

*Saving Farmland:
The Fight for Real Food*

Nathalie Chambers with
Robin Alys Roberts and
Sophie Wooding

Victoria: Rocky Mountain Books,
2015. 358 pp. Illus. \$25.95 paper.

*All the Dirt: Reflections on
Organic Farming*

Rachel Fisher, Heather Stretch,
and Robin Tunnicliffe

Victoria: Touchwood Editions, 2012.
228 pp. Illus. \$29.95 paper.

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HOME TO THE original 100-mile diet and inheritors of a vague but resilient tradition of earthiness and back-to-the-land, British Columbians do not need to be told about the rise in interest in local and organic foods or the literary explosion that has accompanied it. The number of small-scale farmers pushing back against a corporatized and centralized food system, and the books

chronicling their efforts, continue to multiply. Food scholars, however, while supporting these efforts, have recently begun to call publicly for broader reform. In a review of journalist Sarah Elton's *Consumed: Sustainable Food for a Finite Planet* in the *Literary Review of Canada*, the University of Waterloo's Jennifer Clapp notes that, for 100-mile diets to become the norm, we will need to see major changes in agriculture and food policy and regulations. While both of these books are very much in the inspiring pushback against big food mode, they can also, interestingly, be seen to be taking up Clapp's challenge by proposing possible infrastructures for local food.

All the Dirt is the story of the Saanich Peninsula organic farms of Rachel Fisher, Heather Stretch, and Robin Tunnicliffe, as well as their marketing arm, Saanich Organics. The book is part of a genre that aims to provide ideas and advice to aspiring young, small-scale farmers. Personal histories are mixed with discussions of the engineering of greenhouses and much advice on the business of farming (embrace unusual varieties, be reliable, keep good records). On one page, Fisher talks about her exhaustion when trying to care for a newborn baby while farming; on the

next, we're told that she used a one-and-a-quarter- to one-and-a-half-inch pipe in her irrigation system. The book includes beautiful photographs and samples of spreadsheets. The effect is a bit jarring, but then, armchair analysts are not the real audience: prospective farmers are. This book will not tell them how to actually build a greenhouse or irrigation system (the detail on the size of the pipe is probably more than anyone needs); however, it will tell young farmers just what they have coming and what they can do about it. The rest of us can skim the spreadsheets and appreciate the beautiful images of produce and the drama of starting your own farm: the image of the three authors, standing sorting produce late into the night and almost crying with exhaustion, sticks with me.

Nathalie Chambers's *Saving Farmland* is in some ways a more conventional book. It tells a simple, inspiring story. Around the start of the twenty-first century, Nathalie met David Chambers. Nathalie was an agro-ecology student at the University of Victoria; David was farming land that had been in his family for over a century, on Blenkinsop Road in the Victoria suburb of Saanich. Nathalie and David fell in love, coming together in part over their determination to do farming differently. Madrona Farm was eleven hectares of houselot, farmland, forest, and wetlands in a rapidly urbanizing area. David and Nathalie developed a plan to preserve the whole property intact as a working farm. However, though David farmed the land with the blessing of his grandmother, it was actually owned by his father and uncles, who inherited it on their mother's death. At least one uncle wanted to sell the land and collect the cash; the front 1.6 hectares, in particular, were prime development land. Nathalie and David hatched a plan to raise funds to buy out the uncles and turn the land over to a land conservancy

that would own the property, making land available for young farmers while imposing ecologically sensitive farming practices. A grand fundraising campaign followed, involving Nathalie and David's customers; a Chef Survival Challenge, whereby Victoria chefs raced across Madrona Farm gathering the ingredients for a meal cooked on campstoves; and a large donation of airtime by Victoria radio stations. At some point – Chambers is chary with dates and unconcerned with chronology – the money was raised. Madrona Farm is now legally protected.

Saving Farmland is an often exhilarating ride through farm activism and the frontiers of agro-ecology. It includes a history of the financial and political troubles of the Land Conservancy, a fascinating history of Steveston, and a chapter on bees. However, Chambers wants both to tell the story of how Madrona got preserved and to present a replicable model for preserving farmland, but she largely fails to do either. This is a messy book. Readers wishing to know the story of Madrona Farm must assemble it from bits and pieces of narrative scattered throughout the book. Chambers's explanation of the Madrona model is short on clear detail. For instance, she claims that the Madrona model deals with "the largest obstacle to food security on Vancouver Island: the price of farmland." But we are told that farmers lease their land at market rates. How, then, is the problem of affordability addressed? We are never told. That said, this is an inspiring manifesto, packed full of fascinating detail, that forcefully defends a vision of sustainable farming.

Nathalie and David seek to subvert the capitalist market in land. Theirs is the more radical vision here. Fisher, Stretch, and Tunnicliffe are businesspeople and happy to be so. Their major innovation is Saanich Organics, through which they coordinate sales of their own and

others' agricultural products via a food box delivery business, year-round sales of greenhouse salad greens, and commercial sales to thirty-five restaurants and a grocery store chain amounting, in 2008, to \$185,000 in revenue. Thus Saanich Organics functions something like a co-op while being a business, though one that is deliberately limited: Fisher and her colleagues note that they could expand the business by buying up food from other farms, but they do not, as their main concern is to support financially and ecologically sustainable farming. Thus, while Saanich Organics is limited as a model for a future, more local food system – and, to be fair, the authors never claim it as such – others would likely not be so restrained. Finally, and it might just be my own prospect of facing down another northern Ontario winter, but, as models for Canadian practice, both books are perhaps limited by their Victoria-ness. Both note that they are blessed by a long growing season (by Canadian standards), good soils, and the eagerness of Victorians to embrace local organic food and small farmers. How the Madrona or Saanich Organics model might play out elsewhere in the country, then, is unclear.

These are not scholarly books but books with their own, especially in the case of *All the Dirt*, particular audiences. Yet scholars will benefit from this look inside the sweat, tears, ingenuity, and bloody determination that make up small-scale, local, and organic farming. Would that policy-makers could make it just a little bit easier.

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The Slow Farm

Tarn Wilson

Port Townsend, WA:
Ovenbird Books, 2014. 368 pp.
\$18.00 USD paper.

CONNIE BRIM

Thompson Rivers University

MEMOIR, *The Slow Farm*, focuses largely on the brief period during which Tarn Wilson lived on Texada Island with her American parents and younger sister Rima. Arriving in 1973, the then four-year-old and her family first occupied a cabin at geographically isolated Pocahtontas Bay. Here, the parents' counterculture lifestyle ensured that the sisters played unencumbered by rules, etiquette, and (often) clothes. The sea and woods became their playground, and their father's tales of magical creatures nurtured their imaginations. Despite his disapproval, the family moved several months later to the Slow Farm, located 9.6 kilometres from Van Anda, so Tarn Wilson could attend grade school.

More than halfway through the memoir, Wilson announces that "the Slow Farm is hard on women" (190), and it emerges as a metaphor for the sexism that the adult Wilson explores as a flaw in her parents' and, by extension, the hippies' back-to-the-land movement. Dark and feculent, the Slow Farm housed not only visiting hippies and destructive goats but also a disintegrating and financially distressed family. While father Jack tinkered with engines, mother Janet – alone and unaided by modern conveniences – faced a formidable number of domestic chores, developed pneumonia, and sought part-time work in Van Anda. Only a few months after the family had moved to the dank farm,

Janet left, settled on Vancouver's East Side, and immediately petitioned for custody of their daughters.

The Slow Farm is divided into seven sections, the latter two of which focus solely on journeys Wilson later made to Texada Island (1996) and Cowichan Bay (2005). Otherwise, the book's sections contain multiple segments, each thematically titled and only a few pages long. All of the titles, such as "What I Feared Most: Frozen Heart," essentially foreground what the reader is to notice in each segment's self-contained memory. Wilson also incorporates what she calls "artifacts" – quotations, black-and-white photographs, chronologies, passages from personal letters, and newspaper items. These include quotations from Timothy Leary's *The Declaration of Evolution* and A.S. Neill's *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing*, shedding light on some of the sources for Janet's and Jack's guiding ideals and attitudes, while establishing a broad cultural context for Wilson's personal narrative.

As a narrative that increases our knowledge of British Columbia's alternative communities during the 1960s and 1970s, *The Slow Farm* falters. Wilson offers few stories about the hippies Jack and Janet befriended and rarely cites surnames of visitors to the Slow Farm. She acknowledges: "I'm not in Texada's stories of itself" (352). Nor do the island's hippies appear in *Texada*, a historical record prepared by the Powell River Historical Society (352). Nevertheless, as a memoir that evokes a singular childhood, initially Edenic and subsequently traumatic, *The Slow Farm* reveals the emotional and psychological impact of some anti-establishment ideas on a young child who wanted structure and rules.

A Taste of Haida Gwaii: Food Gathering and Feasting at the Edge of the World

Susan Musgrave

Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2015.
374 pp. \$34.95 paper.

The Deerholme Foraging Book. Wild Foods and Recipes from the Pacific Northwest

Bill Jones

Victoria: Touchwood Editions, 2014.
276 pp. \$29.95 paper.

The Urban Homesteading Cookbook: Forage, Farm, Ferment and Feast for a Better World

Michelle Nelson

Madeira Park: Douglas and McIntyre, 2015. 224 pp. \$26.95 paper.

A Field Guide to Foraging for Wild Greens and Flowers

Michelle Nelson,
photos by Alison Page

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2015. 35 colour photos.
\$7.95 pamphlet.

The Boreal Feast: A Culinary Journey through the North

Michele Genest

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2014. 256 pp. \$28.95 paper.

*This Earth Is Ours. 30 Organic
Years along Nature's Path*

Gurdeep Stephens

Victoria: D&I Enterprises, 2015.

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THERE IS AN alternative out there to the globalized world of agribusiness, GMOs (genetically modified organisms), and processed packaged food – one based on harvesting and using local, especially wild, foods and reweaving them into our meals in creative and satisfying ways. Recently, a whole host of books – each a feast in itself – has emerged here in British Columbia and beyond, reflecting a growing interest in locally harvested and produced foods that enrich our lives. These foods are celebrated not just for the different nutrients and flavours they yield but also because they are integral to our identity, our relationships to our home places, and our ties to history and to First Peoples, whose ancestors have relied on foods produced here, in this place, for millennia. Not only the foods but also the knowledge of when and where to harvest them, how to tend them, how to prepare them, and the best ways to serve them are part of the collective skills and wisdom of locally derived cuisine. Whether it is indigenous, from the sea or the land, or brought from distant places in the past and introduced to local fields, orchards, and gardens, the food that is brought to the table from nearby our homes and shared with those we like to be with is an exquisite gift: that's what these books all impart to us.

It is hard to know with which of these books to begin. Haida Gwaii is close to my heart, however, so my descriptions

of the individual books will start with Susan Musgrave's literary feast, which is both about feasting and can, and should, lead to feasting. It is replete with recipes, many served at Musgrave's own Copper Beech Guest House ("the best B and B in all of Haida Gwaii," according to some). These range from scrambled eggs (best unadulterated), to "Crab, Chanterelle, Caramelized Onion and Goat's Cheese Omelette," and "Possibly the Best Granola." One recipe, entitled "Crack Cocaine Made (Relatively) Simple," is an attention-grabber for a discussion on yoghurt and is followed by "Wild Blueberry and Yoghurt Pancakes." Many others embrace local ingredients and local places: "Rose Spit Halibut with Wild Rose Petals," for example. But the book is far more than recipes. There are captivating and fun photos throughout, and stories both personal and universal. There is much to learn from the book, and not just about cooking. I really appreciated having some of Susan's Haida neighbours and friends introduced in photos and stories, and there are many other cultural treasures, such as thirty-four words for salmon in the Haida language, not to mention all the ways of smoking and preparing that fish.

Chapter 4, "Food Gathering All Year Round," and Chapter 5, "Harvesting the Land and the Sea," are my favourite chapters. They embody the spirit of foraging, including a celebration of edible seaweed – with quotes from Haida experts. As well as the more common berries and fruits (salmonberries, thimbleberries, huckleberries and blueberries, wild strawberries, cloudberry, salal berries, bunchberries, bog cranberries, and Pacific crabapples), and the amazing range of seafood to be harvested on these islands (halibut, sea urchin, chitons, mussels, crabs, razor clams and butter clams, geoducks, cockles, scallops, and octopus), there is also a section on mush-

rooms (with appropriate warnings) and greens – Sitka spruce tips, sea asparagus, and lambsquarters (I suspect she is using common orache, *Atriplex patula*, which looks very similar), and even stir-fried devil’s club buds. This shrub (*Oplapanax horridus*) has high cultural and medicinal importance for Haida and other First Peoples throughout its range. In the ginseng family, it is closely related to *taranome*, the Japanese *Fatsia japonica*, whose sprouts and flower buds are served as tempura. This book received a BC book prize, the Bill Duthie Booksellers’ Choice Award, in 2016.

Bill Jones is both an accomplished chef (French-trained and author of eleven cookbooks) and a supreme forager. *The Deerholme Foraging Book* completely focuses on “the bounty of the wild.” It is inspired by the wild food around his own Deerholme Farm in the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island. I love that the first image inside the book is of Oliver, an alert, eager border collie, standing at the beginning of a dirt road, obviously waiting to go on a foraging adventure. The next photos are close-ups of spring morels and stinging nettle leaves: two of my personal favourites! Like Susan Musgrave, Bill cites the inspiration of that pioneer forager Euell Gibbons (1962, 1964), and he dedicates his book to him. The chapters that comprise *Deerholme Foraging* are divided into sections: general information on foraging; ways of processing and storing wild foods; different kinds of wild foods, from forests, fields and seashore; and, finally, all the recipes – no of them, from appetizers to desserts, which comprise about two-thirds of the entire book. Close-up photos, in beautiful colour, of many of the wild foods and the dishes made from them, enhance the book. Most of the ingredients are safe, but I worry about including the possibility of making jelly from pine needles (81, and pictured on the back cover), or even from

cedar tips, as an alternative to grand fir needles. Both pine and western redcedar contain compounds that are potentially harmful, and they should be regarded with caution (Turner and Von Aderkas 2009). The recipes generally incorporate one or more wild ingredients with more conventional foods: “Mashed Potatoes with Wild Onions”; “Soba Noodles with Oyster and Seaweed Jelly”; “Grilled Flank Steak with Wild Mushroom Rub”; “Poached Eggs with English Muffins and Stinging Nettle Sauce.” The titles of the dishes alone make one want to create and sample.

Michelle Nelson’s two books, *The Urban Homesteading Cookbook* and *A Field Guide to Foraging for Wild Greens and Flowers*, are quite different in style. *The Urban Homesteading* is a regular book, bountifully endowed with striking photographs by Alison Page and with eighty-five original recipes. With a doctorate in conservation biology and sustainable agriculture, and plenty of hands-on, practical experience in foraging, gardening, and food production, Michelle is the perfect person to create this book. The chapters are simply labelled: Note on Ingredients; Foraging; Keeping; Growing; and Preserving. Especially inspiring to me is Michelle’s championing of edible “micro livestock” (for example, “Dark and Stormy Chocolate Cupcakes with Cricket Flour”) and edible invasive species (lionfish, bullfrogs, European garden snails, green crabs, Japanese knotweed): for instance, “Japanese Knotweed Chutney on Pan-Seared Trout.” Beekeeping and raising rabbits and quail are other distinctive topics.

A Field Guide to Foraging is a sixteen-page foldout pamphlet – something to slip into your backpack or purse and bring with you on a walk or an exploration of a vacant lot. There are very few native species featured; almost all are introduced

and some are quite invasive. The photos are attractive and helpful in identifying the plants. A few plants are featured – Canada goldenrod, purple looses-trife – that I hadn't thought of as being edible, and a couple of others – kudzu and water hyacinth – do not occur in western Canada (to my knowledge) but are apparently extending their ranges northwards into eastern Canada, and both are potentially invasive.

Labrador tea, spruce tips, chanterelles, birch syrup, blueberries, and cloudberry are just some of the wild ingredients of the North American boreal forest that Michele Genest celebrates in her book, *The Boreal Feast: A Culinary Journey through the North*. Like the other authors here, Michele is a storyteller who obviously loves the outdoors and relishes connecting with others over the bounty of wild harvested and produced food. Her recipes sound sumptuous, and I can't wait to try some of them: Solstice-Cured Lake Trout Gravdax; Birch Syrup Panna Cotta with Rhubarb Compote. She focuses on feasting – putting together sumptuous meals, whether for picnics or to be enjoyed by families and friends around the dining table. Although her book is centred in Yukon, BC northerners as well as those in Sweden, Norway, and Alaska will be able to gain access to similar ingredients.

This Earth Is Ours, by Gurdeep Stephens, is not a foraging book, but it belongs, philosophically speaking, with these others. A truly inspirational book, it recounts the story of Nature's Path, a thriving business founded on ethical food production and dedicated to producing healthy organic food. Developed by Arran and Ratana Stephens (Gurdeep's parents) "in the back of a restaurant" in Vancouver, and starting with Manna Breads® and Manna cereals, Nature's Path now employs hundreds of people and produces dozens of different food

products. This hardcover book is illustrated throughout, with stunning photographs of flowers, fruits, pollinators, gardens, Stephens family members, and the amazing artwork of Gurdeep's father Arran. It is not a recipe book but, rather, a storytelling book about grains and other food and about the success of a remarkable family in creating this nurturing company. As quoted in the Foreword: "The average American now eats more than 150 pounds of added sugar each year, while less than 5 percent of our population is consuming the recommended amount of fibre ... One in three American children is expected to get diabetes" (xi). Canadians undoubtedly face the same challenges. Changing our collective eating habits while encouraging sustainable food production is a key theme of the book. There is an entire section on Envirokidz®, focusing on healthy children's cereals, and the partnerships Nature's Path has developed to support projects on wildlife conservation and environmental health.

These books collectively provide a rich compendium of healthy, tasty food, including farm, garden, and wild foraged food, from greens to berries, mushrooms to shellfish. All provide beautiful photographic images of the food plants (fish and shellfish as well) and the dishes created from them. The books also include all the important warnings for foragers, from not getting lost when you are focusing on finding the ideal chanterelle, to being careful in identifying wild plants, to avoiding red tide and food that might be polluted from pesticides or oil. These are important for any foods, but they are especially critical for non-marketed species that might be harvested by those not familiar with them.

Any of these books, which together celebrate local food and a large local investment in foraging, farming, feasting, and feeling, would be of interest to *BC*

Studies readers wishing to diversify their diets, to harvest and prepare their own food, and to expand their library of books on western Canada's regional cuisines.

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The Salmon People

Hugh McKervill

Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2015.
256 pp. \$19.95 paper.

(First published in Sidney by Gray's Publishing, 1967, and reprinted in Vancouver by Whitecap Books, 1992.)

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WHEN *The Salmon People* was first published in 1967, commercial salmon fishing still sustained many coastal communities, although as Hugh McKervill pointed out then, there were plenty of signs that the resource was threatened. In both the 1967 and subsequent 1992 Whitecap editions, McKervill ends with tempered optimism: "So long as there are fish surging in the sea there will be salmon people ... and the salmon will probably come forever ... if man does not destroy them" (1967, 187). Nearly fifty years later, his conclusions are much more dire.

The Salmon People are those whose lives were or are deeply involved

with the valuable resource that is the Pacific salmon, including Indigenous communities, commercial fishers and canners, and – new to this edition – sports fishers. McKervill tells the history of the commercial fishing and canning industry in an engaging style largely through stories of some of the individuals involved. He also recounts some significant events, such as the Hell's Gate slide disaster of 1914, and details how the resource has been seriously affected by human activity. This is especially evident in the new chapter "Atlantic Invasion," which critically examines fish farming, and the updated final chapter, which replaces optimism with the forbidding words: "Weep for the once illustrious Pacific salmon. Weep for the Salmon People" (243).

One of the stated goals of *The Salmon People* is to highlight the racist nature of much of BC commercial fishing history, particularly that faced by Indigenous, Japanese, and Chinese workers. However, some of the language and terminology used is at odds with this goal. "Indian," used in the first two editions, has been replaced; unfortunately, the result is a muddle of terminology as no consistent usage has been applied. "Native" is most widely used, with "Aboriginal" appearing more in later chapters. "First Nations" and "Indigenous" are used less frequently. Interestingly, "white man" has been substituted with "Industrial Man." The attempt to use currently accepted names of some First Nations is not always successful as McKervill employs, for example, the dated "Niska" and "Nootka" rather than "Nisga'a" and "Nuu-chah-nulth."

Some stereotypical language from 1967 remains, such as "Native children dashing helter-skelter with green running noses [and] clusters of Chinese jabbering excitedly" (66). But a new statement in this version is more disturbing.

Describing how Indigenous traditional fisheries were in balance with the ecosystem, McKervill asserts: "This was not due to any sort of racially determined superior sense of conservation. Their low impact on the salmon runs was in large measure due to the fact that their population was relatively limited, and their fishing techniques were primitive" (201). Contrary to this, however, it is widely acknowledged that diverse Indigenous harvesting methods, including fishing, employed sophisticated technologies using the available resources (see, for example, Greene et al. 2015) and that living in balance with the environment is central to Indigenous world views (see Turner et al. 2000; and Menzies and Butler 2007).

The book includes limited footnotes and a bibliography. Only a few references are more recent than 1967. It lacks an index and would have benefited from maps. Although the writing does a good job of evoking a different time and place, some photographs would also have been welcome.

Despite these shortcomings, *The Salmon People* still has merit after nearly fifty years. It provides a colourful overview of the salmon-fishing industry, especially in the form of the unique stories of some of the people involved, many of which are found nowhere else. It also includes a passionate argument against fish farming and an examination of how we have seriously endangered the Pacific salmon. It is just unfortunate that it lacked a strong and sensitive editorial hand to bring it fully into the twenty-first century.

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Cleaner, Greener, Healthier: A Prescription for Stronger Canadian Environmental Laws and Policies

David R. Boyd

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 412 pp.
\$34.95 paper.

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THE WORLD Health Organization released an update to the Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database on 12 May 2016, finding that more than 80 percent of people who live in major cities around the world are exposed to air pollution that puts their health at risk. Cities with the lowest-income populations are the most affected, with poor air quality increasing the risks and number of people affected by stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory illnesses.

Health as an environmental issue and the need to overcome the "balkanization of information and expertise" in favour of law reform is what David Boyd's latest book seeks to explain (13). At its core, *Cleaner, Greener, Healthier* addresses four questions: (1) What are the most serious environmental health

problems in Canada? (2) What are the economic costs of these problems? (3) Compared with other wealthy countries, are Canada's current laws, policies, and programs adequate for reducing or minimizing the environmental burden of disease and death? (4) What kinds of interventions might be introduced to reduce environmental risks, costs, and inequities in Canada? (13).

Boyd cleverly organizes the book into three parts styled after the stages of medical intervention: examination, diagnosis, and prescription. Part 1, the examination, details environmental health problems in Canada, focusing on the human health impacts of environmental hazards such as toxics, quantifying the magnitude of the impacts and their economic costs, and exploring environmental justice – the differential impacts of environmental harm on poorer, racialized communities – to reach conclusions about the environmental burden of disease in Canada. Part 2, the diagnosis, examines Canadian laws and policies for a variety of topics and assesses how well they protect environmental health compared to those of other industrialized nations, concluding with reasons that account for why Canada performs poorly in addressing health risks. Finally, Part 3, the prescription, contains recommendations for environmental health law and policy in Canada, drawing on the best practices internationally and incorporating discussion of the economic benefits of upping the regulatory ante.

Cleaner, Greener, Healthier is a natural extension of Boyd's work over the past fifteen years, which can be characterized as comprehensive and well-researched book-length exposés of environmental law with a particular focus on environmental rights. With *Unnatural Law* (2003), Boyd began his well-received writing career with a sweeping critique of

Canada's environmental law and detailed law reform proposals. He followed up with *The Environmental Rights Revolution* (2012a) and *The Right to a Healthy Environment* (2012b), which document the right to a healthy environment in national constitutions across the globe and consider how global lessons of environmental health might be applied in jurisdictions across Canada. Among these law reform-oriented tomes, Boyd sprinkled health-related books – *David Suzuki's Green Guide* (2008, with David Suzuki) and *Dodging the Toxic Bullet* (2010) – on avoiding toxics and living the green life. Boyd has consolidated all of these interests into *Cleaner, Greener, Healthier* to focus on law reform for human and environmental health.

Although public health, the environment, and social determinants of health receive considerable attention within the health and sciences fields, few writers and academics are attempting to link environmental quality, health, and law. Notable exceptions are Dayna Scott in her 2015 edited collection *Our Chemical Selves: Gender, Toxics and Environmental Health*, which takes a more applied theoretical approach with a feminist lens. *Cleaner, Greener, Healthier*, with its attention to political, economic, and social factors and a chapter on environmental justice, falls somewhere between Scott's book and explanatory texts on the emerging field of environmental health law.

My minor critiques include inconsistent detail. Some topics receive in-depth treatment, including human symptoms of harm, while others receive a general overview. Boyd also takes some liberties by intermingling peer-reviewed sources with reports generated by environmental organizations. More broadly, his focus on law reform is largely levied at federal and provincial governments. While it is these levels of government

that assert primary jurisdiction over most of the issues addressed in the book and would, thus, be efficient actors, this centrist approach undersells the attention that municipalities are giving to environmental issues. Indeed, although coming on the heels of this book, a national “right-to-a-healthy-environment” campaign in 2014 that saw local governments as the largest adopters (the current count being 137). Irrespective of jurisdiction, and given the largely absent federal role in environmental protection over the past twenty years, local communities are spearheading notable environmental quality programs that have the potential to overcome political and economic inertia by directing attention to environmental harm beyond simple zoning decisions. They can also generate the community support for federal law reform. Finally, as touched on in Chapter 9, if we want to understand why we have not achieved the long-standing law reforms urged by Boyd, other writers, such as Michael M’Gonigle and Louise Takeda in their article “The Liberal Limits of Environmental Law,” dig more deeply into the political economy of environmental law and why comprehensive law reform fails to materialize.

Ultimately, for BC readers, Boyd does not disappoint in delivering another sweeping, well-researched interdisciplinary overview of the difficult challenge of linking environmental regulation to health in Canada. He makes a compelling case for law reform and, along the way, documents emerging and less well-known areas of environmental harm, such as intergenerational health impacts and the mental health benefits of nature. His plain language and clear definitions of technical terms make the book accessible to many disciplines and, in typical Boyd style, to the public. *Cleaner, Greener, Healthier* inhabits the

fruitful common ground between well-substantiated research and public appeal.

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Sustaining the West: Cultural Responses to Canadian Environments

Liza Piper and
Lisa Szabo-Jones, editors

Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press,
2015. 365 pp. \$42.95 paper.

JOHN THISTLE
Memorial University

Sustaining the West: Cultural Responses to Canadian Environments is a fascinating set of essays edited by Liza Piper and Lisa Szabo-Jones. Its overall argument is that threats to the environment pose not only technical or scientific problems amenable simply to regulation and economic solutions but also deeply cultural ones rooted in the way people imagine, value, and view the world. In making this point, which of course others have done in different ways before, the essays collected here highlight “the essential contributions from humanists in solving our environmental crisis” (1).

Sustaining the West includes contributions not only from academics but also from activists, artists, and poets. The book is avowedly interdisciplinary but, interestingly, no scientists are involved, although several essays do address science as a way of knowing nature. Instead, the book seeks interdisciplinary connections among humanists. As Piper and Szabo-Jones observe in their introduction, “for those interested in interdisciplinarity, greater emphasis is placed upon the value and need for work between the sciences and arts rather than among disciplines within the arts and humanities” (1). Building on this insight, *Sustaining the West* “proceeds from recognition that individuals working in the arts and humanities already share much common

ground and produce work that either speaks to a broad public, or to narrow disciplinary audiences, yet rarely to each other” (2).

The book is divided into three parts. The first set of essays provides cultural perspectives on environmental activism. This is followed by a group of essays on the different ways that scientists, industrialists, farmers, and others have known Western natures. The final set of essays concerns the poetics of place, in particular “the sentiments, personal and projected by others, that connect people to place” (10). And a wonderful essay by Pamela Banting – about bees, discipline, cross-pollination, and Claude Lévi-Strauss’s notion of bricolage – ties the collection together.

The result is a remarkable collection of pieces as diverse as they are numerous. In the course of twenty chapters covering three hundred-plus pages and much of the Canadian West, including, somewhat surprisingly, parts of Ontario, we learn about grass, waste, deforestation, bitumen, escarpments, agriculture, hydroelectricity, and much else. We also learn a lot about ourselves from this book. My only criticism of *Sustaining the West*, and really it’s a very minor one, is that it seems to lose some of its interdisciplinary focus as it goes on. Only a handful of chapters – Piper and Szabo-Jones’s brief but useful introduction, and Pamela Banting’s summary reflections being the most important examples – deal directly with interdisciplinarity: what it means, or has meant, in different contexts, and what sorts of challenges and opportunities might be involved. Then again, it could just as easily be argued that this is the strength of *Sustaining the West*: that rather than simply discussing interdisciplinarity (which of course many others have done before), it actually *does* interdisciplinarity or, rather, “performs” it, to borrow a phrase from Lisa Szabo-

Jones and David Brownstein's insightful essay on the restoration of Camosun Bog in Vancouver.

Either way, *Sustaining the West* deserves to be widely read. Most of the essays are so accessibly written that it could easily be used as a textbook in upper-level undergraduate courses on the environment as well as in graduate seminars in the social sciences and humanities. There's probably no point in looking for policy options in this book, although the first set of essays on activism comes close. But if the goal is to encourage a deeper and more nuanced, and ultimately more complex, understanding of environmental problems – which this book shows are also deeply cultural – then *Sustaining the West* is an excellent place to start.

*The Salish Sea: Jewel of the
Pacific Northwest*

Audrey DeLella Benedict and
Joseph K. Gaydos

Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2015.
160 pp. \$22.95 paper.

HOWARD STEWART
Denman Island

AUDREY DELELLA Benedict and Joseph Gaydos's book about the Salish Sea, like Beamish and McFarlane's recent tome on the Strait of Georgia (or North Salish Sea), *The Sea among Us*, is a gorgeously illustrated and uneven treatment of a body of water that largely defines the coastal region surrounding it. The authors are on firm ground when they discuss the biophysical environment of today's Salish Sea, its complex geomorphology and rich biota, and the connections

between them. The book is shakier when it touches on the challenges facing this contested sea today.

The many colour photos are the strength of the book; it is essentially a picture book with detailed captions. Though truly spectacular, non-experts like myself might find themselves wondering if their numerous, magnificent, clear, and bright underwater photos might not have left many elusive denizens of the deep temporarily blinded by the photographers' lights.

The book also provides lots of interesting details, such as the "longevity records" for various fish, birds, and mammals residing in the sea, with the oldest rougheye rockfish living over two hundred years and the killer whale over a hundred, while the giant Pacific octopus only makes it to five. My ears hurt when I learned that, like me, mink can only dive a measly three metres under the sea, but sea otters reach an impressive ninety-seven metres and Northern elephant seals can descend to an astounding 1,735 metres.

The authors are more familiar with their American half of the sea. This explains why a photo looking south over the mouth of Howe Sound and Georgia Strait from a few hundred metres up the forested hillside is described as "looking west from the seaside village of Horseshoe Bay" (28), and why a list of eleven "vital river arteries that nourish the Salish Sea with freshwater" (35) includes only one river on the Canadian side.

A copyeditor might have flagged empty phrases that sound impressive but, upon scrutiny, lack meaning – for example, "We've lost much and we risk far more if we fail to remember that the Salish Sea links us to the vast global ocean" (3) and, "Despite their astonishing colors, shapes and sizes, most fish species in the Salish Sea are found elsewhere in northern Pacific waters" (77).

The book treads very timidly and lightly around issues like First Nations claims and the ongoing threats of oil spills, various types of chronic pollution, ongoing expansion of port and urban infrastructure, overharvesting of marine life, and accelerating climate change. The authors don't really engage with any of these issues, their complex histories, or the contemporary challenges and conflicts that surround them. So, for example, an American shellfish company buying up local producers on BC's Baynes Sound, and at the centre of growing controversy around the impacts of the industry there, is characterized merely as a "family business ... committed to healthy watersheds, healthy estuaries, and healthy communities" (127).

The Indigenous peoples for whom the sea is named are mostly a spectral presence, more alive in the past than in the present. The book's brief history of European exploration and settlement is clearly linked with today's Salish Sea, while short shrift is given to the previous ten millennia of human occupation. In fact, the authors' discussion of issues relating to Indigenous peoples and settlers is so diffident that it's hard to know if they are sincere or ironic when they note: "[Captain George] Vancouver's glowing descriptions of all aspects of the Salish Sea, the scenery, the deep and sheltered bays, the immense trees, the abundant natural resources, and the friendliness of the native people amounted to an irresistible invitation to colonize" (ii).

In their defence, Benedict and Gaydos do end their gorgeous book by acknowledging the vast changes that have been wrought in this sea over the last two hundred years. They suggest that the "first step in saving a place ... is for people to know their ecosystem" because then "it becomes personal and they want to protect and restore it"

(135). This is apparently the purpose of the book – to help people know their ecosystem. It wouldn't have hurt to have told their readers a little more about the threats from which they might want to protect their marine ecosystem, or to have provided some details pertaining to how it got so degraded, or to have indicated the challenges citizens might face if they want to better protect it in the future.

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*The Business of Power:
Hydroelectricity in Southeastern
British Columbia, 1897-1997*

Jeremy Mouat

Winlaw: Sono Nis Press, 2014 [1997].
200 pp.

PHILIP VAN HUIZEN
McMaster University

WHEN Jeremy Mouat's *The Business of Power* first came out in 1997, both Cominco and West Kootenay Power and Light, its main corporate subjects (the latter having commissioned it), had recently been sold to Vancouver's Teck Corporation and Missouri's UtiliCorp, respectively, and Canada and the United States had just renewed the Columbia River Treaty, all of which Mouat addresses in his short and easily digestible review of the history of hydroelectric power production in the Kootenay region. This welcome reprint of *The Business of Power* affords an opportunity to revisit the book, as well as this recent history, after nearly twenty years.

Mouat's work stands on the respectable side of commissioned histories, not quite at the level of David Breen's masterful *Alberta's Petroleum Industry and the Conservation Board* (1993) but comparable to other noteworthy examples, such as Meg Stanley's *Voices from Two Rivers* (2010). The book moves chronologically through the twentieth century, tracing Kootenay Power's genesis during the late nineteenth century's gold-, copper-, and silver-mining craze in southeastern British Columbia, particularly the importance of American and British financing interests; its purchase by the Canadian Pacific Railway and its subsidiary Cominco; its aggressive expansion due to its association with Cominco's lead- and zinc-smelting operations in the first half of the twentieth century; and its eventual decoupling from Cominco as domestic consumption and public regulation rules came to define its post-1950s existence.

Most noteworthy is Mouat's attention to context. Alongside the expected biographies of corporate bigwigs, such as Charles Ross, one of the founders of West Kootenay Power and the creator of the infamous Ross rifle, and Lorne Campbell, the long-time general manager of West Kootenay Power (1899-1947), Mouat also details how the global development of electricity, the influence of two world wars, Doukhobor immigration, and, especially, the history of mining and smelting all played complicated and important roles in West Kootenay's history. Indeed, mining proved to be the single most important reason for power production in southeastern British Columbia, propelling West Kootenay Power into being the number one producer of electricity in the province until the creation of BC Hydro in 1961. Mouat's strongest contribution with *The Business of Power* is thus in reminding us of the importance of resource processing and the East

Kootenay region to British Columbia's history of power.

The book is not without its flaws, however. Mouat spends far more time on the history of Cominco and West Kootenay Power's early investors, presidents, and general managers than he does on the impact of individual dam projects. In fact, we are given no idea of the size of early West Kootenay dams and reservoirs like the Upper Bonnington, Corra Lynn, and Brilliant, nor any sense of their impact on Kootenay people and places. First Nations communities do not even merit a mention. Nor do we really get a sense of how West Kootenay Power and Light, and Cominco more generally, operated in and influenced the BC political landscape after 1930 as the book delves more into larger and more well-trodden narratives (such as the Columbia River Treaty) than into the local details of how Cominco managed to get dams like the Waneta built in the 1950s. *The Business of Power* thus also serves as a reminder that more still needs to be written about this important company and its place in British Columbia's history.

Local Self-Government and the Right to the City

Warren Magnusson

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015.
384 pp. \$34.95 paper.

W.F. GARRETT-PETTS
Thompson Rivers University

WARREN Magnusson's reputation is secure as one of Canada's leading political theorists, and *Local Self-Government and the Right to the City* offers us what he says is "probably ... [his] last book" (viii). As such, it is an

occasion for personal reflection, drawing together, in the manner of a major retrospective, his signature essays and using the opportunity to resituate and thus restate his previous publications through a combination of prefaces and commentaries – and, towards the end of the book, to introduce some new writing. The recursive “pattern of prefacing and commenting upon my own analyses,” he states, constitutes a kind of critical performance that puts him “in dialogue with [his] younger self” (29) – but not with the objective of having the last word. Despite the wealth of scholarship invoked, and despite the closely reasoned positions presented, Magnusson abhors the temptation of closure; he proffers instead the example of an ongoing conversation, an invitation to dialogue that, if taken up, promises to extend his argument beyond the pages of the book.

That argument, by now familiar to readers of Magnusson’s past work, is introduced in the opening lines of *Local Self-Government*, which tell us that this is a book “haunted by an old idea: the thought that people could actually come together in their own communities and decide for themselves how things ought to be” (3). The word “haunted” repeats throughout, conjuring for readers the leitmotif of a ghost story, with the narrator revealing not only his own obsessions as a theorist but also something about the tentative nature of his subject, the spectral possibilities of local democracies variously lost, misunderstood, or marginalized.

Magnusson has long championed theories of local government and ideas of direct democracy at the neighbourhood level, inspired initially and largely by the example of citizen assemblies and the historical precedent of the New England town meeting. The book is divided into three principal sections:

“The Local State in Capitalist Society,” “Social Movements and Political Space,” and “Rethinking Local Democracy.” Section 1 rehearses Magnusson’s work from the 1980s, considering the historical origins of local government and playing off questions of metropolitan reform, centralized bureaucracy, and citizen participation against what Magnusson calls “the old story of the rich and powerful controlling everyone else’s destiny” (5). Section 2 features work from the 1990s and 2000s, interrogating changing notions of political space and introducing the proposition that “the state itself [and thus its claim to sovereignty] was actually more of a movement than a structure,” a political movement taking shape in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and now “shap[ing] our political imaginations” (22). The final section concludes with work from 2003 on, challenging the idea that cities are mere creatures of the provinces, looking to the example of Aboriginal self-government as “offering us a model that could be adopted more generally” (19), and linking visions for democracy to the right of neighbourhood self-government.

At root, Magnusson wants us to consider what a post-capitalist society might look and feel like by focusing not upon the broad national and global narratives but upon stories of local institutions and practices that, prior to his body of critical work, may have appeared more the subject of public administration than political philosophy. Beginning in 1978 with his Oxford DPhil thesis, he has expressed profound concern about how a statist world view has insinuated its presence, as an uncritically examined consensus, among political scientists and others, a working assumption affecting our understanding of participatory democracy and what has been called the “right to the city.” His fascination with such phrasing points to Magnusson’s

largely unacknowledged search for a new political vocabulary, one derived from and sensitive to the local, yet neither myopic nor parochial.

Language is important here, for, if we nudge Magnusson's position only slightly, we can see him arguing that terms authentically derived from an urban world view will have profound implications for political discourse generally:

My main suggestion [is] that we need to learn to "see like a city" rather than "seeing like a state." When we do the latter, we take the state system as determinant and imagine that our politics has to be centred on the sovereign authorities that it establishes ... If instead we learn to see like a city, we come to recognize that political authority is configured in a number of different ways, only one of which is the state. The state's pretence to sovereignty is just that: a pretence. To act politically we have to deal with a multiplicity of authorities in different *registers* (cultural, religious, economic, or whatever). (25, emphasis added)

"Register" is a sociolinguistic term for the range of linguistic features and choices (e.g., use of vocabulary, level of formality, configuration of semantic features) available for use in any given rhetorical situation. Dealing with "a multiplicity of authorities in different registers" necessitates a kind of situational fluency, an ability to translate competing perspectives – in Magnusson's case, to transcend the local while still asserting a coherent community-based viewpoint. As he notes, coming to terms with multiple forms of political authority requires "experimentation and innovation, informed by lateral communication between activists, politicians, and public officials in different communities" (247).

One senses, however, that for Magnusson the issue of placing sovereignty and the state under erasure remains largely an ontological proposition, a philosophical stance at least one remove from the kind of pragmatic lateral communication, experimentation, and innovation he advocates in passing.

While *Local Self-Government* is wonderfully provocative and sophisticated in its working out of political theory, it is also maddeningly short on concrete examples, case studies, and illustrations. That said, it is a beguiling book, at once both melancholy over the loss of fleeting democratic moments and models and optimistic at the prospect of realizing the democratic ideal. What it misses, though, is an equally compelling complementary consideration of the epistemological and the rhetorical dimensions of the argument presented.

For Magnusson, the state functions as what Kenneth Burke defines as a "terministic screen," a cognitive, symbolic, and, for Magnusson, ultimately political filter "composed of terms through which humans perceive the world, and that direct attention away from some interpretations and toward others" (Burke 1966, 46). As Burke argues: "since we can't say anything without the use of terms[,] whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to one field rather than another" (50). For example, our preoccupation with the "state" as a defining term directs our thinking and assumptions and deflects us from an appreciation of local governance, in particular from "seeing like a city." Magnusson's thinking is resolutely ontological, and thus his argument eschews the kind of sociolinguistic self-consciousness that a Burkean perspective might provide; however, what he does advocate is nothing short of a new paradigm of participatory

local governance involving a devolution (as opposed to a delegation) of decision making to local authorities. The rhetorical force of his argument remains undeniably appealing, for, according to those seeking the “right to the city,” what is at stake is the ability of local authorities to shape their own destiny. While *Local Self-Government* may not provide specific directions for achieving such ends, it does a remarkable job in raising and framing crucial questions, in critiquing prevailing disciplinary assumptions, and in mapping the landscape for a new urban-focused, community-based world view.

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*Listening for the Heartbeat
of Being: The Arts of Robert
Bringhurst*

Brent Wood and Mark
Dickinson, editors

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-
Queen's University Press, 2015.
284 pp. \$60.00 cloth.

CEILIDH HART

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POET ROBERT Bringhurst has been just on the periphery of my attention for many years, and it seems I've been in good company. Although he has made a name for himself in some circles (he is a celebrated figure in the world of typography, for example), as a poet, he has not been well anthologized or much studied within the academy. Indeed, the editors of this new collection of essays

about the poet's life and work describe him as a “shadowy figure not only among the Canadian public but among literati and academics.” “Scholarly attention,” they point out, “has been as elusive as commercial success” (4). *Listening for the Heartbeat of Being: The Arts of Robert Bringhurst* provides a wonderful opportunity to redress that neglect. It reopens conversations about some of the author's controversial projects, but, more important, it takes stock of his long and varied career, offers deep analysis of his work, and shows his vital and continuing interest in the responsibilities of the artist.

The emphasis on plurality in the book's subtitle (*The Arts of Robert Bringhurst*) is an important cue for readers as the collection embraces diversity in many ways. Bringhurst is described on the first page as “poet, translator, typographer, cultural historian, essayist, lecturer, and student of languages,” and the collection introduces us to all of these various Bringhursts in contributions not only from literary critics but also from colleagues, collaborators, and friends. Despite this range of perspectives, the carefully written introduction gives the book a convincing coherence by synthesizing the imperatives – always, in some way, to do with *listening* – that underlie Bringhurst's art in all its forms so that, for example, Brent Wood can draw parallels between the typographer's attention to the fabric of the page and the poet's attention to the fabric of the voice (102).

Although the collection is interested in the various facets of Bringhurst's career, it is his poetry that receives the lion's share of scholarly attention, and these essays provide detailed and thoughtful readings of the author's complex poetics: Brent Wood's synoptic view of Bringhurst's writing, with attention to his use of rhythm in particular, clearly delights

in Bringhurst's delight of language and pattern. Iain Macleod Higgins's discussion of Bringhurst's process of drafting and collecting his poems offers a clear articulation of Bringhurst's developing poetic persona and how it has been shaped by his interests in philology and in the music of thought. Katherine McLeod's analysis of one particular project, the two-voice performance poem "The Blue Roofs of Japan," provides a detailed and compelling analysis of polyphonic oral poetry in action – oral polyphony being a principle crucial to any understanding of Bringhurst's philosophy. For this and several other essays I wished for an accompanying sound recording.

Nicely counterpointing the longer, more traditionally academic essays are shorter, personal, and anecdotal ones. Ishmael Hope's essay pairs nicely with Nicholas Bradley's, for example; Dennis Lee's series of sketches balances Katherine McLeod's formal analysis. The inclusion of informal essays in a collection such as this is refreshing and helpful in shedding light on a key figure in the world of Canadian culture, and yet, at times, there's a tension that emerges between a focus on the work and a focus on the man that isn't entirely productive. Some of the more anecdotal contributions seem to insist too emphatically on the virtues of the man, and so out of these personal essays emerges a sense that this book project involves not just a reclaiming of space for the artist's too-long neglected work but also the recuperation of a man's reputation. The inclusion of an essay published by Margaret Atwood in 2004 in the wake of the controversy surrounding Bringhurst's *Masterworks of the Classical Haida Mythtellers* seems to clearly work to this purpose. And yet, given how full the collection is of important questions about art and artistic legacy, about ethics and translation, about beauty and

responsibility, these other gestures seem, perhaps, beside the point.

Underwriting *Listening for the Heartbeat of Being* is editor Mark Dickinson's claim that Bringhurst is Canada's "overlooked literary genius" (44). Whether the book supports that claim or not, what it certainly does do is show Bringhurst to be an innovative, compelling, and crucially relevant artist, deserving of serious and sustained attention.

The Life and Art of Jack Akroyd

Peter Busby

Salt Spring Island: Mother Tongue,
2015. 156 pp. \$35.95 paper.

KERRY MASON

University of Victoria

PETER Busby's *The Life and Art of Jack Akroyd* is the eighth and latest book in the Unheralded Artists Series presented by Mother Tongue Publishing. The series as a whole makes a significant contribution to the art history of British Columbia and to the province's social and cultural history. Whether or not the reader is already familiar with Jack Akroyd is immaterial. Busby brings Akroyd to life in this beautifully written and presented biography. The quality of the writing is high; the artwork is well selected and photographed; and the reader is generously presented with a useful index. An introduction by art collector and patron Paul Wolf succinctly provides additional context and meaning and underscores the merits of this study.

Busby shares the origins of a childhood in Yorkshire, where Akroyd was born in 1921, and also British Columbia,

where Akroyd arrived in 1953. Keen to the importance of context and connection to local landscape, Busby digs deeply to explain the background for events as well as for Akroyd's paintings. True to himself, Akroyd was quietly driven to create and realize his own artistic vision. His training as an engineer made him a talented master of spatial relations; his inquiring mind enabled him to understand, create, or repair everything from kilns to aircraft engines. Details oriented, he reassembled ideas and events from his own experiences to create art, and, invariably, his work reveals an original and personal expression.

Before he moved to British Columbia, Akroyd trained at the Ontario College of Art (OCA), where he studied with the BC artist and automatist expressionist painter Jock (J.W.G.) Macdonald, who had himself studied and taught in Vancouver and drew his inspiration from there. Macdonald and Frederick Varley had been brought by Charles Scott to teach at the newly established Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts in 1926, and they also founded the short-lived British Columbia College of Art in 1933. These earlier connections meant that, when Akroyd worked with Macdonald at the OCA, he was really receiving an introduction to British Columbia. Akroyd benefited as well from exchanges with fellow OCA students, including William Kurelek and Shizuye Takashima. After graduating in 1953, Akroyd moved to British Columbia, first to Nanaimo and then to Vancouver. Self-supporting, Akroyd worked at a whole range of odd jobs but primarily as a draughtsman, turning to his painting as much as time allowed.

Akroyd's story is also an illuminating story of Vancouver, particularly Kitsilano, in the 1960s. He was part of a productive circle of artists and sculptors that included George Fertig, Elek Imredy, and

Frank Molnar. Busby also addresses the artistic encounter between surrealism and British Columbia. And while surrealism is the style most associated with Akroyd, he was fluent and brilliant in a range of media and materials. Busby considers Akroyd's personality through a Jungian lens and connects his art to the work and thought of the groundbreaking abstract painter and theosophist Wassily Kandinsky, who believed that the painter's eye should encompass the inner self and vision. Busby critically analyzes the highly imaginative and precisely composed work that Akroyd called his "visual diaries."

Akroyd's landscapes of the coast and Okanagan regions are sublime. His first trip to Japan in 1960 was a turning point in his personal life and career and became the crucible for his commitment and ensuing creativity. Busby explores his time there through Akroyd's notebooks, journals, photographs, paintings, correspondence, and relevant articles published in Japan and Europe.

As with so many brilliant artists, Akroyd hasn't received the critical attention he is due. His star was rising at the time of his death in 1996. This lively, informative, and path-breaking book will bring this vital artist to a new audience and add a new level of appreciation to those already familiar with the work and world of Jack Akroyd.



*Sonia: The Life of Bohemian,
Rancher and Artist Sonia
Cornwall, 1919-2006*

Sheryl Salloum

Halfmoon Bay: Caitlin, 2015.

250 pp. \$24.95 paper.

KERRY MASON

University of Victoria

CHALLENGED to name women artists of British Columbia of the twentieth century, most people would stop at Emily Carr. While the list of both First Nations and settler women artists of British Columbia is impressively long, most of them languish in obscurity. Sheryl Salloum addresses this lacuna by creating a biography of Sonia Cornwall (nee Cowan, 1919-2006). While many people in and near Williams Lake know of her, most British Columbians, even art historians, aren't familiar with her life and work, though this gap has recently been broached by Julie Fowler in *The Grande Dames of the Cariboo* (2013), a study of Sonia and her artist mother Vivien Cowan (1893-1990), which serves as a companion piece to this biography of Sonia Cornwall.

Salloum explores Cornwall's deep roots in the Cariboo, reveals the historical context of the Cowan and Cornwall families, and sketches Sonia Cowan's birth in Kamloops and her move to the Onward Ranch, at 150 Mile House south of Williams Lake, before she was two years old. Salloum's extensive research reveals the historical foundations of the Cariboo ranching culture and the important economic and social connections between these huge land holdings and other points in Canada and overseas.

Salloum reveals how Sonia Cowan came to be entrenched in the ranching

way of life. As a teenager, to help support her widowed mother and younger sister, she began working alongside male ranch hands, mending fences, driving cattle, ploughing fields, and battling the elements. Like Carr, she was a prolific artist intoxicated by experimentation. She created woodblock prints, linocuts, and batiks as well as sketches, watercolours, and oils. As a self-taught artist, she was completely free to experiment, and Salloum recalls her innovative approaches to subject and technique through excerpts from letters and transcripts of interviews. Her vibrant personality comes through in her energetic determination to realize her artistic vision. Having lived in the Cariboo for her entire life, and deeply attuned to the spirit of place, Sonia's art reflected an intimate knowledge and a resounding love of the world around her.

Onward Ranch became a focal point for any kind of intellectual and artistic gathering. Indeed it is not too much of a stretch to call it a viable Cariboo version of a Paris salon. The book is peppered with anecdotes from those who knew the family. Excerpts from diaries, correspondence, interviews, and newspaper clippings, along with revealing photographs, provide depth and texture to the lives and work of Sonia and her mother Vivien. Their hospitality was genuine and legendary. Vivien, and Sonia's father Charles Cowan – an Irish-born former North West Mounted Police officer famous for managing Cariboo ranches for wealthy Englishmen – enjoyed entertaining and attracted a wide circle of friends who became regular visitors to the ranch, including the artists A.Y. Jackson, Joseph Plaskett, Liliias Torrance Newton, Herbert Siebner, Molly Lamb Bobak, and Takao Tanabe. Sonia kept the ranching and artistic traditions alive when she married rancher Hugh Cornwall of Ashcroft and moved to

Jones Lake Ranch, a section of Onward Ranch. The homes of Sonia and her mother were conduits for the stimulation of the arts in the region, and, in 1945, the two women and A.Y. Jackson formed the still-thriving Cariboo Art Society. One of the many satisfying connections made in the book is the identification, from photographs, of the same iconic barn at Onward Ranch in the work of Cornwall, Jackson, Plaskett, Tanabe, and Siebner.

Salloum provides context for Jackson's tantalizing mention in his autobiography, *A Painter's Country*, of the Cariboo artist Vivien Cowan and "her two charming daughters." We now know that Vivien took classes at the Banff School of Fine Arts in the summer of 1945 with Jackson, a founding member of the Group of Seven and a brilliant painter with a special affinity for western Canada. Always interested in a new adventure and keen to paint any new pocket of the country, Jackson accepted Vivien's invitation to visit her at Onward Ranch. He appreciated the rolling hills, the vast spaces of ranch land, and the company of Vivien and her daughters; he soon became a mentor to Sonia, whom he recognized as a gifted and original artist. Letters and sketches flew between Jackson in Ottawa and Sonia in the Cariboo. Having grown up on the ranch, Sonia had a depth of knowledge and a connection to the land that Jackson recognized and fostered. Her chosen subjects – the landscape and cattle, and the cultural occasions of the Cariboo (e.g., rodeos) – received the approbation of one of the most celebrated Canadian artists of the twentieth century. A similar friendship and mentorship arose between Sonia and the artist Joseph Plaskett. The encouragement of Jackson and Plaskett, along with their careful criticism of her technique and composition, sustained Sonia in what would be periods of doubting isolation.

Sheryl Salloum is well positioned through her previous research and writing to present Sonia Cornwall's story. She also lived in the Cariboo for a decade. While the six by nine inch (approximately fifteen by twenty three centimetres) format of the book has some advantages, the isolation of paintings in a middle section labelled "gallery" doesn't do justice to Cornwall's artistic achievement. It would be much more effective to insert images of paintings into the text in the places in which they are discussed. It was also unfortunate, and I suspect a publisher's dilemma, that the cost of producing a worthy study of this artist meant reducing the number and size of colour images: some of Cornwall's remarkable work merited more space, and the book needed an index.

Nonetheless, this is a path-breaking biography that convincingly presents Sonia Cornwall as an engaging and modern BC woman, fiercely independent and indomitable. Sometimes, as with Carr's career, economic and physical demands became impediments, but Cornwall was always able to reset her focus on painting. She was also a source of inspiration and influence to other artists in British Columbia and beyond, and her legacy is a lasting record and expression of ranch life in central British Columbia. Encompassing every form of work and life familiar to a Cariboo rancher, her art demonstrates Georgia O'Keeffe's observation that what is really important about an artist is where she is from.

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Creative Margins: Cultural Production in Canadian Suburbs

Alison L. Bain

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. 294 pp. \$32.95 paper.

GINNY RATSOY

Thompson Rivers University

ALISON BAIN, an associate professor of geography at York University, begins *Creative Margins* with David Gordon and Mark Janzen's assertion that "Canada is a suburban nation" (3), noting that our population, like that of the United States and Australia, is decentralizing more rapidly than ever. Although the relationship between Australia's suburban cultural spaces and artists' creativity has been well documented, such has not been the case in North America.

After tracing the rise of Vancouver and Toronto as "world-class" cities against the backdrop of the neoliberal movement to commodify urban culture, Bain makes a "pit stop" (27) at Arbour Lake, an outer suburb of Calgary where a cul-de-sac has been transformed into a communal creative and activist space. She then moves to the suburbs that form the bulk of her study – Etobicoke, Mississauga, North Vancouver, and Surrey – one example each in Ontario and British Columbia of inner and outer suburbs. Thus, those studying British Columbia receive both detailed information about the province and germane comparisons. This logically organized book, written in an accessible style, is rich in fact and anecdote, making it engaging reading for varied audiences. It is the result of extensive interviews with cultural producers – practising artists of virtually every medium, arts administrators, and cultural planners. Bain closely

scrutinizes cultural spaces – from "top-down" suburban multi-purpose flagships constructed to mimic, and reproduce the effect of, their urban counterparts to "from-the-ground-up" community centres generated by suburban cultural workers in less likely locations such as strip malls and head shops.

Bain dispels stereotypes of suburbs as cultural wastelands propagating conformity, mediocrity, and repression. Close to nature and city, suburbs offer isolation and community, rural simplicity and urban complexity. Cultural workers select these "spatial buffers" (104) for reasons similar to those of their neighbours: they offer quality and security – sufficient space at an affordable price. The other side of the suburbs as "nowhere" is the suburbs as frontier. To the cultural-worker-as-pioneer, suburbia's limitations are challenges that encourage greater effort and community making.

However, *Creative Margins* acknowledges suburbia's disadvantages. Some interviewees report isolation: connections with colleagues, audiences, resources, and venues may be in short supply. More critically, the aforementioned flagships, products of "civic elites" (149), damage their communities by focusing on branding and tourism in the service of business.

Bain provides compelling evidence that planners should shift efforts to promoting and sustaining creative practice within their communities. For example, Etobicoke's Franklin Horner Community Centre, established in the 1980s, has a large intercultural membership, is a home for fifty-two groups as diverse as a narcotics anonymous chapter, a barbershop quartet, and various dance troupes, and aspires to be an arts teaching facility. North Vancouver's Presentation House Arts Centre houses the non-profit Creative Dominion Society, which runs a multidisciplinary creative-

process facilitation program that fosters cross-pollination and a program that provides select performers with free one-on-one feedback and an on-site public performance venue. Concluding that suburban cultural workers succeed with smaller projects that “embed the arts in everyday routines and spaces” (184), she encourages planners to foster community networks.

This welcome addition to the study of Canadian places will interest cultural practitioners and researchers as well as urban and cultural planners and urban and small city researchers. Although not a textbook, *Creative Margins* should also attract those who teach social and cultural history more generally. I am struck by both Bain’s use of “margins” in the title and her characterization of suburbs as “places in a continual process of becoming” (5). Canada has frequently been similarly described; perhaps ours is a suburban nation in more ways than one.

*In the Spirit of the Ancestors:
Contemporary Northwest Coast
Art at the Burke Museum*

Robin K. Wright and Kathryn
Bunn-Marcuse, editors

Seattle: University of Washington
Press, 2014. 168 pp. \$34.95 paper.

ALAN HOOVER
Victoria

In the Spirit of the Ancestors celebrates the Burke Museum’s contemporary Northwest Coast art collection. The writers, four academics and four artists, all have strong ties to this Seattle museum, and the artists featured here discuss their own creations in the museum’s collection. A consistent theme throughout the publication is

the large and positive influence of Bill Holm, curator emeritus at the Burke, on the course of contemporary Northwest Coast artistic production. Holm also contributes a useful foreword to this volume.

These artists and academics examine a variety of genres, collections, and material remains from much of the Northwest Coast area. Shaun Peterson, a Puyallap Coast Salish artist, analyzes traditional Coast Salish two-dimensional design to demonstrate that, unlike northern formline art, it is built on negative design elements rather than positive formlines. He provides explanations for the presence in Washington State of the very non-Salish-style story poles and explains why many Salish artists continue to use “variations of the northern formline system” (18). Margaret Blackman of the State University of New York considers the Blackman-Hall Collection of 1,168 silkscreen prints that forms the bulk of the contemporary art collection at the Burke. Evelyn Vanderhoop, a Haida weaver from Masset, explores the making of dance robes, so-called Chilkat blankets, now renamed *naaxin*, the Haida and Tlingit name for this type of textile. She also discusses the rebirth of the geometrically designed Ravenstail robes that predated *naaxin* weavings. Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse of the Burke Museum compares the use of personal adornment in non-ceremonial contexts with the use of regalia in ceremonies such as feasts, potlatches, and funerals among northern and central coast peoples. She includes a discussion of tattoos and piercings and of how attitudes towards these practices have changed over time.

In the Spirit of the Ancestors also contains a chapter by the Haida artist Lisa Telford, who learned how to weave from her aunt, the Masset-born Haida weaver Delores Churchill. Like Vanderhoop, Telford is very positive about the role

of the Burke and its collections in her rediscovery of Northwest Coast bark-and-root weaving. Tla-o-qui-aht (Nuu-chah-nulth) artist Joe David provides a personal and spiritual discussion of what mask-making means to him. Robin Wright, curator emeritus at the Burke, provides a survey of wooden box drums and their reappearance among northern and central groups as a prime Northwest Coast bass instrument. Emily Moore of Colorado State University discusses the theft of artefacts, including two house posts, from a Tlingit village in 1899 and their subsequent return by the Burke in 2001. She introduces the concept of “propatriation,” a clever play on “repatriation,” in which the Tlingit initiated the creation of two sculptures for the Burke to acknowledge the belated but appropriate action by this settler institution.

The essays are replete with colour illustrations of the objects discussed and studied, and the last fifty pages offer a portfolio of near full-page images of additional pieces. The editors are to be congratulated for including the voices of the Indigenous creators and giving the same coverage to textiles and basketry that historically has been given to sculpture, engraving, and graphic work.



*Coded Territories: Tracing
Indigenous Pathways in New
Media Art*

Steven Loft and Kerry
Swanson, editors

Calgary: University of Calgary
Press, 2014. 232 pp. \$24.95 paper.

ROB McMAHON
University of Alberta

IN THIS FASCINATING collection, seven Indigenous artists from across Canada illustrate how digital technologies and Indigenous ontologies combine to inform new media theory and practice. In different ways, the contributors demonstrate how digital technologies are not solely a colonizing force; they can also support renewal and resurgence, provided the right conditions are in place. Jason Lewis writes, “Aboriginal communities have many ways of talking about the past ... What we do not do much of is talk about our future” (56). But regardless of one’s cultural background, Lewis and the other artists featured in this work provide empowering examples of how “future imaginaries of our choosing may be developed and supported” (58).

The essays in this book infuse Indigenous tradition and ceremony in the protocols and practices guiding technological development. British Columbia-born artist and educator Archer Pechawis argues for “a spiritual growth that catches up with and supersedes our technical prowess” (37), and he illustrates this by combining powwow hand drumming with digital audio samples. Jackson 2bears describes how the act of crate digging for vinyl records at a Salvation Army thrift shop triggered an audio-visual remix project that reappropriated “Ten Little Indians,”

western films, and other colonial imagery into a performance of collective catharsis imbued with spiritual energy. These forms of new media production and performance not only reflect self-expression and critique but also invoke the spirits, ceremonies, and relations of Indigenous epistemologies. Theorists of Indigenous resurgence point to how lived practices manifest such knowledge in myriad forms, and the artists featured in this work illustrate how the (re)shaping of new media forms such as audio collage, video gaming, and augmented reality are expressions of this process.

As co-editor Steven Loft points out in the book's introduction, Indigenous peoples have always encoded their knowledge systems in emergent media. Importantly, he notes that the ways they do this reflect a distinct "cosmological dynamic" anchored in the teachings of the four directions. Rather than the media ecology posited by Western theorists like Marshall McLuhan, Loft writes: "For Indigenous people the 'media landscape' becomes just that: a landscape, replete with life and spirit, inclusive of beings, thought, prophecy and the underlying connectedness of all things" (xvi). Along with new media theory and practice, this perspective is a needed contribution to the field of Indigenous technology development and use. Researchers based in universities and in communities are documenting how Indigenous peoples are appropriating digital technologies in areas such as education, health, and economic development, but much of that inquiry begins with a technical treatment of infrastructure or applications. This book directs our attention to the ways of knowing, logics, beliefs, and traditions that drive uniquely Indigenous visions for such digital resources. It offers important lessons to help us collectively navigate the evolving landscape of the network society.

*Tellings from Our Elders:
Lushootseed syəyəhub. Volume 1:
Snohomish Texts as Told by
Martha Williams Lamont,
Elizabeth Krise, Edward Sam,
and Agnes Jules James*
David Beck and Thom Hess

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014. 616 pp.
\$165.00 cloth.

*Tellings from Our Elders:
Lushootseed syəyəhub. Volume 2:
Tales from the Skagit Valley as
Told by Susie Sampson Peter,
Dora Solomon, Mary Sampson
Willup, Harry Moses, Louise
Anderson, Martin Sampson,
Dewey Mitchell,
and Alice Williams*

David Beck and Thom Hess

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 404 pp.
\$165.00 cloth.

EWA CZAYKOWSKA-HIGGINS
University of Victoria

THE TWO volumes of tusyəhub ʔə tudiʔ tusluχ luχ čəl – *Tellings from Our Elders* – are the latest additions to a significant body of published dxʷləšucid syəyəhub, or Lushootseed stories. dxʷləšucid, or Lushootseed, as it is known in English, has perhaps the most extensive published collection of narratives and literature of any Salishan language. The previous publications include several bilingual collections of stories (e.g., Sampson 1995; Shelton 1998); a bilingual volume of stories with discussion, commentary, and annotation (Bierwert 1996); three Lushootseed Reader volumes with

audiotapes that teach grammar needed to read the stories (Hess 1995, 1998, 2006); and several publications of stories in Lushootseed and English translation with accompanying commentary and notes (e.g., Moses and Langen 1998).

The new volumes, like all the previously published materials, are selected from stories recorded by the last generation of elders who spoke $dx^w\text{l}\acute{s}ucid$ as a mother tongue and who worked in the 1950s with Leon Metcalf (a high school music teacher) and in the 1960s with linguist Thom Hess, who, in turn, later worked on transcribing and translating the stories with $shudub\acute{s}$ - (Snohomish-) speaking elders and with $Vi\ taq^w\acute{s}\acute{e}blu?$ Hilbert, who was a speaker of the $sqaj\acute{o}t$ (Skagit) variety of $dx^w\text{l}\acute{s}ucid$. The latest volumes are themselves the result of collaboration between Hess and linguist David Beck (Hess's former student) and were completed and published after Hess's death in 2007.

Volume 1 is a collection of eighteen stories (two of them in two tellings each) from the southernmost $sduhub\acute{s}$ (Snohomish) variety of $dx^w\text{l}\acute{s}ucid$, spoken on the Tulalip Reservation on Puget Sound. It begins with a foreword from the Tulalip Tribes Language Department that, among other things, addresses the meaning of the word "sy\acute{e}hub" (story). The stories in Volume 1 are the most narratively complete and accessible of the Snohomish $sy\acute{e}hub$, and are told by $s\acute{e}swix\acute{a}b$ Martha Williams Lamont, Elizabeth Charles (Charley) Krise, $s^?adacut$ Edward "Hagan" Sam, and $lalacut$ Agnes Jules James. Volume 2 is a collection of nine stories from the $sqaj\acute{o}t$ variety of $dx^w\text{l}\acute{s}ucid$, spoken in communities located on the Skagit River. The stories are told by eight elders, Susie $g^w\acute{a}q^wul^c^? \acute{o}?$ Sampson Peter, Dora Solomon, Mary Sampson Willup, Harry Moses, Louise Anderson, Martin $?alata\acute{t}$ Sampson, Dewey Mitchell, and

Alice Williams. Four are tellings from the Star Child saga, a Lushootseed "version of the pan-Northwest Coast story of how daylight was stolen" (2:5), and four are tellings of the Basket Ogress story. Volume 2 includes a foreword by Jay Miller about $Vi\ taq^w\acute{s}\acute{e}blu?$ Hilbert – teacher, translator, linguist, storyteller, Washington State Living Treasure (1989), and founder of Lushootseed Research – who was involved in the initial translation of all but one of the stories in the volume. Both volumes include introductions written by Beck providing clearly laid out and explained information about the $dx^w\text{l}\acute{s}ucid$ language, about the texts themselves, and about the transcription, translation, analysis, and form of presentation of the texts. Each volume includes, in addition, short biographies of the tellers, a glossary of terms, and references.

The publication of the *Tellings from our Elders* volumes has occurred at approximately the same time as another significant collection of $nsiylxc\acute{e}n$ (Colville-Okanagan) stories by the Colville storyteller Peter J. Seymour (Seymour 2015). The publication of two such magnificent sets of collections alongside previous publications of $dx^w\text{l}\acute{s}ucid$ stories and collections from other Salish languages, such as the $St^?at^?imc$ (Lillooet) narratives edited by Matthewson (2005), for instance, opens up comparative possibilities and questions: about the format used to present stories and for whom they are intended; about the representation of "authorship" or "editorship"; about the value of different types of translation; and also about the name(s) used to talk about the stories themselves (e.g., what kinds of connotations do the various terms "stories," "traditional stories," "tellings," "narratives," "texts," and "myths" hold?).

As far as presentation format and type of translation are concerned, the *Tellings*

from our *Elders* volumes are set apart from the other collections of dx^wləšucid stories. The stories in the *Tellings* volumes are presented in four-line format with interlinear glossing to “represent the full grammatical and morphological structure of the language” (2:16). Each sequence of text is represented in four different forms: the transcription line (which is the first line) is in dx^wləšucid itself; the parsing line breaks down the dx^wləšucid words into their lexical and grammatical components; the analysis line translates and glosses each word component; and the gloss line provides an English translation of the whole text sequence. As explained in Beck’s introductions, the English translations are not always fully idiomatic but, rather, focus on reflecting the morphological and syntactic structure of the dx^wləšucid words and sentences. In contrast, the Lushootseed Research volumes present stories line by line, with idiomatic English translations positioned in columns adjacent to the dx^wləšucid. Bierwert’s edited volume presents the stories aesthetically as literary forms, in lines that attempt to capture narrative structure and that help the reader to imagine how the stories are told out loud; it lays out dx^wləšucid and English in face-to-face format, with no glossing of individual words. The Seymour collection presents stories in English first and then provides the stories a second time, in ns̓y̓lx̓c̓ən with interlinear format and glossing. The St’at’imc oral narratives are presented in St’at’imc language first, followed by idiomatic translations, followed by the stories presented in interlinear format.

Each format addresses itself to a different audience and privileges language and meaning differently. Similarly, the attribution of “authorship” (illustrated below by comparing information provided in references) can list linguist(s) as author(s), editor(s), translator(s); the

storyteller as author or collaborator; and so on. In the two *Tellings* volumes, the presentational format, type of translation, and attribution of “authorship” indicate that the volumes are primarily targeted at users who are interested in the grammatical structure and patterns of dx^wləšucid, whether these users are linguists or language speakers/learners who wish to study and understand Lushootseed grammar. The level of scholarly analysis and structural understanding is exemplary.

As excellent examples of a specifically linguistic form of textual presentation, these volumes definitely achieve what they have set out to do. As such, they are not books that one would pick up simply to read the stories. Nevertheless, it is possible to discern that the stories are rich in teachings, that they are beautifully told, and, as the Volume 1 foreword by Tūlalip Tribes Language Department reminds readers, that “the syəhub is a cumulative unwritten tradition, ... a gyre of motifs, rhetorical strategies, characters, plots, teachings, commentary, names, formulas, places, histories, customs, songs, specialized knowledge, and much else” (1:ix).

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*They Called Me Number One:
Secrets and Survival at an
Indian Residential School*

Bev Sellars

Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2013.
227 pp. \$19.95 paper.

JAY LEWYN
Nanaimo

BEV SELLARS's bestselling memoir, *They Called Me Number One*, is a personal account of an important part of the colonial history of British

Columbia told from a specific region in the province (the Cariboo) and from a perspective uncommon to the general public, an Aboriginal woman who is also a community leader and successful politician. A third-generation Indian residential school survivor, Sellars poignantly illustrates her personal struggles and those of her family and community, the Xat'sull (Soda Creek) First Nation in Williams Lake, with the structure of the Indian residential school system and colonialism in general. Sellars's memoir details her personal "victory ... against the residential-school experience" (191), but it is also a testament to the resiliency of her community, a valuable contribution to the growing number of non-fiction publications concerning residential school history in Canada, and a moving account of the traumatic legacy of these institutions on Aboriginal peoples and their cultures.

Elected chief of Xat'sull in 1987, Sellars has also earned degrees in history and law. Shortly after becoming chief, she started writing stories to share with the younger generations of her family. These stories were about the injustices her family members experienced at St. Joseph's Mission Indian Residential School in Williams Lake. She hoped that their telling would help alleviate the school's traumatic intergenerational legacy in her family. By including many of these stories in her memoir, she extends her message of healing far beyond her initial intentions. The black-and-white image on the cover shows her two granddaughters, one of them whispering into the ear of the other, whose grim look suggests the content of this secret. Her memoir includes family photos spanning from 1909 to the time of publication, several of them taken at St. Joseph's Mission, as well as maps detailing the Williams Lake region, a family tree of six generations from the

late 1800s to the present day, and a useful index.

Sellars divides her memoir into fourteen chapters arranged in chronological order. The opening chapter describes the history of her family and concludes with images of her happy early childhood prior to her contraction of tuberculosis at age five. Chapter 2 tells the story of her twenty-month recovery at Coqualeetza Indian Hospital in Sardis. Sellars conveys the loneliness resulting from her having been separated from her family and speaks of the kindness of one of the nurses. She also acknowledges the ability to forget, a childhood survival mechanism conducive to the alleviation of trauma. She did not recognize her family following her recovery because she had blocked out their memory to “dull the pain of loneliness” (26).

Chapters 3 through 8 cover the five years that Sellars was forced to attend St. Joseph’s Mission. She details the inhumane treatment and poor living conditions at the institution. Her memory of this period is clear, except for her recollection of her fourth grade, which is a “total blank” (40). A male friend later revealed to her that he was sexually abused at St. Joseph’s Mission. She suggests that the extent of abuse in residential schools, sexual and otherwise, was more extensive than current records indicate. Sellars also includes positive memories from her time at St. Joseph’s, thus illustrating both the resiliency of Aboriginal children and the value of a sense of humour as a survival mechanism. The final six chapters follow her life after residential school: her public school experience, her near-death from suicide, her affirming realization that she had survived into adulthood, and her journey as a mother and eventual leader of her community.

One of the strengths of *They Called Me Number One* is Sellars’s inclusion of

personal stories contributed by family and community members. She presents this accumulated body of knowledge in an authoritative and respectful manner to create a memoir that provides a rich history of a community over several generations. Her attention to detail and her depiction of specific individuals, institutions, and historical events make this a valuable contribution to the historical record of British Columbia. Her generalized use of the term “White” may reinforce racist binary belief systems in some readers and potentially diminish the considerable value of her voice, but I must agree with Kwakwaka’wakw chief Bill Wilson that this book will be a valuable contribution to the province’s educational curriculum. I can also recommend it to anyone interested in the history of Indian residential schools in Canada and in the Cariboo region generally.

*Indigenous Men and
Masculinities: Legacies,
Identities, Regeneration*

Robert Alexander Innes and
Kim Anderson, editors

Winnipeg: University of Manitoba
Press, 2015. 304 pp. \$27.95 paper.

JEAN-PAUL RESTOULE
University of Toronto

MASCULINITY IS NOT an easy concept to define, never mind Indigenous masculinities, and in *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, co-editors Robert Innes and Kim Anderson don’t really attempt to define it. In the closing chapter, Anderson and Innes report on findings from a national research study of Indigenous men in focus groups that argues that the concept

itself is not Indigenous and, further, that it assumes a certain starting point or trajectory that is antithetical to Indigenous tribal goals. While Innes and Anderson are not forthcoming with a definition of Indigenous masculinity, they nevertheless make some general suggestions for its improvement. And this leads to the two messages I take away from this book: (1) concepts of masculinity have contributed to colonialism; and (2) Indigenous men must take responsibility for charting and navigating a new course that challenges limited views of Indigenous masculinity.

Colonialism has disrupted the traditional roles and responsibilities of Indigenous men in their families and communities, an obstruction that has shifted values, traditions, and conceptions of gender in Indigenous lives globally. The legacy of colonialism, experienced and enacted through residential schools, prisons, sport, and media, persists today in the shocking statistics provided in the opening chapter: Indigenous males are subject to higher rates of violence, murder, and incarceration than any other group in Canada, including Indigenous women. While many years and decades passed before rightful attention was given to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, a campaign for which activists, artists, demonstrators, and some media have fought, the related story of men remains in darkness. Like the workings of colonialism, it functions best out of sight, in the shadows and unquestioned.

The chapters in this collection seek to illuminate the workings of colonialism on masculine identities, particularly Indigenous masculinities, and how they have altered not only how Indigenous men conceive of gender identities and roles but also the ways in which Indigenous families, communities, and

nations (dys)function as a result. Through the imposition of binary notions of gender and the accordance of greater worth to masculine roles, colonialism granted men a more powerful place vis-à-vis women and, in doing so, disrupted gender parity and equality. By marginalizing and making strange the roles of third- (or multiple-) gendered individuals, colonial constructions of gender norms were imposed upon Indigenous peoples and colonization was made more complete. Hypermasculine and “savage” roles such as the warrior and urban gangster have dominated public consciousness about what it means to be male and Indigenous to the point at which these images have been internalized by young Indigenous men.

Several of the contributors to *Indigenous Men and Masculinities* discuss the ways non-Indigenous (whitestream) society has constructed a sense of young Aboriginal men as fearsome, delinquent, and criminal, but it is disturbing how many of our youth have assumed such stereotypes to be true and have adopted them without realizing that there are alternatives within the realm of masculine Indigenous identity. And it is here that another theme emerges from this volume: the responsibility to decolonize and shape a positive view and reality of masculinity lies with Indigenous men. We are in control of our destiny. Even as colonization has created much of this mess and disruption, it is up to us to challenge such limited identities and images and put something positive in their place. The power of the individual to challenge expectations is told here by Phillip Borell in the story of Maori athlete James Tamou, who caused national controversy by choosing to leave New Zealand to play rugby – as though the Maori are somehow part of the New Zealand identity (Chapter 9). As tribal self-determining peoples, the Maori

have no allegiance to, or requirement to identify with, the colonizer state.

Another notion of responsibility applies to relationships with family, community, and Creation. One's manhood is determined or assessed by an ability to provide and protect relations with one's partner, children, parents, and siblings, and also to protect one's land, neighbours, extended families, and other beings. While these responsibilities might be culturally specific and vary depending on where and when one is raised – and some contributions to this volume are very much rooted in particular locales and times – what does seem to be uniformly consistent across all Indigenous communities discussed here is the global imposition of white patriarchal heteronormative notions of masculinity on Indigenous communities.

Indigenous Men and Masculinities is necessary reading for anyone doing work on Indigenous masculinities. It will be a touchstone in this area for some time. The chapters cover geographically diverse locations, ruminating on what Hawaiian, Maori, and Haudenosaunee maleness is about. The contributors also embody multiple social identities, from two-spirit, to urban street and gang-involved, to fatherly perspectives. What I also like about the text is that it opens up discussion rather than closes it down. It is not intended to be the final word on masculinities but a fertile starting point for debate. It's a great companion to Sam McKegney's *Masculindians* (University of Manitoba Press, 2014), which is the best-known recent work on the topic in Canada. It is also fitting that this book is co-edited by Kim Anderson, whose books on Indigenous feminine identities – *A Recognition of Being* (Toronto: Sumach Press, 2000); *Strong Women Stories* (Toronto: Sumach Press, 2003, with Bonita Lawrence); and *Life Stages and Native Women* (University of Manitoba

Press, 2011) – are hallmarks in the field of Indigenous feminisms and female identity formation. This volume provides a lovely complement to Anderson's earlier work. Understanding how we come to know about gender through Indigenous lenses and experiences is an important lesson both in self-awareness and in the workings of colonialism. We can learn a great deal about the workings of gender and the intersections with colonialism from the examples assembled by Innes and Anderson, and *Indigenous Men and Masculinities* will extend thoughtful conversations about Indigenous manhood into the twenty-first century.

*Working Mothers and
the Child Care Dilemma*

Lisa Pasolli

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 270 pp.
\$32.95 paper.

ESYLLT W. JONES

University of Manitoba

THE HISTORY of twentieth-century childcare has received scant attention from historians in Canada. Lisa Pasolli's compact study of childcare debates in British Columbia from the 1900s through the Harper era reveals what a historian can do to illuminate why we have the public policies that we do and, in particular, why in 2016 we still lack universal childcare programs. Much more than connecting the chronological dots (which is itself an important achievement), Pasolli provides an analytical explanation for the rather discouraging continuities that shaped decades of public debate and marginalized the childcare and employment needs of women

and families. Two well-sustained arguments stand out: (1) the persistent de-naturalizing of women's presence in the paid labour force and the strength of societal expectations that women's place was "in the home"; and (2) the fate that befalls social programs that are associated with the poor (who are most often women and their children).

As Pasolli's work indicates, the fact that childcare was designed and viewed as public support and moral uplift for the impoverished – as a welfare policy, essentially – brought stigmatization and public ambivalence. In times of fiscal restraint and conservative approaches to public policy, childcare was vulnerable. Thus, broader goals for women's equality across classes remained distant. At a time when many policy-makers think universality is an irrational luxury, it might be wise to consider the impact of targeted approaches.

Pasolli begins her study by revealing some important connections between mothers' pensions, first introduced in British Columbia in 1920, and attempts to create childcare services for working-class mothers. These histories are usually treated independently from one another, and placing them side-by-side is fruitful. Maternal feminists promoted mothers' pensions as a way of addressing the poverty of "deserving" women with children and without a male breadwinner. But the goal of mothers' pensions was, in part, to keep women at home with their children and to prevent the perceived evils of working motherhood. The notion that childcare was second best to mothering was established early, as was the sense that public programs were for poor women only.

This set of attitudes, it turns out, changed remarkably little over time. Indeed, one of Pasolli's most important insights is this consistency, despite the changing historical context for childcare debates. Challenges to dominant views

gained traction during the late 1960s and early 1970s as a result of the steady increase of women with children in the labour force and the activism of "second wave" feminists, who argued that women should be able to choose to take employment and build careers. Concrete results in terms of childcare policy, however, remained modest. It is a caution against any "onward-and-upward" notion of social change.

Working Mothers and the Child Care Dilemma takes a fairly traditional approach to its subject. It is predominantly a top-down study, although there are some case studies of women's advocacy efforts. I long to know more about these women, their lives, and their politics. Pasolli's evidence suggests that the culture of class played a role in shaping childcare politics and perhaps in determining a lack of broader public support for childcare. And certainly, political parties such as the NDP, when in government, chose to put the needs of poorer working women first, especially during periods of fiscal challenge. Whether they made such decisions easily, however, is an important issue. It would be valuable to know more about internal debates on the left, especially within British Columbia's NDP, which by the 1970s played an important role in increasing government support for childcare, despite, Pasolli argues, a limited embrace of feminist analysis.

Pasolli's study will interest historians of British Columbia, a province that, along with Quebec, invested heavily in public childcare. At about 180 pages of reading, it is the perfect length for teaching upper-year university courses. Students will find it clearly written, with a sustained central argument. A smart book on an issue we continue to wrestle with, and the sole monograph on the topic from a historian's perspective, it will find its way on to many bookshelves.