

munity and its continuing socialist legacy reflected in the islanders' creation of Canada's first consumer co-op in 1909, their adherence to the Socialist Party and Social Democratic Party of Canada and, later, the Communist Party, and their active involvement in logging and fishing unions.

Wild is adept in her description of Malcolm Island's social life in the 1930s and 1940s. As one resident reported, "There was no church, no policeman, no beer parlours, and no trouble in those days" (p. 159). But this ideal situation was not to last. In 1951, electricity and, five years later, telephone service, helped change the island. Organized religion in the form of coastal missionaries arrived in 1948 (the original Finnish inhabitants had been rabidly anti-clerical). The first church, which was interdenominational, opened in 1961, and the RCMP arrived in 1965. Television became common, as did booze at Saturday-night dances. Each day high-school students took the ferry to school in Port McNeill. Even so, until the arrival of the American "hippies," "everybody knew everybody." "When you saw a man coming down the street," one informant reported, "you knew where he was coming from, you knew where he was going, and you knew what he was thinking about" (p. 175). The newcomers changed all that; but, over the years, tensions between the "old" and the "new" residents have eased. Today, about 750 people make their home on Malcolm island.

Sointula: Island Utopia is a popular rather than an academic account. Although the text is marred by a number of historical mistakes and spelling errors in the Finnish names, it is both interesting and readable, with the post-1905 period being particularly illuminating. The photographs, both historical and present-day, are excellent, giving the reader a real sense of the island and its fascinating history.

University of British Columbia

J. DONALD WILSON

Making Law, Order, and Authority in British Columbia, 1821-1871, by Tina Loo. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1994. xii, 240 pp. Illus. \$18.95 paper.

This book analyses the deployment of British law and the fashioning of social identities in nineteenth-century British Columbia. Working with court records and ideas from social theory and legal history, Tina

Loo argues that colonial British Columbia was shaped by “a discourse of classical or laissez-faire liberalism” (3). She claims that non-native British Columbians were concerned foremost with their economic fortunes, that they and the colonial government sought a social order based on liberal principles of free trade and individual rights, and that the institution of law was central to such aims. She compiles her case from seven legal vignettes, starting with the Hudson’s Bay Company’s system of paternalism and ‘club law’ in the Cordillera and ending with a stimulating sketch of how liberal discourse mediated colonial identity and Native-white relations. But the bulk of the book is about the gold rushes of the late 1850s and 1860s, and Loo develops a bold argument about law and individualism.

When the Hudson’s Bay Company became the colonial proprietors of Vancouver Island in 1849, she argues, it abided by its monopolistic fur trade practices, filling state offices from its own ranks, selling land and provisions at a prohibitively high price, and taking the best land itself, thereby inciting protest. She views colonists’s petitions to the British government as yearnings for an unfettered socio-economic order and argues that this liberal sentiment matured during the gold rushes, when both miners and the colonial government identified the need for law and order, especially standardized rules of exchange and the protection of individual rights. Loo accepts the popular image of the gold fields as harsh, isolated places, where a pidgin of competition and calamity was spoken, rather than a language of community and tradition, but she challenges the impression which usually accompanies this image, that rampant individualism spilled over into lawlessness. Her data suggest that miners used the courts rather than guns to settle their differences; judges tried far more cases of breach of contract than charges of theft or bodily harm.

Loo probes this desire for the rule of law with some fascinating legal case material. She argues that law was more than a government tool for regulating British Columbia’s extemporaneous, geographically fractured market economy. Miners and settlers “took an active and ever-watchful interest” (89) in the administration of law and debated its meaning with judges, arguing over the importance of different kinds of evidence and pitting the validity of improvised gold rush ways against textbook rules. Law was a powerful medium of social identification and the courts became primary symbols of a capitalist-liberal order modeled on the aspirations of the individual. The “colony’s great distances and the localism it spawned were overcome by investing in courts,” Loo explains; yet judges “could not be deaf to local voices”

and miners viewed law “as an outgrowth of human nature — the natural outcome of the pursuit of self-interest” (57, 130, 75).

This book is a sweeping, tantalizing, conceptually sophisticated re-interpretation of the colonial period and should create great debate within British Columbia. Liberalism was a basic feature of Victorian imperialism, yet Loo is virtually the first historian to discuss its purchase in colonial British Columbia in any depth. She is interested in questions of hegemony (the term under which ideological frameworks of collective action and belief are fashioned) and challenges the assumption, implicit in much writing on British Columbia, that law and state formation are simply about domination. If she is right, economy, society, law and the colonial state were entangled in a productive four-way relationship. Aspects of British law were recast in British Columbian mould and law “created meaning by shaping the way people saw the world and acted in it” (124). The moral of her story is that while many injustices have been perpetrated under the banner of law, “the reproduction of relations of domination is not straightforward because the power of the law is not totalizing” (162). For Loo (and for me), power is relational, not a unitary force that is simply possessed by some people and imposed on others through law or by other means.

Loo writes seductively about law and liberalism, and makes ingenious use of a hitherto neglected archival source. But is she right about British Columbia? I have two main reservations about her thesis.

First, I am not convinced that she has sufficient evidence to ground her claim that miners and settlers strove to turn themselves into a society of rational, liberal-minded individualists. There are some marvellous images in this book — of Judge Begbie transporting the hefty trappings of the colonial state (legal tomes and court robes) over the Cascade mountains, and of miners packing frontier courtrooms, adding theatre to due process. Yet this book leaves me a little cold, with an analytical grasp of colonial litigation, but without much sense of a social life in the gold fields or of the dramas and emotions that people took to court. Loo works through lawyers’s, judges’s and newspaper editors’s accounts, but we hear relatively little from miners and settlers themselves. She quotes from only a small selection of their journals, reminiscences and correspondence. Other scholars, who have worked assiduously with such sources, have depicted a more violent, ethnically divided, definitively masculine and expedient world than Loo sees.

Loo acknowledges that mining camps were often composed of people from the same country or county, but she insists that social

relationships were fleeting and underpinned by economic self-interest. This argument is surely too simple. The gold fields did not encourage the recomposition of kin and community, but ethnicity remained an important medium of identity and estrangement. I doubt that American, British, Canadian, Chinese and European immigrants all understood British law in the same way, or that economic self-interest governed social life entirely. Loo rarely takes us out of the courtroom and I am apprehensive about the way she imputes a collective liberal psychology from her legal data. Court ledgers obviously convey images of anonymity and individualism because they recount names, not faces and accents. And court proceedings were rationalizations of social experience. How were civil suites hatched, and court debates retold, around camp fires or in saloons? Law probably did play a more central place in the making of British Columbia than we have realized, but law is not a transparent window onto social identities. Loo does not say whether her legal data can be broken down along ethnic lines, but an analysis of the ethnic dynamics of the gold fields, and of how many miners settled in British Columbia, would be revealing. I am thus uneasy about Loo's thesis because it is not elaborated from enough vantage points.

And second, there are some remarkable silences in this book. Principally, Loo only barely acknowledges the overlaps between liberalism, racism, and colonialism. The position of Native people in the liberal equation is not addressed until the last chapter, where she suggests that adherence to liberal principles destabilized the racist distinction between a civilized, colonial self and a savage, Indian other. The rule of law was a mark of British civility and superiority over the Indian, but it also required British Columbians to treat everyone as equal before the law, thus threatening the standards of difference on which colonial identity was built. The western liberal tradition still struggles with this tension between the recognition and disavowal of difference — between localism and universalism — and Loo concludes by noting that Native groups now engaged in land claim trials and negotiations are appealing to the egalitarian promise of liberalism, arguing over the universality of rights and shunning claims to special status.

This leap into the present is emblematic of the one-sidedness of her account of liberalism. Why have Native peoples been in the courts? Because there never has been equality before the law in British Columbia. British law has been instrumental in the dispossession and subjugation of Native people, and the pursuit of self-interest was far

more brutal than Loo lets on. Miners dislodged Native groups and the colonial government protected settlers's claims to Native land. If a liberal-legal culture emerged in British Columbia, we must acknowledge that it denied Native people any proprietary interest in land and produced a reserve system. Loo says hardly anything about land policy, Indian policy, or the Native-white contact process. She is interested in capital and labour, competition and the market, not in property relations, which is surprising, since the right to private property is a basic tenet of liberal philosophy.

But it is not just these silences, or Loo's handling of the court record, that makes this book so tantalizing. Underlying her interest in British Columbia is a reasoned belief in the power and legitimacy of the liberal tradition. There is an idealistic, almost ghostly, ring to her thesis. She draws us into the utilitarian world of the individual and the market — a world that British Columbians are still trying to further and protect. I look at the British Columbian past and present and see social spaces washed with relations of domination — spaces girded by a legal-colonial calculus of power.

Loo has prepared some of the basic conceptual groundwork for a much-needed analysis of the articulation of liberalism and colonialism in British Columbia. Debate about this book should cut an important trail in that direction.

University of St. Andrews, Scotland

DANIEL CLAYTON

The Klondike Stampede, by Tappan Adney, with a new introduction by Ken Coates. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994. xxii, 470 pp. Illus. \$19.95 paper.

In July, 1897, a young journalist named Tappan Adney was commissioned by *Harper's Weekly* "to proceed to Dawson to furnish news and pictures of the new (Klondike) gold-fields" (p.9). The first Alaska steamships bringing reports of sensational gold strikes had docked in Seattle and San Francisco a month earlier and, with the help of major newspaper chains, the news spread like wildfire throughout depression-torn North America and Europe. Armed with two cameras, many rolls of film in sealed tins, and a keen reporter's eye, Adney caught a northerly bound steamer from San Francisco on August 9th. During the next ninety-two days, he interviewed the men he met and