

There are a few errors in the Chinese terms: e.g. Ts'ao-ch'ing (肇慶) should be Chao-ch'ing (Table 2); Jung-yang t'ang (榮陽堂) should be Ying-yang t'ang (榮陽堂) (Appendix A); K'en-ch'in kung-so (懇親公所) should be either Tun-tsung kung-so (敦宗公所) or Lung-hsi t'ang (隴西 - 堂) (Appendix A); Tsu-ying t'ang (萃英堂) should be Ts'ui-ying t'ang (萃英堂) (Appendix B), etc. There are also factual inaccuracies such as the following: Hsiang-shan people should be considered Punti, not as a group separate from the Punti (9, 10); Hsiang-shan people are not considered Szu-i (15); Hsin-ning district was part of Guang-chou prefecture, not Chao-ch'ing prefecture (Table 2); Szu-i hui-kuan no longer existed during the period 1893-1911 since it had changed its name to Kang-chou hui-kuan in 1867 (Table 2); Chinese Six Companies came into existence in 1862, not the late fifties, because it was only then that the sixth company, Ho-ho hui-kuan, came into existence (17); the presidency of the Chinese Six Companies was rotated among five companies from winter 1901 to winter 1902, not monopolized by two hui-kuan as stated in the text (19); hui-kuan did not stop importing presidents from China and began electing local merchants to their presidencies until 1927 (153).

Some of these facts do affect details of the author's interpretation of events although they do not materially affect the basic overview. Despite these blemishes, however, this reviewer feels that the book remains an important contribution to understanding the history of the Chinese communities in the Americas and Hawaii during a crucial period in their development.

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The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History, by Carlos A. Schwantes.
Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989. Pp. xxi, 427. Illus.; maps.

Although he notes that some definitions of the Pacific Northwest have included "western Montana and *even* British Columbia and Alaska" (p. 1, my emphasis), Carlos Schwantes confines his history to the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. *The Pacific Northwest* is apparently the first single-author book-length history treating these three states as a discrete region. Schwantes synthesizes what has already been examined and published: he does not extensively investigate archival sources for new perspectives, and only relatively seldom does he identify the specific sources for particular ideas and facts. In thus addressing an interested general audience rather than academic historians, he speaks to a reader such as I am. For

someone whose approach to the Northwest has been mainly through poetry, fiction, essays, and native mythology, *The Pacific Northwest* engages attention for the themes and means by which Schwantes builds a regional identity (the "interpretation" proposed in the subtitle). Writing about these constructions in *BC Studies* naturally suggests some potential comparisons and contrasts with British Columbia.

Among the broad themes which Schwantes' method of "responsible reductionism" (xix) proposes, the primary one, not surprisingly, is the psychology of hinterland. The economics of supplying raw materials to the industrial heartland reinforces the Northwest's physical and imaginative remoteness from "the centers of economic and political power" (2). This metaphor, equally familiar to readers of British Columbia history, usually carries with it the mythology of a predominantly male brute struggle against rock and tree. Schwantes sets out to resist this "heroic nature-heroic men approach to Pacific Northwest history" (xix). Central to this attempt is his introducing each of his five chronological stages of development with a character portrait intended to define and represent the era. Captain James Cook, for example, expresses the essence of "Isolation and Empire." Less predictably, and more relevant to his unsettling the culture of heroic men, Eliza Spalding and Narcissa Whitman, Protestant missionaries, summarize the good intentions, ethnocentric ignorance, and religious jealousies Schwantes chooses to represent in "The Pioneer's Northwest" (from the 1840s to 1880s). Part IV, despite its evocation of the myth of "progress" (which Schwantes distrusts, but essentially adopts as a structural feature) is anchored by a portrait of May Arkwright Hutton, mining camp cook and author. Her anti-management, pro-worker lobbying (particularly by means of a novel, *The Coeur d'Alenes*, published in 1900) during the Coeur d'Alene mining wars provides a nicely jaundiced female perspective on the rise of a wage labour economy, and the inability of emerging political systems to deal with social injustice.

The impact of a large and militant labour movement, with a prominent female presence, may be one theme that Schwantes' Northwest shares with British Columbia. Other close parallels to the British Columbia narrative would be found in the completion of a transcontinental railway, the economics of the salmon fishery, the culture of the potlatch, and the extensive involvement of Asian immigrants in economic development (and the attendant racist hostility). On the other hand, Manifest Destiny, anti-black legislation, and Washington state's massive military infrastructure have little presence in the B.C. story.

One of Schwantes' most interesting attempts at finding a theme common to the entire region — rain forest or desert — is his argument that all of his Northwest lies “in the mountains' shadow” (7). Climate throughout the region is determined by mountains, and views to the mountains are found almost everywhere. Schwantes detects a psychology of impending wilderness, and notes that transportation systems and economic structures derive from an encounter with mountains. This suggestion of a Northwest mindscape provides a counter to the tendency to conceive of the Northwest in two distinct zones — coastal and interior — but Schwantes is not quite enough of a humanistic geographer to develop and sustain the notion beyond his prefatory chapter.

The “Oregon Territory” once included much of present-day British Columbia, and remained, almost freakishly, “open” to both Americans and British from 1787 to 1846. Although most of Schwantes' dozen and a half references to Canada and British Columbia are incidental and passing, this history of shared occupation (with its shared interest in, and appropriation of native cultures) provides a dimension of regional definition which Schwantes might have profitably pursued. The historical logic that Washington state might have, by virtue of Hudson's Bay Company occupation, become part of Canada may be sustained in the current growth of trans-border regional economic associations based on common interests in Pacific Rim links.

Equally certainly, a British Columbia historian could *not* introduce the last section (“Coming of Age”) of a provincial history with a portrait of a premier, such as Oregon's Governor Tom McCall (1967-75), whose anti-pollution crusades pushed over one hundred environmental protection measures through the state legislature during his first 4½ years in office.

Schwantes' style is not always equal to the interest of his material. Fortunately a tendency to banal phrasing is somewhat alleviated by engaging tangential items and perspectives. In framed boxes, which complement the main text, the reader gets glimpses of Oregon separatism, or of the evolution of Oregon's government from early “wolf meetings” called to organize against predators. I discovered Northwest flour is “soft” and mainly processed in Asia for noodles, and confirmed that utopian communes are a fixture of the Northwest, as of British Columbia.

But because of his “reductionist” format, Schwantes' anecdotes of the bizarre never move quite far enough to turn a glimpse into a tell-tale story. His summaries are so succinct that the most intriguing elements fade in the mist. But Schwantes argues for the populist spirit of his Northwest, especially in the “‘Oregon System’ of direct legislation — the initiative,

referendum and recall — measures” which were largely adopted in Washington and Idaho, and in other states (268), and in many other pieces of socially responsible legislation first introduced in the Northwest and widely imitated elsewhere. Maybe it is in the spirit of this populism that Schwantes answers with a history which is widely accessible and well priced and which will likely reinforce in the Northwest the traditions he sees as central.

Where Schwantes detects a history of Northwest environmental activism, I sense another connection in 1990s political fashion. Certainly several of the notions of Ecotopia (in Joel Garreau’s *Nine Nations of North America*; in poet Gary Snyder’s concept of the Ish nation; in occasional uses of the label Cascadia) necessarily include British Columbia.

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Winter Sports in the West, edited by E. A. Corbet and A. W. Rasporich.

Calgary: The Historical Society of Alberta, 1990. Pp. 148. Illus. \$11.95 paper.

To celebrate the eightieth anniversary of its founding, the Historical Society of Alberta combined resources with the University of Calgary to organize a pre-Olympic symposium whose general theme was the history of sports in western Canada. A published record of its proceedings, co-edited by E. A. Corbet and E. W. Rasporich of the University of Calgary, and containing ten of the papers presented during the conference, is currently available.

Greg Thomas’s essay “Sports and Leisure in the Nineteenth Century Fur Trade” leads off the proceedings. Well written and researched, this essay alone makes the book worth the purchase price. Thomas uses a combination of fact and poetry to evoke for the reader a view of how fur traders used their leisure hours. As one might expect, he notes that snowshoeing, canoeing, horseracing, and dancing were all favourite pastimes. However, he offers some surprises as well. Football, referred to by John McDougall as the “national game of the North-west,” was being played as early as 1734 at Churchill. The first recorded game was held on New Year’s Day and inaugurated a tradition of holiday football at various forts and settlements in the west. The most interesting section of Thomas’s essay evokes the boisterous and reeling swirl of activity that accompanied such colourful local dances as the York Factory Breakdown, the Hudson Bay Jig, and the Polar Bear Walk. Thomas also alludes to the games and dances