

with the history of British Columbia is the likely cause, although the editor did consult archival and cartographic authorities in the province.

Interesting as is the text, the work's glory and its true value lies in the water colours that Porcher produced during his travels. The University of Alaska Press deserves all praise for reproducing fifty-four of these sketches at a very high standard. Porcher's paintings are notable for their fine

sense of colour. They convey the atmosphere and mood of the places they depict. By including human beings and animals in movement, Porcher gave a dramatic, personal touch to the scenes he painted. Particularly fine and historically significant are the paintings of New Westminster (facing, 64), Fort Simpson and Clinton (facing, 104), and "Nahritti" village on Hope Island (facing, 140). Porcher's water colours deserve wide circulation.

*Geography of British Columbia:  
People and Landscapes in Transition*

Brett McGillivray

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000.  
235 pp. Illus., maps. \$39.95 paper

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THE *Geography of British Columbia: People and Landscapes in Transition* is intended as a textbook describing the geography of this "vertical landscape" in a comprehensive manner. It supersedes an earlier, similar book, *British Columbia: Its Resources and People*, edited by Charles N. Forward (Western Geographical Series, vol. 22). Brett McGillivray borrows from the format of the earlier compilation but, as the single author of this text, has created a more pleasing and more easily read treatment of British Columbia's geography. Well written in one voice, it doesn't suffer from the somewhat disjointed assembly of Forward's book. Still, McGillivray is aware of the necessity of omitting some topics and only touching on others.

Both Forward and McGillivray's books take a similar approach, beginning with a chapter providing regional profiles, although some of the regions have been redefined. This is one of the idiosyncrasies of regional geography: there are different and changing views. Unfortunately, the transitory regional names and boundaries don't lend themselves to spatial comparisons, although a full-page version of Figure 1.2 – showing the eight regions – could have been combined with census subdivisions, thus allowing for such analysis.

McGillivray's book begins with a general overview and introduction to regional geography. Chapter 2 deals with physical processes and, for the non-geographer, explains the basic tectonic and volcanic processes that

affect British Columbia's land forms, as well as the forces of weathering, erosion, and climate. Missing in this part is an overview of the biogeoclimatic system of landscape classification used by the Ministry of Forests, which would have provided a more satisfying picture of vegetation zones than does McGillivray's very generalized, short description of soils and vegetation (35-36). On the other hand, in Chapter 3 McGillivray offers far too much detail on living with risks. A few figures and tables, such as those pertaining to flood plains and hazards related to streams on the Squamish Highway (as well as general types of avalanches), although topical, could have been expended in favour of a full-page map of British Columbia (in Chapter 1) showing mountains and plateaux. A map showing major highways and rail lines would also be in order.

McGillivray, to his credit, devotes an entire chapter to European exploration, another to First Nations, and still another to Asians. While it is always difficult to leave out particular ethnic groups, these chapters offer important background to current, controversial cultural relations. The second half of the book offers a more traditional and topical treatment of the economic geography of the province, and it includes chapters on forestry, fishing, metal mining, energy, agriculture, water, tourism, single-resource communities, and urbanization. The final chapter (on urbanization) is intended as a kind of summation, reinforcing some of the concepts discussed in earlier chapters.

*Geography of British Columbia* is well laid out with a balance of maps, photographs, graphs, and tables – all of which form a rich resource. The references for each chapter, including Web sites, are nicely presented. There is a

glossary at the end that explains more fully some of the geographic terms that appear in the book. Although they do not detract from the book's overall usefulness, there are some flaws throughout the text. For example, the chapter on tourism unfortunately presents outdated regions and data. High Country is no longer the name for the tourism region centred on Kamloops, which is now connected with the Okanagan and is referred to as the Thompson-Okanagan. The names of the tourism regions are written in lower case in the text, which may confuse the reader (Figure 14.4). The schema of tourism regions – now only six, not nine – is a reminder of the vagaries of government changes and the need to date such maps. One major error must be noted: the lowest discharge rate of most rivers does not occur, as McGillivray states on page 184, at the times of highest demand. For example, the Thompson River at Kamloops is at its highest discharge from late spring through early summer. Demand is highest during Kamloops's hot summers but has no impact on the water supply. Here and there, *Geography of British Columbia* suffers from repetition. For example, figures could have been combined (Figure 11.7 with Figure 11.3, and Figure 11.1 with Figure 11.6), and text, especially the chapter on urbanization, could have dwelt more on urban structure and problems – the concern of 80 per cent of British Columbia's population – rather than recapping themes already covered. Unfortunately, McGillivray prognosticates about the immediate future, which is often subject to changing trends and reversals. For example, since the book's publication, the Sechelt First Nation has pulled out of treaty negotiations.

But most of the flaws consist of minor slips and typos. The Okanagan

region does not extend to the Fraser Canyon, as is shown in Figure 1.6. On the same map, Osoyoos is misplaced. Vernon does not belong on the map of the Kootenay region (Figure 1.7). The “modified Mediterranean climate” does not apply to the whole Coast but only to a small stretch around Victoria (31). Cherry Point Refinery is not in Puget Sound but on the Strait of Georgia (157). First Nations did domesticate dogs, and at least one crop – tobacco – was cultivated (169). The Provincial Museum and the Royal British Columbia Museum are the same institution (191). Typos include “Wells Gray Park” (23), “Wenatchee” (39), “Ootsa reservoir” (161), “Courtenay” (217), “Michel” (219), “Fort d’Original” (Figure 4.2, 58), and “Natural gas pipeline” (Figure 11.6).

Missing is a full-page overview map of British Columbia. McGillivray recognizes this and encourages students to acquire a map to use with the book; I recommend the Tourism BC road map of the province. Unfortunately,

there is no up-to-date atlas of the province, but A.L. Farley’s *Atlas of British Columbia* (1979) can be found in most libraries and is still a good resource from a historical point of view.

But there is a great deal to recommend this text. It is the best book on British Columbia’s geography to date and will, I hope, maintain its value as a text for many years. For best use in the classroom, however, it needs to be supplemented with other materials. It should be used as an overview in conjunction with other important books and articles on British Columbia, which McGillivray has utilized extensively. The Internet and films are also recognized sources of additional information.

A student workbook to accompany the text would be a welcome addition. Despite its minor problems, as an instructor who has used this text in a course on BC geography, I have found it very satisfactory. I hope that a future edition will fix those pesky errors and keep it up to date.

## *Radical Roots: The Shaping of British Columbia*

Harold Griffin

Vancouver: Broadway Printers, 1999. 258 pp. Illus.  
(Betty Griffin, 403-2222 Bellevue, West Vancouver)

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**A**S THE FOUNDING EDITOR of *The People*, the weekly newspaper of the BC branch of the Communist Party of Canada, the late Harold (Hal) Griffin made a key contribution to British Columbia’s radical past. After Hal’s death, his

widow Betty brought *Radical Roots* through to publication. The result is a book that deals with a diverse number of topics and takes the reader through British Columbia’s past from prehistory to the present. Readers will benefit from this well written and