

mise "the delights of Rural England at one-tenth the cost." Sports, including a revival of polo, dances, a riding club "with a pack of real foxhounds," the Kalamalka Players, two private schools, the Mackies' Vernon Preparatory School for Boys and St. Michael's School for Girls, All Saints Church and Bishop's Garth, the residence of the Anglican bishop of Kootenay, all contributed to maintain and reinforce the British atmosphere cherished by the residents of Coldstream and their friends in Vernon.

The thirties was for the District a decade of "depression and disillusionment" and by 1939 "Coldstream's elitist society was disintegrating," "the valley of dreams when the fruit trees were planted had . . . become the valley of shattered illusions. The Arcadian life of early times had become a life of hard work and worry." War brought heavy enlistments and new anxieties but, in common with the country at large, Coldstream and Vernon prospered. The postwar years were years of rapid change as the Anglo-Scots community of the past gave way to a multicultural society. Then, after 1965, the provision of a new water supply for the Vernon Irrigation District made Coldstream "the fastest growing area in the North Okanagan" and "Vernon's fastest growing suburb." Though Coldstream still doggedly retained its independence as a rural district it had become "for its residents what it had been to their predecessors, 'second to none.'"

This is "local history" as it should be written, thoroughly researched, admirably documented, tightly organized. There is a useful name index, seven interesting maps and a collection of well-chosen photographs that admirably supplement the text in explaining the nature of the society that evolved in the North Okanagan. Coldstream is peculiarly fortunate in its historian, for Dr. Ormsby writes out of a lifetime of knowledge of the community where she grew up and still lives. She writes with both sympathy and insight and makes every sentence contribute its full weight to her narrative. My only regret is that she has confined herself to not much more than a hundred pages.

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*Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945*, by Angus McLaren. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990. Pp. 232. \$15.95 paper.

As McLaren reminds us, some of the contemporary debate concerning race, class, and reproduction is nothing new in Canada. The question of who should reproduce has preoccupied some Canadians for generations.

At the beginning of this century, the preoccupation was coupled with the notion that the Canadian race could be improved by social management. For some, the path to progress lay primarily through a changed environment. For others, the answer was to be found chiefly in eugenics. Some people were born defective; therefore, one could expect only so much from public health measures designed to change the environment. In order for public health measures to be effective in improving the race, eugenicists argued that they had to be linked with programs to prevent or discourage the defective from breeding.

Within this framework, McLaren's introductory chapter outlining Francis Galton's ideas and their popularization in England, the United States, and Canada is followed by an examination of three major areas: 1. Dr. Helen MacMurchy's public health work in relationship to hereditarian concerns, primarily during her tenure as head of the maternal and child welfare division in the federal department of health in the 1920s; 2. the impact of hereditarian ideas upon the debates about restrictive immigration policies, legalization of birth control, and passage of sterilization acts in the 1920s and 1930s; and 3. the connection between eugenics and such geneticists as Madge Thurlow Macklin in the 1930s and 1940s. In an epilogue, McLaren concludes that the increasing evidence of the Nazis' eugenic grounds prompted abandonment of public espousal of eugenic programs, while some ideas and practices continued (for instance, sterilization continued in some provinces until the 1970s).

Chief questions for McLaren are: who were the supporters of eugenic theories, and what was the impact of eugenic ideas? The most obvious proponents of hereditarian ideas were the approximately one hundred members of the Eugenics Society of Canada. Although McLaren spends considerable time upon the individuals clearly identified with promoting eugenic solutions to such social ills as poverty and crime, he also examines the various ways assumptions about heredity were articulated by others. Eugenicists thus are defined to include a spectrum of Canadians who manifested varying degrees of commitment to the ideas at different times and for varied reasons. A minority, for instance members of the Eugenics Society, remained steadily committed to effecting their ideas, although, as the birth control debate illustrates, they sometimes differed as to the means. A larger group of political activists, such as Tommy Douglas, temporarily supported eugenic ideas en route to different agendas for dealing with modern social problems. The majority, drawn from Canadians prominent in public health, politics, psychiatry, teaching, social work, and genetics, used the eugenicists' vocabulary and terminology for varied reasons in pro-

moting several programs — mothers' allowances and medical inspection of schools, to name but a few. Despite the apparent broad appeal of some of the eugenicists' ideas, McLaren concludes that they had limited success in implementing their agenda. He attributes this to the fact that they were "always too frightening and too elitist to garner mass support." (p. 169)

One wonders if there could be additional explanations for the impact of eugenicists' programs. Here the reader could be helped by a thorough analysis of those who actively opposed the eugenicists. Public opposition to eugenicists appears to be limited to representatives of the Roman Catholic church, some prominent French Canadians, and a few distinguished members of the medical profession, and it would be useful to know more about that particular opposition. Private opposition to the eugenicists isn't discussed, but it would help to examine the extent and rationale for any passive resistance. At the simplest level, a consideration of birth rates of those who did not share the class and cultural values of the eugenicists might tell us something about the private opposition. Greater analysis of public and private opposition would also enhance the discussion of the shift from eugenics to social welfare arguments and our perspective of the contemporary debate about alternatives to social welfare programs.

McLaren's study is a thought-provoking and disturbing examination of attempts to formula policy in response to fears about change. It serves as a timely reminder that what he calls the "new eugenics" of reproductive technology needs to be placed in the context of earlier times when scientifically trained experts assumed the right to decide who could reproduce. Then the poor and marginal were told not to reproduce; now they don't have access to reproductive technology.

My wish that McLaren could have told us more about some points and a quibble over the gratuitous information about Macklin's weight, height and health (p. 130) are minor objections to an otherwise valuable study of Canadian eugenicists' ideas during the interwar years.

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*Bax<sup>w</sup>bak<sup>w</sup>alanusiwa*. Un récit Haisla / a Haisla story, raconté par / as told by Gordon Robertson. Lincoln, Neville J., John C. Rath, Evelyn Windsor, 1990. *Amerindia*. No. 14. Supplément 3. Pp. xii, 119. \$8.00.

The population of Kitamaat Village, on the Kitimat Arm of the Douglas Channel, is an amalgamation of a number of villages, divided linguistically into two main groups. The majority are from villages near the present