

those with an interest in issues of racism and the construction of racial identities, the history of tourism, the role of the state, and environmental history. The essays centre on the parts of the American West of most interest to British Columbians – the Northwest and the Pacific Coast. And one essay is specifically about British Columbia: John Lutz's study of the "Importance of Place" in the social construction of race. The volume offers a useful introduction to the work of a number of relatively new scholars who, in the last few years, have published major studies in the history of the American West. These authors include James Brooks (*Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands, 1660-1880*);

Chris Friday (*Organizing Asian American Labor: The Pacific Coast Canned-Salmon Industry, 1870-1942*); Hal Rothman (*Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West*); Paul Hirt (*A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests Since the Second World War*); and Joseph E. Taylor III (*Making Salmon: An Environmental History of the Northwest Fisheries Crisis*). Only one essay in *Power and Place* focuses on gender, a curious fact given its importance as one of the categories of analysis that defines the "new western history" as "new." This is, nonetheless, an important book that merits the attention of readers interested in thinking about British Columbia's past from a comparative perspective.

*Women Who Made the News:
Female Journalists in Canada, 1880-1945*

Marjory Lang

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.
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THIS LIVELY, intelligent history of Canada's women journalists is a pleasure to read; it is packed with fascinating information and provocative speculation. While few press histories acknowledge their significance, media women have been powerful influences, "integrally involved in defining normative roles for Canadian women – and not only for anglophone middle-class women like themselves but also ... for working class and immigrant women who looked to the

media for cues as they too were swept into the mainstream of consumer culture" (7). While the scribbling sisterhood occasionally laboured as journalists and editors earlier, the late nineteenth-century press's turn to commercial advertising and female consumers created unprecedented opportunity. Pioneers, often well educated, single, Canadian-born refugees from their sex's limited employment options, encountered active resistance even as they contributed to newspaper

profitability. Created in 1904, the Canadian Women's Press Club (CWPC) (the Media Club of Canada, 1971-93) invoked the strong sense of community and commitment to women's advance that typified so many journalists. Its "strong sense of making history" (20) served it well, especially in the lifetime of the suffrage generation. Today it has served Marjory Lang and other Canadians well by allowing the telling of an extraordinary story of initiative and dedication.

Chapter 1, which sets forth the significance and the demographics of female journalists, is followed by eight chapters and an epilogue. Chapter 2 introduces key figures among the thirty-five "women editors, reporters, and journalists" reported in the 1891 census (29). While many were help-mates to other family members, other such "new women," like the globe-trotting Sara Jeannette Duncan, struck out on their own, attracting both envy and criticism for their supposed deviation from respectability. Anxious for larger markets, newspapers reluctantly embraced and meagrely repaid new recruits. A mix of British and, more often, American influences, Canadian papers and magazines soon recognized the sales potential of strong female columnists. Their popularity did not, however, ensure a decent income for most women writers, who regularly cherished ambitions as novelists and poets.

Chapter 3 considers the CWPC and its "quest for professional status" (65). The first nationally organized women's press club in the world, its intention was to have well educated female professionals serve the public good. Such sentiments reflected the feminist sympathies of many of its early members. Indeed, the CWPC provided key actors, including Nellie McClung, to

the suffrage struggle. Later generations of presswomen were hard put to maintain that early ardour, which, like the quest for professional status, faltered in the post-suffrage decades. Unionization offered another route to community and power, but employer opposition and their own mixed feelings kept women a minor force in Canada's newspaper industry.

Chapter 4 employs a lifecycle approach to charting the "patchwork quilt" of domestic and paid work that journalists, like working women in general, sought to maintain. A model of professionalism founded in male experience, albeit often a highly romanticized version, did not readily serve women. Married women had particular difficulties, regularly condemned by male colleagues, and sometimes by their single sisters, for "double-dipping." While a certain number of women, like Cora Hind of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, created lives of influence and comfort, more grew old with few financial resources. Not surprisingly, as Chapter 5 tells us, many journalists made their careers writing for "women's sections." Often dismissed by critics suspicious of female and popular enthusiasms, these pages exhibited an unprecedented interest in female lives, both domestic and public. Sometimes feminist, especially in the early days, they supplied critical opportunities for paid employment. As Chapter 6 suggests, these sections regularly tackled the changing roles of women. Experts in everything from beauty to child psychology, women such as Kate Aitken coached readers on the critical consumption of modern information and products. Such advice helped bankroll newspapers.

Chapter 7 recalls the history of the often vilified society section. Influential in the establishment of social rank,

these pages provided many writers' bread and butter. They also inspired nausea among those who recognized pretension even while they celebrated or, more occasionally (as with Madge Macbeth), lampooned it. Not surprisingly many pioneers, as Chapter 8 suggests, turned with relief to recording and contributing to the reform efforts of turn-of-the-century women's clubs such as the National Council of Women. For a few, their enthusiasm proved a springboard to elective office; but, as feminist inspiration dissipated, the club world lost much of its reason for existing and so, too, its interest for thoughtful presswomen. For those committed to social change, no ready alternative to the support provided by activist women's associations emerged. Elsewhere discrimination remained the order of the day, as may be seen in Chapter 9's description of the continuing barriers in the conventional male specialties of "war, politics, economics and finance, and general reporting" (249). While some, like Genevieve Lipsett-Skinner, challenged such haughty male preserves as the

Parliamentary Press Gallery, they had few successors.

As Lang's Epilogue makes only too clear, the fate of the CWPC mirrored the fate of presswomen. Once the activist heart of Canada's female journalists, its beat slowed as ambitious young women rejected older same-sex communities. In the course of their search for equality, however, they also lost an earlier generation's history of struggle. Only with the renewal of feminism at the end of the twentieth century would Canada's female journalists begin to recover and appreciate their predecessors. Only one regret marred my appreciation of this volume: E. Pauline Johnson, the Mohawk-English Canadian writer, was a member of the scribbling sisterhood but she does not appear in this volume. That omission cost Lang an important opportunity to consider how race politics shaped the writers who sought to influence the ways that other Canadians lived. In every other way, *Women Who Make the News* provides a crucial reminder of how much we lose when our history is not remembered.