

offered by John Wadland.² To the end of this book Laing remains an interesting character but does not become a rounded personality, as some aspects of his activities are passed over much too quickly.

One such activity arose from Laing's interest as a young man in a species of wildlife that tends to be ignored by other naturalists. Nowadays the hog is, if not endangered, then certainly threatened, unless, of course, it can be preserved by the boys from Porsche. But Laing knew the beast well before it became a cult item. In 1915 he rode his Harley-Davidson, which he named "Barking Betsy," from New York to San Francisco. The account that he wrote of the journey, entitled "Transcontinentalizing or Joy of the Road," was one of his many "books" that was never published. The Harley-Davidson Motor Company felt that it was too long to run in its monthly magazine, *Enthusiast*. In its letter of rejection the Milwaukee Company did note, however, that the demand for power had become so urgent of late that the engineering department had finally perfected a 74 cubic inch model "that would make old Betsy look like a mere weakling."³ And so it did. But even in 1915 the Harley had its mystique and, while the male students were sceptical, a number of the young ladies from his art school in New York wanted to accompany Laing on his journey. Betsy's rigid frame, murderous swept-back bars and suicide shift must have made "transcontinentalizing" a touch uncomfortable at times. Yet, even then, the classic V-twin engine was reliable enough to take him from coast to coast and, booting across the great American desert, Laing surely knew the meaning of the words "live to ride" long before they gained currency in the biker fraternity.

Simon Fraser University

ROBIN FISHER

² John Henry Wadland, *Ernest Thompson Seton: Man in Nature and the Progressive Era 1880-1915* (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 447-51.

³ Harley-Davidson Motor Co. to Hamilton M. Laing, 30 March 1922, H. M. Laing Papers, Add Ms 1900, Box 16, Provincial Archives of British Columbia.

The Chinese Connection, Getting Plugged In To Pacific Rim Real Estate, Trade and Capital Markets, by Michael Goldberg. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985.

The objective of Goldberg's book is to analyze the behaviour of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs. Goldberg hopes that this will contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurial behaviour in general and to the

development of strategies to improve access to the fast-growing Pacific Rim markets.

The volume begins with a short discussion of trends in the Pacific Rim countries. This is followed by a general discussion of the nature of Chinese society and overseas entrepreneurs. Chinese businesses, according to Goldberg, are characterized by small-scale, centralized decision making, family control, flexibility, financial acumen and reliance on trust. Overseas Chinese have traditionally filled the role of entrepreneurs — a function shunned by indigenous populations. Their economic success resulted in indigenous populations discriminating against them. Consequently, overseas Chinese feel insecure in the host countries.

Following the general discussion, Goldberg summarizes the results of over eighty interviews with Chinese real estate investors in Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. Investment flows, decision-making criteria and methods of investing are discussed. Interview results reveal a diversity of characteristics. Hong Kong entrepreneurs are influenced by the lease renewal question. They are interested in secure investments in regions where families reside. Singapore investors are less security conscious and rely more on real estate brokers than family. Bangkok entrepreneurs are also interested in diversification. Overall, the results indicate the significance of personal connections and reluctance to deal with strangers.

The book concludes with a discussion of the policy implication of changes in the world economy. The shift to information-based activities, the role of “capital circuits” and the importance of cities are emphasized. Goldberg identifies means of encouraging immigration of Chinese entrepreneurs such as access to education and improved transportation. He emphasizes that Canada should concentrate on areas of comparative advantages such as exporting expertise in resource development.

Some of Goldberg’s observations and policy proposals, such as exporting resource development expertise, are interesting. There are, however, a number of important issues which are not addressed. Goldberg assumes, for example, that increased foreign investment in real estate is good for the Canadian economy even though many analysts emphasize that this type of investment is unproductive and does not compensate for the weakness in industrial entrepreneurship relative to mercantile entrepreneurship which plagues the Canadian economy. Goldberg at least owes it to his readers to discuss this controversial issue.

The book also suffers from lack of continuity. The reader gets the feeling that Goldberg added chapters to turn an interesting research

paper into a book. The chapter on the Pacific Rim economy contains information which is irrelevant to the study, such as the number of telephones per capita. The chapter on the overseas Chinese comprises largely quotes and data from several other studies. Why bother printing it? The final chapters on changes in the world economy and policy suggestions for the Canadian economy bear little relation to the actual core of Goldberg's study. Nonetheless, Goldberg's book addresses an important issue for British Columbia. It contains some useful insights on the nature of Chinese entrepreneurs and economic development. It also contains an impressive bibliography which any researcher on Pacific Rim issues will find invaluable.

Simon Fraser University

THOMAS GUNTON

School Wars — The Assault on B.C. Education, by Crawford Kilian.
Vancouver: New Star Books, 1985.

Crawford Kilian's *School Wars* is, as he describes it, "a personal book about a public institution in crisis" and a book that presents one account of the events that have led to the recent turmoil in British Columbia education. Kilian, a teacher at Capilano College and education columnist for the *Vancouver Province*, served as a North Vancouver school trustee from 1980 to 1982 and is, in his own words, not "a friend to the Social Credit Government or sympathetic to its priorities."

Believing obviously that the pen is mightier than the sword — and, indeed, he wields it sometimes with the subtlety of a blunt instrument — Kilian has set out in this 241-page volume to catalogue the evils that have befallen public education since the introduction of the government's restraint legislation in 1982 and to indict government leaders for their "incompetence and malice." As he puts it: "In three years, the Socreds have thrown a major social institution into chaos. Careers have been ruined, money has been wasted on a titanic scale, and the whole atmosphere of British Columbia social life has been poisoned."

Government attempts to control educational spending in the 1980s and to reduce dramatically the number of public sector workers are historically grounded, Kilian explains, and may be traced to the reactionary attitudes found in certain elements of the business community in the 1930s as well as to ever-present currents of anti-intellectualism within the provincial character itself. In addition, recent government attacks on the schools,