebacks and Silver Brights:
A Lifetime in the BC Fisheries
from Bounty to Plunder*

Norman Safarik with
Allan Safarik

Toronto: ECW Press, 2012. 382 pp.
\$22.95 paper.

KENNETH CAMPBELL
Victoria

FOR SIXTY years the Campbell Avenue fish dock on Burrard Inlet was the hub of Vancouver’s fishing industry, home to numerous fish plants, smokehouses, and floats where the boats tied up. The Safarik family business, Vancouver Shellfish and Fish Company, or simply Van Shell, was the first tenant and one of the last to go. For most of those years, Norman Safarik worked among the fishers, plant workers, big company executives, and fish buyers.

Bluebacks and Silver Brights is a collaboration between Norman

² Nineteen twenty-four proved to be an annus horribilis for the Attorney General’s Department. The death of Peter Vasilevich Verigin, the Lordly, the first leader of the Canadian Doukhobors, in October of that year in an explosion on the Kettle Valley Railway remains, like the Smith case, unresolved. Police investigative bungling was a contributing factor in that case, too. See www.canadianmysteries.ca.

Safarik and his son Allan, a poet whose publications include the recent collection of west coast poems entitled *The Day Is a Cold Grey Stone* (Hagios Press, 2010). Norman, after retiring in his eighties, began to record his memories in longhand. Through a lively process, which Allan describes in his Preface, they worked together to complete this decade-long project. The result is a successful alliance of Norman's vivid recollection of his experiences at Van Shell and Allan's subtle structuring of his father's stories. Many of Safarik's tales feature the memorable personalities who frequented the waterfront. The book, though loosely chronological, is built around these intriguing characters, giving rise to many of the chapter titles, such as "The California Con Man" and "The King of Fishmongers."

Of note are the stories about the ground fisheries, from the trawlers that caught the cod, halibut, and other ground fish, to the buying, pricing, and processing at the plant, and, finally, to sales to local peddlers and high-end fishmongers. Safarik also deals with other ocean resources that passed through Van Shell's plant, including clams, crabs, sturgeon, dogfish, and herring as well as the salmon species featured in the book's title (bluebacks are sockeye, while silver brights are chum).

A thread running through the memoir is the ongoing tension between the small companies like Van Shell and the big players – particularly BC Packers, which had a plant on the dock – and with federal fisheries officers. "It was no secret in the industry," writes Safarik, "that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans was almost an adjunct of the big companies" (309). Some of the most tensely paced stories are of one side trying to better the other

in a fish deal or to get revenge for a bad transaction.

A second thread, woven through the stories of hard work and crazy escapades, is a serious environmental message. (The publishers classify the book as Environmental Conservation and Protection rather than as British Columbia History.) Behind the anecdotes lies a profound sense of loss not only of the diversity of products harvested from the sea but also of the quality available to us. Much of what we find in the fish market today, says Safarik, is "only really fit for the bin" (32).

The Gulf of Georgia, once rich with cod and salmon, is today "a barren sea," and Safarik reflects on the reasons for this. "After working in the fishing industry every day for over sixty years," he concludes, "I believe the loss of our great resource can be attributed to a lack of feed for the major food fish species. Frankly, there are not enough herring around" (32-33).

There are plenty of published memoirs of British Columbia's fishing industry, but none quite like this. Most are told by the fishers and generally focus on the salmon fishery. Safarik, however, brings a unique insight into the diverse fisheries that British Columbia's coastal waters once sustained and the people who caught, processed, and bought the ocean resources.



*A Wilder West: Rodeo in
Western Canada*

Mary-Ellen Kelm

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011. 312 pp.
\$24.95 paper.

J. EDWARD CHAMBERLIN
Halfmoon Bay

THIS IS A BOOK about people in small towns in the west and the rodeos that have provided ways to negotiate their complex social, economic, and cultural relationships with each other and with the animals that are part of their ranching heritage. These rodeos celebrated the values of both individualism and community; and they represented a fusion of work and play in which horses have always been central, beginning several thousand years ago on the steppes of Asia. The legacy of this is with us well beyond rodeo for horses are the only animal to take part with humans in the modern Olympics, which began about the same time as the rodeos that Mary-Ellen Kelm talks about. And equestrian events are the only ones in which women compete on an equal footing – or seating – with men.

Kelm outlines the ways in which rodeo performed many of the dynamics of gender and race and class that shaped (or warped) western communities, and although her book is at times overloaded with postcolonial jargon, hearing Judith Butler and Homi Bhabba quoted in a book about rodeo provides its own kind of entertainment. Kelm's account is rich with details about the community organization of rodeos in Alberta and British Columbia, which offered a welcome and affordable alternative to the large-scale extravagances of the touring wild west shows that decorated

the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially in the United States, where they represented a popular pantomime of frontier settlement. The Calgary Stampede (which began in 1912) was modelled after them, but it was also made up of rodeo events that were inherited from ranching, the staple economy of local (and increasingly, with the collapse of the buffalo herds) tribal communities in the Canadian west. Kelm outlines when and how rodeo became more regulated and eventually more professional, mirroring changes in other sports and requiring performers to be on the road for nearly as long as their forebears, the old-time cowboys. And she is clear that, while some of the impulses behind rodeo were colonial, they were as often as not matched by values that were communal. Performers (in the first half century of rodeo) came to rodeo primarily from the ranches of the region and included not only cowboys of British heritage but also Hispanic gauchos and vaqueros from Argentina and Mexico as well as African Americans, who made up a quarter of the cowboys on the western plains after the American Civil War (and, incidentally, composed many of its best known songs, such as the old standard "Riding Old Paint," the last song to be played at dances in rodeo country when I was growing up). And contrary to a myth that Kelm nicely deconstructs, many of these rodeo cowboys were in fact Indians – hardly surprising, when you think about it, since the Aboriginal peoples of the plains constituted one of the great horse cultures of the world, rivalling those of the Asian steppes and the Arabian desert. The winner of the bucking bronco competition at the first Calgary Stampede was Tom Three Persons, a Kainai (Blood) Indian of the Blackfoot Confederacy. And this was only the

beginning of his success as well as that of many Aboriginal men and women who also provided much of the skilled labour on ranches in those years on the Prairies and in the foothills of Alberta.

Kelm dates the beginning of institutionalized local rodeo early in the twentieth century, but the events that came to constitute rodeo were played out considerably earlier. For instance, in the spring of 1885 the biggest round-up that the Canadian west had ever seen got under way, gathering cattle from the open range just south of Calgary all the way down to the Montana border. This was the beginning of the “beef bonanza” of the 1880s, when cattle companies attracted the same kind of interest as “high-tech” stocks did in the 1990s. In 1881, there were nine thousand cattle in the whole of the North-West Territories. By 1886, there were 100,000 in the grasslands of the foothills alone; and by the turn of the twentieth century, there were half a million. The cowboys and Indians at that big round-up, and at others that followed, would certainly have taken time to show off their skills and to test the skills of others; rodeos, after all, were a round-up for the cowboys as well as the cattle. My grandfather (John Cowdry) was living in Fort Macleod in 1885, right at the heart of it all, and he told about regular bucking-horse and calf-roping competitions out on the range. By the time he became the first mayor of the newly incorporated Macleod in 1892, the competitions – not necessarily always advertised as rodeos but including most of their events – were part of seasonal activities, with the horsemen of the North-West Mounted Police watching on – and, when they moved into ranching after their indenture was over, taking part.

It would have been useful to have included a bit more description of

specific events at a typical rodeo. Among other things, this would have consolidated its connection with ranching and have qualified the fashionable commentary (which Kelm, to her credit, takes up uneasily) regarding the supposed performance of masculinity. It would have made it obvious that a successful rodeo cowboy has to have a gymnast’s balance and a dancer’s timing, with a sensitive and sensible understanding of animals, for rodeo performers are never as strong or as fast as the animals they ride – and when it comes to horses, seldom as smart.

The best of the rodeo cowboys were very good horsemen, and they needed good horses, bred to the conditions and challenges of the range, with the intelligence to understand what cattle were going to do before they did it, the stamina to work long hours in all kind of conditions, and a sense of balance and timing (which is mirrored in rodeo events). Breeding cow ponies therefore played a significant role in the business of ranching; and, as rodeo came into its own, so did breeding rodeo stock. And rodeo country took pride in its best, with horses (and later, bulls) celebrated for their performances almost as much as the riders. So when a horse named Midnight, bred in southern Alberta, became the greatest bucking horse of the day, the entire west took notice. Midnight was a horse that no one could ride – not even the renowned Pete Knight, who tried four times (probably chuckling over their names as he picked himself up off the ground). Kelm writes about Knight, chronicling his remarkable career and its sad end in 1937, when he was stomped on by a bronc and died at a rodeo in California. His passing was commemorated all round rodeo country, just as Midnight’s had been when he died a year earlier. Both

the famous rider and the infamous horse were celebrated in song and story.

The best rodeo announcers, some rodeo cowboys, and a few of those sitting around the bucking chute make rappers sound tongue-tied, combining the nonchalant intensity of a poet with the quick wit of a comedian, all the while ready for a sudden turn into serious trouble, for rodeo is a dangerous workplace and playground. So I would like to have heard more of Kelm's conversations with participants in contemporary rodeo, knowing their delight in language. But the hard work and hard travelling that she put into this book is its own image of the dedication to craft that is rodeo; and she opens up its story in western Canada with insight, new information, and fascinating photographs. When she speaks in her own voice, and gives us the voices of the people about whom she is writing, her book brings rodeo and western Canada to life.

*Flyover: British Columbia's
Cariboo Chilcotin Coast –
An Aviation Legacy*

Chris Harris and Sage
Birchwater

105 Mile Ranch: Country Light
Publishing, 2012. 224 pp. \$39.95
paper.

JAY SHERWOOD
Vancouver

IN HIS LATEST publication, Chris Harris views the Cariboo, Chilcotin, and Coast region of south central British Columbia, the base for his numerous books, from a new perspective derived from a series of flights over the region.

Flyover continues Harris's trademark large-size book style with many arresting photographs, several of them full page. Harris describes the book's purpose as "photographing a visual narrative of the aviation industry and legacy in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast" (5), while also capitalizing on a new vertical viewpoint for his photographs: "I loved the aerial perspective for the different way of seeing: fresh, new, inspiring, and invigorating. Most of my flying time was spent searching for those decisive moments when subject matter and light unite to form beauty" (7).

The excellent visual quality extends Harris's reputation as one of British Columbia's outstanding outdoor photographers. Rich in colour and detail, the photographs provide an excellent perspective on this vast and thinly populated region of British Columbia. In a section called "Beauty in an Unknown Landscape" (170-81), Harris describes some novel photographic techniques he employed. "By shooting downwards and eliminating the horizon, I had lost all understanding of the landscape ... What I wanted to do with this landscape was invite people into the images, to look deeply at the form, colours and textures, and be visually stimulated and intrigued" (180). Since this is one of the strong elements of the book, making it more than just a geographical record of the area, Harris might have included this section on photographic technique earlier. In a concluding section, Harris writes: "I searched for a way to portray to the world the land's vastness, remoteness, and beauty, the very elements that drove these pilots to fly there in the first place" (208). However, the dominant motif in the photographs is summer and blue sky. With almost no photographs taken in wintry or stormy weather, the book lacks a sense of the variety

of weather and seasons. Moreover, the book contains very few photographs of the airplanes that transport people to places where they work or live.

But *Flyover* is not just a book of photographs. It contains more text than Harris's previous books, much of it provided by Sage Birchwater, long-time Williams Lake resident and author, who interviewed several pioneer pilots to derive the aviation history of the area. He also outlines the prominent aviation families and the role of aviation, both airplanes and helicopters, in the Cariboo, Chilcotin, and Coast today. While Birchwater's text includes interesting historical narrative, there are only a couple of historical photographs, making it more difficult to get a sense of the aviation legacy that is the book's subtitle. The second half of *Flyover* contains chapters on the role of aviation in the region's industry; but, again, the photographs are all contemporary. In the last part of the book the text consists mainly of short sections on a variety of topics that do not relate closely to the photographs. Despite some shortcomings in Harris's photographs and Birchwater's text, *Flyover* provides an innovative and intriguing perspective on British Columbia's Cariboo Chilcotin Coast.

*Trucking in British Columbia:
An Illustrated History*

Daniel Francis

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2012. 208 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

BEN BRADLEY

University of Toronto

HISTORIANS of British Columbia have devoted considerable

attention to how its economy and social geography were shaped by different kinds of transportation, from sailing vessels and trails to wagon roads and railways. However, automobiles and the roads they travel along have generally been neglected. Daniel Francis's new book about the province's trucking industry is intended for a popular audience; nevertheless, it makes a valuable contribution to the literature on this oft-overlooked aspect of the province's modern history.

The only previous book-length study on this topic is Andy Craig's *Trucking: A History of Trucking in British Columbia since 1900* (1977), which is mostly a retired truck driver's personal reminiscence about the period between 1930 and 1960. Francis's book helps fill out our understanding of that period, but it is especially valuable regarding the period between 1950 and 1990. It draws on a wide range of secondary and primary sources, including articles, theses, websites, government reports, industry journals, and a series of interviews Francis conducted with people who have been involved in British Columbia's trucking industry. There are no citations, but a useful bibliography is included and the reader usually gets a good sense of which sources are being drawn upon. To call this book "lavishly illustrated" would be an understatement for there are fewer than a dozen pages without some kind of picture on them.

The focus is primarily on long-distance freight hauling, with occasional sections about truck logging and urban delivery trucks. A chapter about the province's highway network since the turn of the last century is followed by a chapter outlining the evolution of truck and trailer technologies. British Columbia is rarely thought of as a place where automobiles were produced,

but Francis draws attention to British Columbia-based truck manufacturers like Hayes and Western Star. Chapter 4 is about the work of trucking. It emphasizes the difficult conditions encountered when driving in British Columbia, including long, steep grades and wildly varying climatic conditions. Truck driving, Francis shows, has typically involved working alone and spending extended periods away from home. However, questions about pay and working conditions are not pursued in depth, and unions like the Teamsters are only touched on briefly. Coming after chapters about difficult roads and powerful machines, this chapter reads a bit like a celebration, valorizing truck drivers as archetypal “rugged individualists.”

The last three chapters are about the trucking business. Chapter 5 describes some of British Columbia’s biggest and longest-lasting family-owned trucking companies. Chapter 6 outlines the various associations that carriers formed in order to advance their interests – for example, lobbying the provincial government for better roads and modifications to the licensing system. Chapter 7 is about the regulation and deregulation of British Columbia’s trucking industry, with the British Columbia Motor Carrier Commission taking centre stage. Francis does not shy away from some of the industry’s problems in these chapters, like the widely publicized rash of deadly accidents that occurred during the 1990s on the heels of deregulation. However, even though the book is not meant to be a critical business history, this reader hoped to learn more about the nature of competition within British Columbia’s trucking industry. Companies are repeatedly shown absorbing or merging with other companies, but how and why this was the case is left something of a

mystery. Similarly, Francis identifies the 1950 national railway strike as an important catalyst for the growth of the trucking industry in western Canada but, thereafter, says little about competition between railways and truckers for the province’s freight market.

This book belongs in the library of anyone who is interested in the economic and business history of twentieth-century British Columbia. Francis has done an admirable job of balancing popular appeal with a scholarly approach, and students of British Columbia will find *Trucking in British Columbia* an engaging and informative read.

Liquor, Lust and the Law: The Story of Vancouver’s Legendary Penthouse Nightclub

Aaron Chapman

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

VANESSA COLANTONIO
Vancouver

UP UNTIL NOW, local venue histories have not been in great supply. Should they become a trend among BC historians, Aaron Chapman’s *Liquor, Lust and the Law* may be seen as a pioneering effort. As much a family story (of the Fillipones, founders and owners) as it is a history of the Penthouse Nightclub in downtown Vancouver, this book has a warmth that many local history books lack.

Liquor, Lust and the Law is the end product of many years of research – the Fillipone family kept an extensive archive of photos, notes, newspaper articles, and memorabilia – and is also

based on interviews with many of the players, including current Penthouse heir Danny Fillipone and various members of the liquor and vice squads from the venue's days battling for an alcohol licence (1960s) and arguing in court against the Crown's charges of running a common bawdy house (1970s).

Chapman gives us a rare glimpse of Vancouver's mid-twentieth-century nightlife, including the major jazz acts and Hollywood celebrities coming through town, such as Oscar Peterson, Duke Ellington, the Mills Brothers, Frank Sinatra, Vincent Price, Errol Flynn, and others. They played or appeared at places such as the Commodore Ballroom, the Cave Supper Club, and the Orpheum, and then retired to the Penthouse for drinks and, in the very early days, a jam session or, years later, a floorshow. Chapman features candid photos of celebrities visiting the Penthouse alongside Fillipone family portraits – an appropriate pairing considering that this clandestine space was a combination of family guest parlour and Hollywood hangout. We witness the struggles and ups and downs of the Penthouse business and the strains on the Fillipones' marriage. Later, with the untimely deaths of most of the men behind the business, we seem to witness the passing of some golden era.

Then there is the late 2011 fire, which could have spelled the end of the club, but Chapman depicts, almost tenderly, the phoenix-like rebirth of the Penthouse. The author should be commended here, and throughout the book, for narrating with a light touch: he stands back and lets Danny Fillipone describe the death and resurrection of the Penthouse as he might that of a loved one saved from the brink by some miracle.

A much different and arguably more subdued venue reopened in early 2012, with local indie band shows and community events. Are the Penthouse's best years behind it or have they yet to happen? Once again, Chapman leaves us to see for ourselves.

In the Mind of a Mountie

T.M. "Scotty" Gardiner

Victoria: Agio Publishing House,
2010. 680 pp. \$31.95 paper.

BONNIE REILLY SCHMIDT
Simon Fraser University

T.M. "SCOTTY" Gardiner's memoir, *In the Mind of a Mountie*, fits nicely into the genre of heroic Mountie literature that has enjoyed a popular readership since the late nineteenth century. Gardiner, who served with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) at a number of postings across Canada between 1952 and 1983, offers a highly readable account of his career as a Mountie, as members of the RCMP are colloquially known. This lengthy memoir (680 pages) is based on events culled from his diaries and police notebooks. The material is organized into 131 short chapters, each featuring a specific theme, event, character, or crime. The narrative is supported by a number of photographs and crime scene sketches to illustrate that Mounties, as the popular saying goes, always get their man.

Gardiner's recollections as a rookie police officer at his first posting in Manitoba, where general duty officers handled all types of investigations, provides the most engaging reading. These stories range from murder investigations, bank robberies, and

cockfights to seizing stills, transporting prisoners, and investigating the theft of gold bars from the Winnipeg airport. They are peopled with colourful characters from small towns who taught Gardiner the value of using common sense when dealing with civilians, who often aided the police in solving crime. As the years progressed, Gardiner also discovered that effective police work was sometimes the result of chance and good luck. This was the case with the *Samarkanda*, a ship that was carrying thirty-two tonnes of marijuana to Canada from Mexico in 1979. Gardiner, who was the commanding officer in charge of the investigation, recalled that, as the ship's crew was off-loading bales of cannabis in a deserted inlet on Vancouver Island, they failed to notice that the tide was going out. Their miscalculation of tidal changes stranded them and their cargo on the shore, resulting in the largest drug seizure in Canada at the time.

There was a darker side to life as an RCMP officer, however, that Gardiner does not address, particularly the long hours of work, marriage restrictions, poor pay, alcoholism, multiple transfers, and uncompensated overtime. For example, Gardiner describes "the country shift" as a two-week period during which officers often worked twenty-hour days policing rural communities with little or no sleep. He sidesteps these questionable safety hazards in which the RCMP expected its men to engage, commenting only that it was an enjoyable experience (61). In fact, it was the RCMP's insistence on continuing these practices that sparked a great deal of labour strife over working conditions for a younger generation of Mounties. Indeed, thousands of Mounties began to organize across the country for the right to form a union in 1973 as a result of these policies, a

factor Gardiner fails to acknowledge. Gardiner also omits any reference to the hiring of women (and married men) for the first time in 1974, one of the most pronounced and controversial changes to the RCMP during his service. In spite of his status as a commissioned officer at the time, he does not mention his interactions with female police officers under his command.

In general, Gardiner avoids commenting on the inner workings of the RCMP and the politics of police culture, with one exception. In the final chapter, he refers to a paper he wrote for the RCMP in 1974 that warned of a growing lack of self-discipline and personal integrity among the leadership, a circumstance that would ultimately lead to "a creeping lessening in our code of conduct" (654). Gardiner sees his original call for a return to self-discipline as a solution to the RCMP's current problems, a response some readers may find to be an outdated and simplistic approach to the many complex issues the force is currently experiencing. Despite the lack of a comprehensive and balanced analysis, Gardiner never sets out to write anything more than a narrative filled with engaging stories about his time as an RCMP officer. His memoir delivers just what the title suggests: a glimpse into the mind of a Mountie.



Pinboy

George Bowering

Toronto: Cormorant Books, 2012.
320 pp. \$29.95 cloth.

DAVID TRACEY

Vancouver

Pinboy is a tender account of an adolescent penis growing up in the South Okanagan around 1950. Because it is attached to a gawky, bright, funny boy who loved reading enough to carry cowboy novels or sports magazines in the back pocket of his corduroys, and because that boy grew up to be the first Poet Laureate of Canada, naturally we're interested. A tad daunted, perhaps, if we've never read him, because isn't a Poet Laureate supposed to get all erudite and overwrought and determined to wrench the deepest significance out of what might seem like everyday occurrences to us lesser attuned beings?

Thankfully, not when it's British Columbia's own George Bowering, as fiercely democratic a literary artist as you could hope to find. He may be the author of dozens of books, winner of two Governor General's Literary Awards, and an Officer of the Order of Canada, but you can leave your dictionary on the shelf and settle in for an amiable tale full of nostalgia and humour. A tale not just about a penis, of course, although it seems that way, given its prominence in the life of a fifteen-year-old trying to be a good boy while a hormonal tide floods within him.

The title refers to one of Bowering's odd jobs as a "skinny, hopeless jerk" setting pins in the Oliver Bowling Lanes while secretly ogling the bodies of the female customers, including some of his teachers. Curiously, after the

first chapter we never go back inside the bowling alley; instead, the book is spent largely outdoors under the baking Okanagan sun. We learn a lot about summer life in the orchards picking apples and peaches and hiking in the dry hills looking out for rattlesnakes and cactus. The action may be hot and sweaty from the fruit picking or occasional sexual encounter, but the scenery is often lovely and a worthy evocation of the region.

Bowering is also deft at describing the landscapes of the bodies of the women fuelling his physical obsessions: his girlfriend, the daughter of a British orchard owner; an enigmatic classmate who mistakes Bowering's noble interest for voyeurism (but may be right after all); and a teacher with a short, wide, but nonetheless muscular body that is athletic enough to be alluring.

A master of self-deprecation, even about his own writing, Bowering's style as a memoirist is often to step back from the scene he's about to depict to explain his own reluctance or inability to capture what it was really like. This is especially so for the sexual episodes in which he dawdles on the page, then tells us he's dawdling, then finally gets into the juicy details of the encounter. "Well, I have to tell you that I don't have any power of imagination," he warns us early on: "I am not recreating any of this stuff. I think it all happened" (23).

That may be so. And George Bowering may be the only boy in history to be ordered to read aloud a Wordsworth poem on Dionysian rites while his teacher introduces him to fellatio. I am ready to believe it, just as I'm ready to believe the rest, as he navigates the tricky path to sexual maturity and embarks on an adulthood in which words and feelings would serve him very well. The formative years

surely helped him develop the skills necessary to write a book recapturing a time long gone in ways that still ring true. It's the best kind of nostalgia – the kind that makes you think wistfully back on your own fifteen-year-old life. It would not work if the author were not still infused with some of that teenager's verve and decency and wit. The boy is still very much a part of the man, and we're all the better off for it.

*Journey with No Maps:
A Life of P.K. Page*

Sandra Djwa

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-
Queens University Press, 2012.
424 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

BARBARA COLEBROOK PEACE
Victoria

“WHO AM I,” asks the narrator in an early poem, “Arras,” by P.K. Page, “or, who am I become...?” (144). It's a question Page was to return to many times in both her literary and visual art. But it wasn't a simple question the way Page posed it, and it didn't make possible a simple answer. Page's thinking about herself and her identity was not the usual sort: she was not asking the question simply to try to situate herself as a woman, a Canadian, or an ambassador's wife, or, indeed, as a poet, a writer, or an artist. Rather, she was asking how “I” bring something into being, asking who is the self who engages in perception, asking about the multiple selves, asking about the relation of the temporal self to eternity, asking about the individual spirit in relation to the unmapped infinite. The challenge for her biographer was to meet Page in that inquiry and yet, at

the same time, to write her life story in a way that was appealing to a reader interested in chronological sequence and in how Page's life's work as a writer and visual artist meshed with her life's events.

As Sandra Djwa brings out this first and fascinating biography of P.K. Page, she locates the question of Page's identity in diverse contexts: in the exciting social history of Canada through a time of two world wars and much change, especially in the lives and careers of women; in the evolution of modernism among Canadian writers and artists; and in the global setting of humanity in the space age.

The biography is the product of more than a decade of work, following Page's invitation to Djwa to undertake the project in 1996. Much earlier, however, in 1970, the relationship of friendship and mutual trust between the two women had its beginnings when Djwa, a professor of English at Simon Fraser University, invited Page to read to her students. It is evident that even before she undertook the project, there had been many years of listening on Djwa's part, at a very deep level, to Page's work. Page gave her biographer carte blanche: “you would be free to interpret as you see fit.” (286). She gave her extensive interviews and complete access to documents: correspondence, diaries, journals, early manuscripts, personal and family photographs, and images of her visual art. It was a great act of trust, especially when one considers that, throughout her work, Page expressed a fear of containment. Would she be, in a sense, confined, defined, limited by the biography?

I think Sandra Djwa's greatest achievement in this biography is that she does the opposite of confining her subject. Instead, by her scrupulous opening of the story to the larger

questions Page was posing; by her sympathetic, non-judgmental and non-intrusive style of narration; and by her frequent inclusion of many voices, especially Page's own voice, she brings about a book that opens door after door in our understanding of Page's essential being and her life's work.

This biography is outstanding for the amount of meticulous research Djwa put into it: the "Notes to Pages" section at the end of the book alone runs to fifty-two pages and, together with the comprehensive bibliography and index, forms about a quarter of the book's length. The way she substantiates the stories with documentary evidence gives the reader total confidence in the factual accuracy of the narrative. Moreover, in matters of interpretation – psychological, literary, or artistic – Djwa's strategy of transparency in laying out the evidence (often interviews or correspondence with Page) gives the reader the chance to see the basis for her view.

One of the interesting features of the biography is the way in which Djwa explores Page's autobiographical and semi-autobiographical writings. She brings her own observations, enters into dialogue with Page, and fills in some gaps in the story where Page said little: for example, her relationship with F.R. Scott or the fact that she did not have children. The result is a book that contains a wealth of hitherto unpublished aspects of Page's life and work. The reader becomes much more aware of the struggles Page faced and overcame. All this is handled with tact, compassion, and respect. Djwa adds to this her erudition as a professor of literature, some insightful close readings of Page's poems, and an ability to place the writings within the context of Page's life story – something that is original and unprecedented.

I come away from the book with many new insights into Page's life and work. It is much to Djwa's credit that she did meet the challenge of engaging with Page's evolving philosophy, her questions about perception and the self, and her Sufism. Admirably, she manages to do this at the same time as sustaining the reader's interest in the story of Page's life, keeping it suspenseful and engaging on an emotional level. One knew from Page's poetry that she had known heartbreak. But because her life was externally so successful, the surprise for the reader may be to discover how much Page had to overcome, her loneliness and discouragement, and her need to find a way with no maps. Here is a biography that is moving, thought-provoking, and visually stunning – one that succeeds in loving the questions themselves.

"Who am I / or who am I become...?" The fact that Page's poem "Planet Earth" was chosen to be put into space by the United Nations is testament to the fact that she became someone who grew beyond the borders of British Columbia or Canada. This timely biography will help readers remember her and will deepen our understanding of her life and work. It deserves to find an international readership and to endure as a fascinating story of one of the great poets of the twentieth century. It is pleasant to imagine that some day, someone in space, in the vast and unmapped universe, may be reading her work – indeed, may be consulting this very biography.

*Patriot Hearts: Inside the
Olympics That Changed a
Country*

John Furlong with Gary Mason

Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre,
2011. 344 pp. \$32.95 cloth.

*Bob Lenarduzzi: A Canadian
Soccer Story*

Bob Lenarduzzi and Jim Taylor

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2011. 224 pp. 40 b&w photos. \$28.95
cloth.

*A Season to Remember: The
Vancouver Canucks' Incredible
40th Year*

Grant Kerr

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2011. 232 pp. 60 colour photos.
\$19.95 paper.

ERIC W. SAGER
University of Victoria

JOHN FURLONG's book is neither an autobiography nor a history of the 2010 Winter Olympics. It is a personal memoir by the CEO of the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the Games (VANOC), written with the assistance of journalist Gary Mason. Since it is not an autobiography, the account of Furlong's life and career before he became involved in the bid for the Olympics is brief (a mere twenty-nine pages), focusing mainly on his youthful enthusiasm for sports prior to his emigration from Ireland to Canada. The memoir offers a highly selective

window onto the administration and promotion of sport as a global capitalist enterprise and as a nationalist mission. The main characters in the story are not the athletes themselves, although many are given enthusiastic recognition. The main characters are the builders of the Games – a huge cast of Canadian and international sports administrators, sponsors, corporation presidents, media executives, politicians, entertainment impresarios, and thousands of volunteers. Furlong is both generous in acknowledging the contributions of VANOC's many partners and blunt in identifying perceived weakness and error. He is particularly aggrieved by some of the media coverage, which, from the author's perspective, turned glitches into national disasters.

Furlong takes us into the high-pressure world of sports administration at this level: a complex management process is undertaken in a fish bowl, under the intense and unforgiving gaze of media, politicians, and taxpayers. The CEO is trying to coordinate a vast array of unstable elements, each with its own agenda: international sports federations, the International Olympic Committee, the Canadian Olympic Committee, three levels of government, television corporations, his own management team, and an element beyond human control but requiring rapid remedial efforts nonetheless – the weather. This is a world ruled by events both unexpected and tragic. The CEO can cope with a symphony orchestra that refuses to perform and even a hydraulic arm that fails during the opening ceremonies. He can do nothing to soften the grief following the death of an athlete in a training run on the luge course.

For the historian of the future who attempts to write a history of these Games, or the history of sport

as capitalist enterprise in the early twenty-first century, this book will be a valuable primary source. For what it includes and what it omits, Furlong's account is deeply revealing. The Cultural Olympiad merits a mere two paragraphs (254-55). The importance of Aboriginal construction companies is acknowledged, but Furlong ignores the role of Aboriginal leaders in the initiation of the bid for the Games, and readers learn nothing about the debates over the Games' appropriation of Aboriginal cultural images. Protesters appear briefly, but one hears nothing of the debates they unleashed over ballooning security costs, the Sea-to-Sky Highway, Vancouver's notorious levels of poverty and homelessness, and whether or not low-cost housing would be a Games legacy. The naysayers are either silenced or briefly caricatured, their opposition drowned out by the tsunami of Canadian patriotism that sustains Furlong and guides his vision for the Games. "The Olympics That Changed a Country," trumpets the book's title. "Our mission was to touch the soul of the country," declares its author (96). Hyperbole, to be sure; but perhaps no lesser motives can explain the commitment, individual and collective, that allowed this project to occur. Furlong's book is valuable not least because it is testimony to the power of sport to equate itself with national interest and national identity.

Bob Lenarduzzi's *Canadian Soccer Story*, when read together with Furlong's memoir, offers a reminder of the peculiar historical impact of capitalist sport and its alliance with media capitalism in Canada. Where a Winter Olympics or an ice hockey final can saturate the media and claim to represent "patriot hearts," the most popular team sport in the world, and also in Canada in terms of the

number of participants, allows itself no discursive claim to identity with the nation. Lenarduzzi has never claimed to touch the soul of Canada; he played football, he coached and managed teams, and he promoted his sport. Yet he tells us much more than does Furlong about the world of professional athletes and the commitment that participation can inspire; and his sport has as much to tell us about Canada and our sports culture as does athletics or hockey.

"I will talk soccer with anyone" (9), Lenarduzzi tells us, and so he shares stories that are "too heartwarming and funny to be locked away in memories" (10). There was Willie Johnston, who once preceded a corner kick by buying a greenhouse from a nearby fan; and Robbie Campbell, who dumped his unwanted pasta behind Lenarduzzi's mother's stereo speakers; and the Whitecaps' coach, who blamed the team's slump on the "poisonous" effect of sex. There are larger stories too, born of their time and place: the game in St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1985, at which the Canadian team defeated Honduras and earned a place in the World Cup finals; and the last game ever played by a Canadian team at the World Cup, which fans back home could not watch because the television broadcast was pre-empted by *Sesame Street*; and the World Cup qualifying matches at Swangard Stadium, where the majority of the crowd cheered for the *visiting* team.

Lenarduzzi takes us from the original Whitecaps of the North American Soccer League, to the Vancouver 86ers of the Canadian Soccer League, to the new Whitecaps of Major League Soccer in our own time. He is a genial and witty guide, but humour evaporates when he comes to analyze the sorry condition of the men's national program today, the

structural problems of the Canadian Soccer Association, and our amateurish approach to player development. While our American neighbours invest vast sums in a campaign to win the World Cup, Canadians take themselves out of the world's major sports event and do not even seem to care. The women's program offers more hope, grounded in both numbers and an unparalleled history of dedication and determination. But here, too, Lenarduzzi's analysis is sobering: the needs are the same as for the men's program. "If we stand still, we're doomed" (199). Lenarduzzi gives us a very enjoyable read, some cogent analysis of the state of his sport, and a very Canadian story.

Grant Kerr, journalist and hockey coach, has produced a fine gift book for fans of the Vancouver Canucks. If you want an expert guide to the team, the players, and their progress through the 2010-11 season, here it is. If you want an account of the riots in Vancouver that followed defeat to the Boston Bruins, or if you want any insight into the dysfunctional corporate cartel that dominates this sport at the professional level, look elsewhere. This is a book for fans, beautifully illustrated and well produced, as one has come to expect from Harbour Publishing.

Here are three very Canadian sports books, each with its own merits. Preferences will vary, but if I had to choose a pleasurable read, I would take the memoirs of the Italian-Canadian kid from East Vancouver who became one of Canada's finest soccer players.

