

EDITORIAL

LINGERING POLLUTION AT Britannia mine after its closure in 1974; traditional use studies at Splat-sin, a Secwepemc (previously Shuswap) community; the work of an LGBTQ committee in Vancouver civic politics between 2009 and 2014; catch figures for BC marine fisheries between 1873 and 2011; and a memoir of a career spent writing about East Asians in British Columbia. Here, in the topics considered in this issue, we see something of the glories and the challenges involved in the production of an interdisciplinary journal: our pages include important contributions on a dazzling array of topics, but it is tough, at times, to find meaning in multiplicity, a pattern in the array, or larger significance in the hotchpotch. Yet there are good reasons for endeavouring to do so. The promise at the heart of regional scholarship is in some sense an ecological one: that everything is connected to everything else. These are studies of British Columbia in *BC Studies*. Do they amount to more than the sum of their parts? Might they, for all their differences, lead us to think anew about this impossibly mixed and variegated place and how we seek to make sense of it?

Perhaps McIlwraith and Cormier provide a pointer in this direction with their argument (in “Making Place for Space”) for counter-mapping. An anthropologist and the title and rights director at Splat-sin (near Enderby), respectively, McIlwraith and Cormier have grown impatient with the ways in which, they say, traditional use studies and maps (of the sort mandated by the government in advance of development) emphasize site-specific data collection and fixed resource locations to create a landscape dotted with discrete places of activity that reduce Indigenous worlds to a market-based logic that facilitates development. Traditional use mapping ignores the rich social, spiritual, cultural, and historical context of Indigenous land use and remains, in their words, “a colonial action that separates Indigenous people from land by identifying precisely where development can and cannot occur.”

In its stead McIlwraith and Cormier would prefer a radical cartography requiring a massive community effort and a large amount of geographical and genealogical research as well as “a cultural security and continuity approach” that sees land as necessary to cultural identity and survival. This is counter-mapping. McIlwraith and Cormier would use it to honour the deep and ancient cultural infrastructure of British Columbia’s Indigenous peoples, which they insist should trump the province’s development and economic agendas. Without diminishing this

argument, which resonates with the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Tsilhqot'in v. British Columbia* (2014), perhaps the notion of challenging prevailing ways of portraying events or interpreting the world, inherent in counter-mapping, might be adapted more generally to the articles in these pages and the understanding of British Columbia as a place *sui generis*.

Robert McCandless, who, in issue 178 of *BC Studies*, wrote about petroleum exploration off the west coast of Vancouver Island in the 1960s, is here concerned, as the title of his article indicates, with “Ending Pollution at the Britannia Copper Mine.” His is a terse narrative of large-scale industrial pollution, legislation, and legal wrangles between government and mining companies, and the eventual “cleanup” of the site of what was once the largest copper mine in the British Empire. The bare facts about the mine are arresting. Between 1905 and 1974, it yielded over 500,000 tonnes of copper zinc, silver, and gold. It spawned its own company town (see K. Rollwagen in issue 151 of *BC Studies*). It was “one of the world’s largest point sources of metals pollution,” and its toxic discharge “sterilized at least a kilometre of the adjacent shoreline and posed risks to juvenile salmon migrating down Howe Sound from the Squamish River estuary.” But the heart of McCandless’s story lies in the BC government’s efforts to remediate the site. The process was complicated and fraught, but it was resolved early in the new millennium. The outcome was celebrated for the provincial government’s belated decision to take leadership and legislative responsibility for seventy years’ worth of ongoing environmental damage on Vancouver’s doorstep. But there is a counter-narrative to be mapped on to this story. The resolve to act probably owed as much to the desire to remediate the environmental eyesore on the road between Vancouver and Whistler before the 2010 Olympics as it did to any deep-seated environmental commitment. As McCandless shows, a hastily executed settlement indemnified the polluters in perpetuity while holding them responsible for only \$30 million of the cost of the cleanup, initially estimated at \$75 million plus any continuing expenditures.

In “Queering Vancouver,” Catherine Murray examines the origins and activities of the City of Vancouver’s LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and queer) Advisory Committee between 2009 and 2014. Its work might be described as mapping the LGBTQ community onto the largely heteronormative fabric of the city. It sought to enhance the safety of the LGBTQ constituency by asking the city to increase community policing in Davie Village, assisting the BC Ministry of Education to strengthen

efforts against homophobia in schools, and convincing the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics Committee to promote queer rights and to include Pride Houses at the two main venues. It also produced a video on transgender issues, had Vancouver's Pride Parade designated an official city event subsidized by council, and pushed to have Vancouver become the first municipality in Canada to require gender-neutral washrooms in public buildings. All of this came about through endless meetings that transformed into larger designs the mundane (cartographic) work undertaken in consultations, surveys, and reports. But, as Murray recognizes, "it is often in just these everyday banal processes that equality is constructed." Through such counter-mapping Vancouver "has moved beyond the token acceptance of queer."

Mapping against the social grain to reveal and entrench new perspectives and sensibilities is one thing, but one might wonder whether anything similar is possible in more scientific and statistical realms. Biological oceanographer Cameron Ainsworth suggests an affirmative answer with his careful reconstitution of British Columbia's marine fisheries data between 1873 and 2011. By incorporating discarded catch, and unreported subsistence, artisanal, and recreational catches, into official government statistics he refines assessments of the quantities of fish extracted from the seas around us and provides "a baseline for what may be extracted safely from healthy marine ecosystems." From this it is possible to derive "correction factors useful for interpreting governmental catch statistics in social and ecological modelling applications" and, more generally, to better understand "the impacts of human beings on marine ecosystems." The import of Ainsworth's findings is well summarized in his Figure 1, which shows a gradual increase in the fish catch between 1873 and 1929, a precipitous decline during the Great Depression, a sharp jump after the Second World War (to a maximum of 700,000 tonnes in 1963), and then a decline to the current catch levels of about 200,000 to 300,000 tonnes per year.

Finally, we are pleased to introduce a new series of pieces that we call Reflections, or "occasional, invited 5000 word essays by senior scholars who have made important contributions to understanding British Columbia." Our first Reflection is by historian Patricia Roy, who taught and worked at the University of Victoria from 1966 until her retirement in 2005. In an expanded version of a keynote address given at the *BC Studies* conference at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in May 2015, Roy reflects on her long engagement with the history of Chinese and Japanese people in the province. She begins her intellectual memoir

with her grandmother's stories about "a succession of Chinese pedlars ... who traded oranges and bananas for vegetables from her Burnaby garden and root cellar and stayed for afternoon tea," then she discusses the genesis of her three landmark books, all published by UBC Press: *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants 1858-1914* (1989); *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province* (2003); and *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941-67* (2007). This lays the base for Roy's reflections on the substantial recent outpouring of scholarly publications on East Asians in western Canada. Here it is clear that these works, like Roy's own landmark contributions, map new and different histories onto the story of British Columbia, countering earlier (often triumphal and hegemonic) anglo-centric accounts of the provincial past. By sketching something of the personal, scholarly, institutional, and intellectual influences, networks, and communities that shaped her work and career, Roy's Reflection carries us – as counter-mappings will – behind the scenes to comprehend unexamined and untold facets of the fascinating place that is British Columbia.

Richard Mackie and Graeme Wynn