

## BOOK & FILM REVIEWS

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*Britannia's Navy on the West  
Coast of North America,  
1812-1914*  
Barry Gough

Victoria: Heritage House, 2016.  
416 pp. \$32.95 paper.

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THIS HANDSOME volume, published in hardback with a blue-and-white dust cover (featuring E.P. Bedwell's 1862 painting of the steam-sloop HMS *Plumper* on the front and a photograph of HMCS *Rainbow* in Esquimalt, January 1911, on the back), is an updated and expanded version of Gough's 1971 inaugural volume for UBC Press, then entitled *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914*.

Barry Gough's lifetime of research on the nineteenth-century Royal Navy and the Pacific Northwest is encapsulated in this volume. Gough stresses the maritime origins of Britain's role as an often reluctant colonial power at the frontiers of empire. The Pacific Northwest, and the future territory of British Columbia, initially factored into the British world-

system as a small hub in the Hudson's Bay Company's vast fur trading network. As the resource-rich Pacific coast began to be exploited in the 1840s, the need to establish clear border demarcations with the United States increased, and Vancouver Island emerged as a key naval supply station, culminating in the construction of the naval base at Esquimalt. This volume picks up where Gough's previous volumes, *Distant Dominion: Britain and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1579-1809* (UBC Press, 1980); *The Northwest Coast: British Navigation, Trade and Discoveries to 1812* (UBC Press, 1992); and *Gunboat Frontier* (UBC Press, 1995) left off.

Gough is keen to emphasize the connections between colonial periphery and imperial metropolis, and rightly so. The colonial history of British Columbia was profoundly influenced by naval developments throughout the nineteenth century. Even small warships, at critical moments, could produce profound results. Gough observes the "synchronicity" (56) of developments that hinged on single frigate actions, such as that between HMS *Phoebe* and USS *Essex* during the War of 1812 in the Pacific. Even to the discriminating eye of a veteran historian such as Gough, the vagaries of wind and weather over such

vast oceans seemed disconcertingly close to providential. Gough remarks that it was this story of the War of 1812 in the Pacific that inspired the 2003 Peter Weir adaptation of Patrick O'Brian's beloved *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, and it is this salt-air frontier flavour that imbues much of the text.

The breadth of the text steadily narrows, and what begins as a sweeping chronicle of the War of 1812 in the Pacific transitions to the unification of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) with Britain's colonial government, leading to the formation of Fort Victoria in 1843. At this point, the text becomes more appropriately a frontier history, and, with the exception of the retelling of the effort to seize Petropavlovsk during the Crimean War in 1854, an operation symbolic of the global scope of the Admiralty's naval effort during the war with Russia, the remainder of the text is focused on colonization rather than on grand strategy.

Gough focuses on the development of British Columbia and Vancouver Island as colonies, primarily during the governorship of HBC fur trader-turned-governor, James Douglas. Two-thirds of the book is dedicated to the origin, construction, and evolution of Esquimalt during the mid-Victorian period, when the port expanded from a small coal and forestry trading post to what would become the Royal Navy's major Pacific Ocean base, eventually supplanting Valparaiso in significance. After the American Civil War, however, the Royal Navy's presence on the Pacific began to decline, until the sweeping reforms of Sir John Fisher resulted in the abolition of the Pacific station altogether in 1905. The Royal Navy finally handed over control of Esquimalt to the newly formed Royal Canadian Navy in 1911.

The book is lavishly illustrated, including nearly fifty black-and-white

photographs of ships, harbours, and portraits, although oddly there is no list of illustrations in the reprint (there was in the 1971 original). The maps are simple but effective and are also drawn from the original publication. A particularly gratifying inclusion is a number of useful appendices containing valuable data on fleet sizes, ship locations, technology, and Royal Navy administration, although a list of governors of British Columbia should also have been included for ease of reference. The book is completed with endnotes and a full index, and it features a thorough bibliography that reflects the breadth of Gough's research.

In short, this classic volume helped define the naval historiography of the Pacific Northwest and, although not as thorough as Gough's more specialized later publications, is an approachable, engaging, and informative text, well deserving of a first or second appraisal.



*Boom Days in the Slocan*

Joseph Colebrook Harris

New Denver, BC: Chameleon Fire Editions, 2015. 43 pp. \$8.00 paper.

*Beginnings of the Bosun Ranch*

Joseph Colebrook Harris

New Denver, BC: Chameleon Fire Editions, 2015. 53 pp. \$8.00 paper.

*Industry and the Good Life  
around Idaho Peak*

Cole Harris

New Denver, BC: Chameleon Fire Editions, 2015. 50 pp. \$8.00 paper.

*Mist and Green Leaves: Japanese  
Canadians on the Harris Ranch*

Cole Harris

New Denver, BC: Chameleon Fire Editions, 2015. 33 pp. \$8.00 paper.

DUFF SUTHERLAND  
*Selkirk College*

EDITED BY Cole Harris, the Slocan History Series began with four booklets that focus primarily on the mining “boom days” of the 1890s and their long-term effects on the region. The first two booklets are accounts written in the 1940s by Cole Harris’s grandfather, Joseph Colebrook Harris, about his experiences of the “Silvery Slocan” boom and his establishment of the Bosun Ranch between New Denver and Silverton on Slocan Lake. The third booklet is a reprint with

a new introduction to Cole Harris’s well-known 1985 *Canadian Historical Review* article, “Industry and the Good Life around Idaho Peak,” which sets his grandfather’s accounts within a wider historical context. The final booklet is Cole Harris’s history and reminiscences of the wartime years when the federal government interned Japanese Canadians on his grandfather’s ranch. As series editor, Harris notes that the booklets are “intended primarily for residents of and visitors to the Slocan Valley in southeastern British Columbia” (*Boom Days*, i). These well-written, well-illustrated, and accessible booklets provide lively introductions to two distinctive moments in the modern history of the Slocan Valley. Taken together, the booklets also allow for reflection on the colonial and industrial history of British Columbia, about which Harris has written extensively.

Towards the end of his life, at the prompting of his daughter, Joseph Colebrook Harris wrote a long account of his early years in British Columbia, parts of which form the first two booklets in the Slocan History Series: *Boom Days in the Slocan* and *Beginnings of the Bosun Ranch*. Like many early settlers on the West Kootenay’s agricultural frontier in the late nineteenth century, J.C. Harris had a good education and came from a middle-class English family. He settled first in the Cowichan Valley in the early 1890s, visited the Slocan Valley during the boom, and settled permanently on Slocan Lake in 1897. Harris had studied at the Guelph Agricultural College and planned to supply the mining region with fresh fruit and vegetables. However, having arrived near the end of the boom, he had to diversify to make a living: though he sold farm produce, he also hauled supplies and ore for the mines, worked on road and wharf construction crews, sold firewood, and developed

a mining claim. As the boom wound down, the Bosun Ranch continued as part of a modest commercial economy focused on New Denver and Silverton. In *Industry and the Good Life around Idaho Peak*, Cole Harris views this kind of local economy as a common outcome of the staple economy of Canada. At the same time, Harris notes, his grandfather “lived a thoughtful, generous, and happy life on the Bosun Ranch” (*Beginnings*, 2).

J.C. Harris vividly describes an emerging colonial and industrial frontier in the West Kootenay. In *Boom Days*, he conveys the intensity of a boom that attracted attention and investment from across the Western world. He describes government officials trying to bring order to a disorderly frontier that extended from the American west, while rapidly emerging communities such as Sandon attempted to service mines and miners and house the owners and managers in style. He recounts the methods of prospectors who discovered and “proved” mining claims to sell to mining capitalists, and the efforts of haulers to move tons of ore with horses, sleds, and wagons, from mines usually located high on mountainsides to concentrators and shipping points. Harris refers to Sandon’s two railway branch lines, three bank branches, and numerous saloon licence applications. All this suggests productive energy, but Harris also describes how whisky and gambling ruined lives; miners dreamed of getting out of mining; and poor conditions, garbage, and filth led to typhoid fever outbreaks. In the final section of *Boom Days*, Harris describes the mining boom’s devastating impact on the wildlife and forests of the region. Harris loved the natural beauty of Slocan Lake and criticized miners and settlers for overhunting, clearing forests, and starting fires that burned broad swaths of the country, including communities like Sandon. He evokes “the sickening

pall of smoke over the country” that is well known to present-day residents of the region (*Boom Days*, 43).

*Beginnings of the Bosun Ranch* tells J.C. Harris’s story of coming to the Slocan, purchasing land, and developing the Bosun Ranch. By 1896, “astonishing stories of the new mining camps” reached the Cowichan Valley where Harris had a struggling farm (*Beginnings*, 3). The furor over William Jennings Bryan’s platform for “free coinage of silver” and the enthusiasm of fellow Fabians living in New Denver convinced Harris to investigate the region’s prospects. He describes his search for land with the famous prospector Eli Carpenter, his purchase of 245 acres – “less than twenty acres of which was really fit for cultivation” – between New Denver and Silverton, and his early work clearing the land and making a living (*Beginnings*, 26). Harris appears as an energetic, sociable settler who enjoyed these early farm years. He had money, too, which likely reduced his worries. Along with land, he purchased a pair of Clydesdales and hired labourers, including a boy from his Wiltshire home, Arthur Cleverly, and a friend from the Cowichan Valley, Charlie King (“the Bosun”). The ranch also employed “a small China boy we called Golly” as cook (*Beginnings*, 32). Harris was also prosperous enough to use the money from the sale of a mining claim to build a community theatre in New Denver. Nonetheless, as noted above, to make a living he also had to work at various jobs connected to the economy of the towns and mines. His became a common pattern of life and work in the West Kootenay. Looking back from the 1940s, J.C. Harris evoked an overwhelmingly male and European settler world in the Slocan Valley that remained, until recently, our dominant image of the BC resource frontier, including the “Silvery Slocan.”

*Industry and the Good Life around Idaho Peak* makes Cole Harris's 1985 scholarly article on the Slocan mining boom accessible to a wider audience as a booklet. It also helps readers of the entire series better understand the accounts and life of his grandfather. In a new introduction, Harris sets the Slocan Valley within the traditional territory of the Sinixt, to correct a long-standing colonial belief in an empty wilderness. Though there were references in other writings to Sinixt and Colville people in the valley in the 1890s, J.C. Harris made no mention of local Indigenous people. Cole Harris also corrects his own 1985 statement that Indigenous people had never lived near Idaho Peak. One feels the way is open for a fuller colonial history of the region.

*BC Studies* readers will be familiar with Harris's framework for understanding the history of the Slocan mining boom as an outcome of the staple economy, especially with respect to the contrasting histories of Sandon and New Denver. However, these first three booklets considered together raise questions about the origins of social relations in New Denver and Sandon. In addition to the staples trade, one wonders how much the long, bitter strike of 1899-1900 over the eight-hour day affected relationships on the Bosun Ranch and shaped the social history of the two communities. In a sense, after 1900, we are looking at two communities in the aftermath of a cataclysm.

The final booklet in the series also considers issues of colonialism and diversity. In *Mist and Green Leaves: Japanese Canadians on the Harris Ranch*, Cole Harris describes the relationship of his family to Japanese Canadians interned on the Far Field and in the main house of the Bosun Ranch. In August 1942, J.C. Harris leased the Bosun Ranch to the federal government as one of the Slocan Valley sites for interned Japanese

Canadians. The lease allowed the Harris family to remain on the ranch, where they came to know well the two hundred to 250 internees, including fifty elderly men and two cooks who lived in the old ranch house. J.C. Harris supported the internment of Japanese Canadians as a necessary step to protect a vulnerable community during a period of wartime hysteria. He also well understood the long history of hostility and racism towards Asians in British Columbia. And he felt that the Security Commission "handled the situation well and with commendable consideration for people caught in circumstances beyond their control" (*Mist*, 10). This was a common, and not uncontroversial, response among educated British Columbians.

The Harris family came to admire the internees for their fortitude in the face of hardship. They also appear to have prided themselves on their acceptance of the internees compared to the hostile response of the community in nearby Silverton. Harris includes evidence that the Japanese Canadian children had some positive memories of winter and summer activities around Slocan Lake. J.C. Harris's son, Sandy, and his family formed especially close relations with internees who lived nearby. We do not learn much about how the adult internees responded to their time on the ranch. Cole Harris concludes that the camps reflected the racism of white British Columbians who had failed to accept diversity. At the same time, despite a history of racism in the Slocan Valley, on the Harris ranch people came to know and appreciate each other. Harris views this as a more positive experience than that of some Harris extended family members who were interned in a Japanese camp in occupied China. It also suggests a tolerance of diversity that hardly existed during the 1890s mining boom.

In *Industry and the Good Life*, Cole Harris notes that his grandfather's Bosun Ranch on Slocan Lake "posed many of the questions about this country that, over the years, I have tried to answer" (*Industry*, 49). The well-produced booklets of the Slocan History Series introduce us to his grandfather and consider some of these questions. The answers suggest how broader forces, including capitalist development in a new colonial setting, affected the lives of a diversity of people living in a remote valley in British Columbia. The people of the Slocan Valley and beyond will find this a useful and interesting series.

*Sister Soldiers of the Great War:  
The Nurses of the Canadian  
Army Medical Corps*

Cynthia Toman

Studies in Canadian Military  
History. Vancouver: UBC Press,  
2016. 312 pp. \$34.95 paper.

SARAH GLASSFORD  
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**D**URING THE First World War, 2,845 women enlisted as lieutenant nursing sisters in the Canadian Army Medical Corps (CAMC) (39), but over the ensuing century their experiences of service have largely gone untold. They comprised a tiny proportion of the total Canadian Expeditionary Force (one-half of 1 percent), but each of the 761,635 patients admitted to a CAMC medical unit during the war came into contact with them (219). In *Sister Soldiers of the Great War* historian Cynthia Toman returns the CAMC nursing sisters to their rightful place at the heart of Canada's First World War military medical system.

Drawing heavily on newly available diaries, memoirs, and letters, as well as a demographic analysis of the personnel records of every single nursing sister, the book is an invaluable addition to the histories of Canadian women, medicine and nursing, and the First World War. It will be the authoritative work on its subject for years to come and, in its focus on rank-and-file sisters, an admirable companion to Susan Mann's 2005 biography of CAMC matron-in-chief Margaret Macdonald.

The nursing sisters came from all provinces; 2.7 percent of them were born in British Columbia, and the same proportion enlisted there. Two of the nurses profiled in the book have a BC connection: Ellanore Parker moved to Victoria with her husband in 1948 (57), while Elsie Dorothy Collis was raised in British Columbia and had personal and professional connections with Victoria, Salt Spring Island, and a variety of military hospitals in the province (61). Reference is also briefly made to the hospital ship the *Prince George*, which made a single voyage up the BC coast (68). Individual nurses like Parker and Collis are profiled in Chapter 2, but the twenty pages of consecutive mini-biographies found here would have worked better as an appendix that could be consulted in small doses. Two existing appendices (a historiographical essay and a list of CAMC medical units) and a thorough bibliography are useful additions.

Between the introduction and epilogue, six chapters explore the nurses' place within the British military medical system; their collective and individual profiles; their work and working conditions, and how they coped; their social life; and their postwar careers. Wartime nurses have long been romanticized as self-sacrificing saints, but Toman foregrounds the nursing sisters' own words, with engagingly earthy

results. Her nurses occasionally soothe fevered brows, but they also get dirty, cold, and frustrated, host tea parties, sightsee, search their clothes for lice, suffer dysentery, bristle at the futility of the war, resent their co-workers and supervisors, and, above all, *work*. The finer nuances of their nursing practice are explained in prose that is medically precise yet comprehensible to lay readers.

By revealing the nursing sisters' wartime world, the book inadvertently throws into sharp relief the terrible experience of the soldiers they nursed. In this way, the military nurses whose voices animate *Sister Soldiers of the Great War* once again serve as witnesses to the war's cruel destruction as etched into the bodies of their soldier-patients, just as they first did a century ago.

*War-Torn Exchanges:  
The Lives and Letters of Nursing  
Sisters Laura Holland and  
Mildred Forbes*  
Andrea McKenzie

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016.  
268 pp. \$32.95 paper.

C.M. HANEY  
*University of British Columbia*

FOR FOUR turbulent years (June 1915 to May 1919) Nursing Sisters Laura Holland and Mildred Forbes served together in the Canadian Army Medical Corps, taking on new administrative and bedside nursing roles in joint postings to England, Lemnos, Salonika, and France.

In this welcome volume, Andrea McKenzie compiles the surviving letters written home by Laura and Mildred

throughout their service. Preserving the women's military experiences as told through their own words, *War-Torn Exchanges* makes available a rich well of rare primary text comprising Canadian nurses' narratives written during and over the course of the First World War from multiple locations and in diverse conditions. McKenzie, however, successfully approaches the compilation as a cohesive collection, offering close readings of the letters combined with careful reflection on the wartime contexts in which they were written and on the women's formative civilian experiences and social positions.

Her keen analysis reveals that the women generally wrote from a professional perspective – that is, as military nurses describing their work – framed by their profound personal friendship. This discursive mode, McKenzie suggests, offers representations of wartime conditions that offer an alternative to those that are expressed in more commonly available military- and self-censored soldier-to-civilian correspondence, public media, fragmented wartime writing, or romanticized retrospectives. Significantly contributing, then, to extant war literature, McKenzie also adds to a growing scholarship that lays bare the material realities of nursing work. In doing so, McKenzie highlights Laura's and Mildred's vivid portraits of improvised, messy, bodily work performed in intolerable conditions largely engendered through military mismanagement. She convincingly argues that these representations disrupt familiar conceptualizations of war as thoughtfully organized, soldiers as meaningfully sacrificed, and military nursing as the ministrations of angels. Yet beyond these more obvious considerations, McKenzie invites readers to explore how women's friendships are also represented in the

nurses' rich descriptions by paying close attention to how and why they are sustained, strengthened, and exercised in a consuming professional context that emphasizes the very real trauma and horror of war.

In addition to their official nursing work, *War-Torn Exchanges* captures the women's – and especially Laura's – significant overseas experiences with and critiques of social disparity and health inequities. Laura offered visceral representations of the squalor and "poverty and filth" she encountered (121). Foreshadowing her postwar work, she commented on the "intelligent and bright looking [Romanian refugee] kiddies, [saying that] one longs to take them away from this poverty & idleness & give them a start somewhere" (137). Not surprisingly, then, scholars of Canadian women's and children's health will undoubtedly recognize Laura Holland and Mildred Forbes as essential to the creation and implementation of federal public policy. Having trained with Mildred in social welfare after the war, and following her friend's death, Laura became active in "transforming child welfare in British Columbia," with her work "resonating throughout the twentieth century" (213) in Canada. Readers interested in the development of Canadian, and more specifically British Columbian, health policy now have the fortunate opportunity to explore *War-Torn Exchanges* for some of its most significant beginnings.

In recovering, preserving, and examining Laura's and Mildred's correspondence, in *War-Torn Exchanges* Andrea McKenzie provides an indispensable service to contemporary readers as the women no doubt did to their friends and family during the war. As Mildred exclaimed, in the absence of such accounts, "the people at home have *no idea* what the soldiers [and nurses, we

might now add] ... went through for them" (194).

*Remembered in Bronze and Stone: Canada's Great War Memorial Statuary*

Alan Livingston MacLeod

Victoria: Heritage House, 2016.  
192 pp. \$24.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT  
*Cambridge University*

IN THE TWO decades following the Great War, Canadian sculptors, architects, and stonemasons produced over four thousand war monuments in the form of plaques, shafts, crosses, obelisks, stelae, and figurative sculptures. Some were paid for by federal and provincial governments; others by civic-minded organizations. Whatever form they took, war memorials provided fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, and sons and daughters throughout Canada with a site for grieving, remembering, and celebrating those who did not survive the Great War. Above all, the production of war memorials gave the sculptors who made them a means of earning a living during the financially lean interwar years.

In *Remembered in Bronze and Stone: Canada's Great War Memorial Statuary*, Alan Livingston MacLeod focuses on the more than 410 figurative war memorials that can be found in villages, towns, and cities across the country today. MacLeod has visited – and photographed – them all. And the results are a revelation. There are grenade-throwing and bayonet-stabbing soldiers. There are also pensive and reflective soldiers, like the grieving soldier sculpted in Fernie, British

Columbia. There is Canada's elaborate National War Memorial in Ottawa, featuring a cavalcade of uniformed men and women marching through a commanding arch. Then there is the largest of all: the Canadian National Vimy Memorial, with its two seventy-metre pilons, tonnes of stone and granite, and imposing allegorical figures, that commands the ridge above the Dauoi Plain in southeastern France.

The war memorials featured in this handsome volume were rendered in a plethora of styles ranging from the Beaux-Arts and Art Nouveau traditions of the late nineteenth century to the Art Deco style that came to prominence during the 1920s. And the artists who created these figurative works came not only from Canada but also from Great Britain and Italy. Indeed, as MacLeod reveals, anonymous artists in Carrera, Italy, produced almost half of Canada's figurative war memorials. This accounts for why MacLeod found Canadian soldiers wearing soft, rather than hard, hats; striking stiff stand-to-attention poses; and wearing uniforms with a disturbing similarity to those worn by New Zealand and Australian soldiers.

Alan MacLeod is not just interested in what was represented on top of the plinth: he tells us about the soldiers whose names are featured at its base. For example, he writes movingly about a young bank clerk from Dorchester, Ontario, who enlisted when he was just seventeen. Lance-Corporal Harvard McAllister survived four years on the front line only to be killed in Hangard Wood just three months before the end of the hostilities. MacLeod underscores the distance between the graves of young men like McAllister, whose remains were buried in the Demuin British Cemetery on the Somme, and their homes in Canada. Accounts like this give additional meaning to the hundreds of

memorials that Canadians pass by every day.

Of course, not all memorials were figurative. For example, the Japanese community in Vancouver raised funds to raise a memorial to commemorate the fifty-four Canadians of Japanese ethnicity who volunteered and died on the Western Front. The result, the Japanese Canadian War Memorial, erected in Stanley Park in 1920, merged a western column with ancient Kasuga lanterns typical of the famous shrine in Kyoto.

Nor did the figurative sculptures that were produced during the Great War always commemorate the fighting forces. In depicting the women who worked in the factories and munitions plants during the course of the war, sculptors Frances Loring and Florence Wyle showed that there were other kinds of heroes. Commissioned by the Canadian War Memorials Fund during the closing years of the Great War, Loring and Wyle's sculptures showed that women were not just allegorical figures or victorious angels – as they were represented on plinths across the country – but contributors to the war effort on the home front. However, MacLeod's focus in *Remembered in Bronze and Stone: Canada's Great War Memorial Statuary* is on the fighting forces, and he does an admirable job of showing us how they were remembered.



*Death in the Peaceable Kingdom:  
Canadian History since 1867  
through Murder, Execution,  
Assassination and Suicide*

Dimitry Anastakis

Toronto: University of Toronto  
Press, 2015. 320 pp. \$42.95 paper.

LARRY HANNANT  
*University of Victoria*

TWO DECADES ago, a prominent conservative academic smacked down Canadian university instructors with the provocatively titled *Who Killed Canadian History?* J.L. Granatstein's answer was, in part, social history and the historians who taught it.

Social historian Dimitry Anastakis's reply has been to create a Canadian history textbook that uses murder to cure the patient Granatstein declared dead. In a bid to revive student interest in the history of the country, Anastakis shoots a hole point blank in the cherished myth that we're a country free of violence. Then he hangs the myth, kidnaps and strangles it, and runs it over with an automobile. Violence, it seems, is as Canadian as pumpkin pie.

Anastakis's inventive approach to framing the story of a sprawling country scores some telling points and raises intriguing issues. In twenty-one chapters, he sets out some "tragic tales" that he uses "as a helpful entrée into many of the broader themes of Canadian history" (xv).

Inevitably, readers and instructors will point out missing tragedies, a limitation that Anastakis himself acknowledges (xvi). Perhaps the most egregious omission is what has recently been set out as the greatest act of violence in Canadian history, which is central to the European takeover of a huge swath of the

country's land. This is the dispossession and starvation of Indigenous peoples on the Prairies, documented in James Daschuk's *Clearing the Plains*. This is not to say that Anastakis ignores Indigenous people. Indeed, he uses the killing of the unarmed Ojibwa Dudley George by an Ontario Provincial Police sniper in 1995 as a means of exploring the assault on Aboriginal rights and status in the post-Second World War era in Canada.

Questions will be raised, too, about how Anastakis weaves the largely violence-free political development of Canada into his thematic approach. Usually, Canada *was* peaceable. This problem occasionally requires Anastakis to include some dubious "crimes." Did Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King commit regicide "by (mostly) killing the British constitutional connection to Canada" in the 1920s (117)? If this be violence, one might wish the country and world had more of it.

Readers in British Columbia will have plenty of cases to recommend to Anastakis, some of them central to the history of this country. The deaths – contemporary estimates range from 1,500 to 2,200 – of Chinese labourers in the 1880s from disease, accident, violence, or crime in the construction of the BC section of the Canadian Pacific Railway, for instance, should have been included (see Roy, "A Choice between Evils"). Acknowledging their deaths would expose the building of the CPR as one of the bloodiest of the development projects that imposed capitalist modernity on the country.

Similarly, no case better encapsulates the complicated social, political, and economic dilemmas of the peopling of Canada than the 1924 explosion on the Kettle Valley Railway line in southeastern British Columbia, which took the lives of nine people, among them Doukhobor leader Peter Verigin. Dunkin' Donuts

appears in the text, but Doukhobors are absent.

But these are relatively minor objections. *Death in the Peaceable Kingdom* is a worthy contribution to the texts available to university instructors. The general reader, too, will find it an eye-opening way to rethink the history of Canada.

## REFERENCES

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### *Tending the Student Body: Youth, Health, and the Modern University*

Catherine Gidney

Toronto: University of Toronto  
Press, 2015. 294 pp. \$65.00 cloth.

DONALD FISHER  
*University of British Columbia*

THIS FINE piece of work provides new insights into the way the nature and culture of life in Canadian universities changed during the first sixty years of the twentieth century. Based on a careful review of archival and other primary sources, the author provides a descriptive, analytic account of the historical development of student health in Canadian universities from

the turn of the century through the 1960s. The argument is roughly divided by the Second World War into two chronological parts. Chapters 1 through 5 cover the period from 1900 to 1940 and focus on the expansion of health services and physical training/education programs. Chapters 7 through 9 cover the period from 1930 through the 1960s and trace the move towards mental health concerns and the demise of physical education programs.

Part 1 shows clearly how the provision of these programs was justified because of their contribution to the university as a "moral community" that was charged primarily with the job of "character formation." The "whole" person needed a sound body just as much as a sound mind. The account necessarily intersects with the issues of class, race, and gender as the elite university was held up as a healthy and safe place. Developments at UBC were typical of the changes taking place in urban universities across Canada. From the mid-1920s, educators and health professionals worked hard to establish health services and physical activity programs. By the 1940s, UBC had a medical health officer with a staff and a permanent health office, while new students were required to submit to a medical examination, including a TB test, and to participate in a physical activity program.

Changing definitions of "manhood" and "womanhood" are linked to the professionalization of women faculty and the rise of team sports. Gidney draws on the literature linking gendered roles to middle-class amateur games and sports and argues that these gendered ideals and values carry through into the twentieth century. For men, the qualities fostered include fair play, self-restraint, endurance, competitiveness, and order. For women, games and sports instilled "qualities such as organization, discipline,

respect for authority, determination, self-reliance, self-control, selflessness, teamwork, and service to others" (61). In general, the university was seen to be responsible for "creating and shaping upright citizens of moral character" (75) and for creating the conditions that "allow for the emergence of a student's character" (99-100).

Part 2 documents the emergence of a new mode of thinking according to which the emphasis was on personality development and self-realization. Concerns with infectious diseases like venereal disease and tuberculosis decreased with the rise of scientific medicine. The new concern was with mental hygiene. Gidney argues that "the new discourse of personality was part and parcel of broader societal developments such as the process of secularization, changing concepts of citizenship, and the growing emphasis on the importance of 'expressive individualism'" (164). By the mid-1950s, UBC had established a counselling service alongside a health service that consisted of a twenty-six-bed hospital and out-patient department. A decade later, the extensive medical staff now included a part-time psychiatric consultant and two full-time resident psychiatrists.

The turn to "human adjustment" and the rise of "student services" and "student affairs" was accompanied by the termination of physical education programs and the continuing triumph of team sports. Yet, as the author reminds us, the two conceptions of the purpose of the university remained side by side, each pressing the institution towards a unified vision of an appropriate model of citizenship. What had changed by the 1960s, with the rise of research culture and a different conception of the state, was the emphasis on social citizenship and citizen rights. Then, as now, our

universities are confronted with "old ideals and new realities" (190).

*The Secular Northwest:  
Religion and Irreligion in  
Everyday Postwar Life*

Tina Block

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016.

244 pp. \$32.95 paper.

BRIAN FRASER

*Brentwood Presbyterian Church*

SCHOLARLY endeavours, at their best, are richly textured conversations with a wide range of considered opinion and new sources that reveal the dimensions of a subject previously hidden. Tina Block conducts such an endeavour, focusing on the complex dynamics and impact of secularity in the Pacific Northwest between 1950 and 1970. This book is a provocative progress report on her findings and reflections.

The central contention of the book is that Northwest secularity during that period was a distinct regional culture that placed relatively little importance on formal religious connections and involvement. Block explores in considerable depth the shaping, meaning, and significance of secularity in the unique regional culture of the Pacific Northwest.

Block's understanding of secularity is broad and nuanced. For her, secularity is distinguished by a distance from religious institutions and a fluidity of beliefs. It consists of the many ways in which people have avoided, resisted, or rejected religion (the beliefs, structures, and practices people associate with the supernatural, sacred, or otherworldly), particularly in its organized forms. She explores these diverse forms of meaning

through the lenses of organized religion, class, gender, beliefs, family, and region. Her understanding also incorporates the dynamics of individualism, materialism, independence, and mobility.

Block uses three primary sources in her study: printed articles from both religious and irreligious sources from a wide variety of regional and national writers; demographic data from governmental and polling sources; and interviews with forty-four residents of the region who identified as having a secular world view during the period under study. The number of interviews might seem small, but Block listened carefully for the ways the interviewees constructed their world views in the vernacular of the region. Her weaving of their lived language into the rich tapestry of the study is one of the outstanding features of this work.

I am especially impressed by the ways in which Block uses the oral histories she has gathered to challenge the theoretical frameworks often imposed on lived reality. Secularity, she argues throughout the book, is a much more complicated and shifting phenomenon than many assume. For me, as both a Canadian religious historian and a practising Christian minister in Burnaby, British Columbia, this pioneering study on the intricacies of secularity in the Pacific Northwest opens up a whole new set of questions and possibilities in both dimensions of my life.

Block draws judiciously on a broad range of scholarly approaches in fields that dig deeply into the everyday reality of how humans shape and express meaning. The primary disciplines are lived history, oral history, regional history, religious history, sociology, geography, and cultural studies, but many more inform the questions she brings to her topic. Especially in the introduction of her book, Block offers an instructive summary of the frameworks and insights

offered by these relatively new disciplines. The depth of her analysis in the rest of the book, as she applies these perspectives to her topic, illustrates their usefulness in getting closer to the complexities of lived reality.

As she pursues this endeavour, Block raises three questions of interest that lie beyond the scope of her present study. First, the study is limited to the white population of the region and she is curious about how non-Europeans construct their experience of secularity. Second, she wants to explore more deeply the impact of nature-based leisure activities in the region, such as skiing and camping, on religiosity and irreligiosity. Finally, she thinks there is more work to be done on the connections between the distinctive religious, political, and moral perspectives of Northwesterners. From my perspective within organized religion, I'd be curious about a comparative study between the perspectives of her interviewees and those of ordinary church members who decided to stay connected with organized religion in the Pacific Northwest. How did they construct their continuing or new-found adherence and is there something regionally unique about their religiosity?

To conclude, people interested in Pacific Northwest life are indebted to Tina Block for an admirable scholarly endeavour. It deserves wide circulation and consideration.



*Learning and Teaching Together:  
Weaving Indigenous Ways of  
Knowing into Education*

Michele T.D. Tanaka

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.  
260 pp. \$34.95 paper.

MICHAEL MARKER  
*University of British Columbia*

Students must become aware of how ambition, self-gratification, power, and control as purposes for learning are forms of self-deception that must be avoided because they lead eventually to the misuse of knowledge and the further perpetuation of self-deception. (Gregory Cajete, xiii)

THE ABOVE quote from Tewa scholar and science educator Greg Cajete, from his foreword to *Learning and Teaching Together*, concerns the goals and purposes of Indigenous education. It is not only about Indigenous education: it is also about the deepest purposes for *all* education. While this book begins as a report on a project to help University of Victoria teacher education students understand holistic Coast Salish knowledge forms through an earth fibres course, it evolves into a critique of Eurocentric teacher education and the realities of schools that cannot slow down enough to make the time-space for a deliberate and more natural way of learning about the world and the self. The “hegemonic presence of positivism” (168), as the author puts it, creates a frenetic atmosphere for even the most culturally responsive educators who are, as one teacher reported, “all busied up” (183). Time-pressured schools oriented towards global competition and individual ambition are likely to

perpetuate the self-deception and mis-education against which Cajete warns.

Teachers in British Columbia and throughout Canada who struggle with how to enact curriculum changes that incorporate Indigenous knowledge, history, and identity will find this book illuminating. Michele Tanaka gathered together an extraordinary group of local knowledge holders and Indigenous scholars as advisors on language, cultural practices, protocols, and cosmologies. The earth fibres course that was the meeting place for teacher education students and Indigenous educators featured themes that have been widely recognized in over thirty years of Indigenous cultural revitalization: the centrality of place-based knowledge; stories of the metaphysical properties of landscapes; limits of thought in the contrasts between English and the local Sen̓cōten language system. What Tanaka does that other works on university students learning about Indigenous knowledge systems often don’t do is to follow students as they leave the campus and enter the schools of this digitally dystopic era. In this way she demonstrates the challenges of including Indigenous content in fast-paced schools oriented exclusively towards training economically competitive individuals. The education students were inspired and unsettled/disrupted by learning about and experiencing Indigenous principles of relationality. The “pre-service teachers’ approach to becoming inquiring professionals was influenced by Indigenous sensibilities” (201). These same sensibilities are resisted by the paradigm of time pressure in schools.

Drawing on a wide range of literature in educational theory and curriculum studies, Tanaka is hopeful for a transformation in education but realistic about the resistance to expanding cross-cultural consciousness.

As this book asserts, in spite of the seemingly overwhelming challenges in making a space for Indigenous thought and experience, it can and must be done. The transformation has been happening and is continuing. As I finished reading the book, I did wonder if the time-congested workworld of schools and teachers is the first and main impediment towards opening a learning space about Indigenous peoples and Indigenous reality. Teaching about Indigenous knowledge systems requires a context within which emotions and metaphysical realities are integrated into learning. Thoughts and feelings must be slowed down and quieted to open up a consciousness that is more tuned to the deep ecologies of the natural world. Eurocentric, and now globalizing, epistemologies are oriented toward a *time-ness* while Indigenous reality is immersed in *place-ness*. It is difficult to understand the meanings of Indigenous landscapes when one is moving at too great a speed through time.

Cajete and other Indigenous scholars advocate for a third space that could include both Western scientific education and Indigenous knowledge systems. Tanaka sees that “education is teetering on the edge of a paradigm shift” (203). However, entering into a pedagogical space where Indigenous knowledge can be authentically taken in will require a shift in the way time is structured in schools. Without this, there can be no paradigm shift. The frenzy of time-pressured classrooms with global economic competition, increasing emphasis on STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) oriented curricula, and overwhelming teacher workloads will swamp and sink this canoe that is trying to deliver ancient and eternal cargo essential to educational transformation and planetary survival.

### *Belonging Métis*

Catherine Richardson

Vernon, BC: JCharlton Publishing,  
2016. 217 pp. \$30.00 paper.

JENNIFER HAYTER

*University of Toronto*

THE TITLE OF *Belonging Métis* is apt because the book illuminates the common twenty-first-century Métis condition of yearning for belonging. Having been alienated from their geographical homeland on the Prairies since 1870, when Canada invaded and colonized the Red River area, many Métis communities became fragmented, though not irreparably so. Richardson looks at the psychology of Métis selfhood in Canada and explores some ways of fostering Métis wholeness and belonging, particularly through the use of stories as medicine. She argues that stories, and the space in which to share them, can heal and help form Métis selves that belong to (instead of long for) a whole, healthy community.

Many in the Métis diaspora have been reconstructing their Métis selfhood, a project shared by the author in her own personal life. Richardson makes it clear that her personal position informs her analysis. She is a formally educated Métis community counsellor and professor of social work who grew up in Nanaimo. Like many other Métis, she came to her Métisness later in life and had to work to build an intact Métis self, a process she refers to as the “experience of becoming a Métis person” (45). As a survival strategy many Métis have had to hide their culture, sometimes even from their own children. Among the twelve participants whom she interviewed for this book, only two were raised in a Métis household in which being Métis was their daily lived reality.

Richardson states that her analysis borrows from both European and Indigenous conceptual frameworks of selfhood. She blends symbolic interactionism (in which the self is created through interaction with the wider society—the “me” lives and gathers experiences, while the “I” processes and integrates these experiences) with narrative theory so that the “I” is the author of the story and the “me” is the protagonist. Holism is an admirable goal but the book itself is not entirely successful in achieving it. Unfortunately, *Belonging Métis* reads almost like two separate books: on the one hand, the first four chapters are heavy with academic theory and jargon; on the other hand, the next three chapters rely on narrative and the writing flows well. Chapter 7, in particular, is a gem, containing one long meandering but edifying story, which unfortunately remains unanalyzed and disconnected from the other chapters. Because the Métis stories appear near the end of the book, Euro-academic analysis appears privileged over Indigenous experiences. In addition, though the author states the book is written for all Métis people, the writing in the first few chapters may be difficult for non-academic readers to follow.

Despite these shortcomings, *Belonging Métis* offers a substantial academic contribution. Though the book’s focus is not British Columbia, Richardson grew up, was educated, and worked in this province, and several of her participants are British Columbian (which is interesting as British Columbia is considered to be outside the Métis homeland). As a historian, I appreciate how Richardson uses Métis history to explain current conditions. Her prescription for exclusively Métis spaces (a “third space”) is well explained and supported. The first space is dominant society, and the second space is First

Nations society: the Métis have often been marginalized in both. A third space, in which Métis can share stories, creates a sanctuary or psychological homeland. Her participants report a transcendent sense of self-recognition when among other Métis.

Although there has been some progress in terms of Aboriginal-centred social work, this practice in relation to Métis people has been overlooked. Though Richardson offers relatively few concrete suggestions for Métis-centred social work, *Belonging Métis* will help social workers and psychologists to further their understanding of contemporary Métis selfhood, which, she notes, is often pathologized by these helping professions.

*The Native Voice: The Story of How Maisie Hurley and Canada’s First Aboriginal Newspaper Changed a Nation*

Eric Jamieson, foreword by Chief Dr. Robert Joseph

Halfmoon Bay, BC: Caitlin Press, 2016. 288 pp. \$24.95 paper.

*The Road Forward*

Marie Clements, director

National Film Board, 2017. 101 min.  
(See [https://www.nfb.ca/film/road\\_forward/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/road_forward/))

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*The Native Voice* and *The Road Forward* provide unique, though very different, glimpses of historic examples of Indigenous activism in

Canada and British Columbia. *The Road Forward* marks what may be a defining moment in Indigenous documentary filmmaking, combining both beautiful artistry and contemporary storytelling with a powerful message of rebirth and resistance. *The Native Voice*, on the other hand, represents a compendium – almost twenty years' worth – of excerpts and stories from an alternative press, constructed around the story of a non-Indigenous first-generation immigrant, Maisie Hurley. While the rich artistry of the film differs markedly from the fastidious, almost regimented, storytelling of author Eric Jamieson, both make an important contribution to the historic record of Indigenous resistance in Canada and British Columbia.

In *The Road Forward*, Marie Clements combines the musicality of a film like *Hair* (1979) with a narrative that speaks to both resilience and rebirth in the trajectory towards an Indigenous cultural resurgence in Canada. Beautifully portrayed and performed by a cast of First Nations and Métis actors, this pastiche of storytelling combines music and history with a strong sense of contemporary resilience set against a poignant backdrop that includes residential schools and the Highway of Tears. The music is entrancing and the acting both genuine and sincere. It's hard to imagine the script for this film as it moves seamlessly between song, a form of soliloquy, and storytelling. Focused on the struggles of First Nations leaders during the period following the imposition of colonial rule in British Columbia, the film advances a narrative that is both heart-wrenching and informative. It is in its historical storytelling that it intersects with Jamieson's text, which focuses on the *Native Voice* newspaper.

The *Native Voice* was a BC-based newspaper that operated from the mid-

1940s well into the 1960s, spearheaded by Maisie Hurley. While she also figures briefly in *The Road Forward* (smoking a cigar, no less), the thematic focus of Jamieson's book is the struggle of First Nations leadership in British Columbia – from Alfred Adams to George Manuel – as seen through the lens of this publication. While there are some references to other historical and academic sources, the author weaves together several hundred excerpts from the newspaper to tell a rich story about the First Nations struggle to be recognized in British Columbia – from the inception of the “land question” to the basic right to consume alcohol without being harassed by authorities. One learns here, for example, about Thomas Berger – who also features in *The Road Forward* and was the protégé of Masie Hurley's last husband, Thomas Hurley – who set the stage for the litigation of Indigenous land rights in the modern period (see *R. v. White and Bob*, 1964).

As *The Native Voice* focuses heavily on the story of Maisie Hurley herself, the contemporary reader cannot help but feel self-conscious about the fact that here, yet again, we are making sense of the “Other” from the standpoint of a presumably more identifiable “white” character. No doubt Jamieson was aware of this likely criticism but, because of the very unconventional tendencies of his protagonist, nonetheless chose to pursue this focus. While the introduction of Hurley's background in the first chapter is interesting from a historical perspective, it does not grab the reader in the way that an otherwise constructed narrative about First Nations might have done. Nonetheless, the emergent picture of this woman's indomitable spirit soon makes it clear why she is the central focus of the book – due to her significant role in the First Nations struggle for recognition in British Columbia.

*The Native Voice* reminds us of the central role that newspapers played prior to the internet, when finding ways to be heard or seen was a particular challenge for marginalized or otherwise dispossessed peoples. Maisie Hurley, an unlikely hero, took up this challenge in a period when “whites” helping “Indians” was relatively unusual. Jamieson’s compelling reenactment demonstrates the critical role that such characters can play in shaping the future. The fact that Maisie was inducted as a member of several First Nations is evidence of her role in supporting the surfacing of Aboriginal rights in Canada – not as a main character but precisely because her cause and conviction were not self-aggrandizing. She is an example of a woman – in a period in which overt sexism was more the norm than the exception – who challenged the status quo, confronted mainstream racism, and commanded the respect of leaders and others who might have preferred to do otherwise. It is curious, however, that Jamieson does not explore gender as an issue, thus weakening the overall contribution that this text could have made.

Where *The Native Voice* recounts the history of a remarkable woman who worked on behalf of First Nations in British Columbia at a time when the Indian Act’s most repressive policies were under review, *The Road Forward* picks up on this path and forges it clearly and eloquently into the present. Overall, both of these works make a meaningful contribution to our understanding of the Indigenous landscape in the present day, but *The Road Forward* does so with greater artistry and, perhaps, in a spirit that more profoundly celebrates the Indigenous contribution to the Canadian mosaic on the whole than does *The Native Voice*.

*The Amazing Mazie Baker: The  
Squamish Nation’s  
Warrior Elder*

Kay Johnston

Halfmoon Bay, BC: Caitlin Press,  
2016. 230 pp. \$24.95 paper.

SEAN CARLETON  
*Mount Royal University*

I GREW UP ten minutes away from *Eslha7án*, the Mission Indian Reserve, in what is today known as North Vancouver, which is part of the territory of the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw*, or Squamish Nation. Yet, as a child, I did not learn a lot about Indigenous peoples generally or about Squamish people specifically. Kay Johnston’s book, *The Amazing Mazie Baker*, gave me, and will give other readers, the opportunity to see the “North Shore” from the perspective of a woman warrior elder of the Squamish Nation – Mazie Baker. For much of her life, Mazie fought for the rights of Squamish people and, particularly, to protect and to create opportunities for Indigenous women. The book is a rich collection of stories that Mazie shared with Johnston, ranging from how she escaped residential school and crossed the border to live and work in Washington with her family to her political struggles back home against the patriarchal policies of band and settler governments. *The Amazing Mazie Baker* contributes to the growing record of Indigenous peoples telling stories of resistance, resilience, and resurgence, and it will be of interest to those studying women’s and gender history, Indigenous feminisms, and political organizing in colonial contexts.

The book is structured as clusters of stories and anecdotes about different

periods of Mazie's remarkable life. Velma Doreen "Mazie" Antone was born to Moses and Sarah Antone in 1931 at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. Like many Indigenous children, Mazie could not avoid being forced to attend residential school. In 1920 the federal government amended the Indian Act to make attendance mandatory, and in 1937 the police came to take young Mazie to St. Paul's Indian Residential School in North Vancouver. There she was forced to perform manual labour and was often abused by school staff. Mazie later recalled: "I was scared and angry. I just knew this was wrong and unfair, and I made this very clear to the Sisters by just refusing to cooperate ... I tried my best to be difficult. Stubbornness was my way of fighting things I didn't want to do or if I was scared. I just wanted to go home" (23). Mazie's "stubbornness," in school and afterwards, became her signature character trait and might be understood as a form of what Anishinaabe cultural theorist Gerald Vizenor (1994) calls "survivance," a mixture of survival and resistance.

When Mazie's parents became aware of the school's inexcusable treatment of their children, they took direct action. Mazie recalled the day her mother came to the school to rescue her and her siblings, declaring to one of the Sisters, "Look, if you don't want to be laying in a ball at the bottom of the stairs, you'd better get out of my way, 'cause I'm taking my kids home, and there's no way you're going to stop me" (27). The Antones made the difficult decision to leave their community and escape to Washington where they worked picking hops and berries. Scholars like Paige Raibmon (2005) and Michael Marker (2015) have shown that Coast Salish peoples have always traversed the colonial border between Canada and the United States, and the Antones' actions confirm that

Coast Salish cross-border migration continued well into the twentieth century. Mazie's stories of escaping residential school and working in Washington also highlight the ingenuity and agency of Mazie and her family.

After a number of years in Washington, Mazie's family returned to the reserve. Like many Squamish men at the time, Moses found work as a longshoreman, and Sarah and some of her children, including Mazie, worked at a local cannery. Mazie soon met and married Alvie Baker and raised a family on the Mission Indian Reserve. But it was not until she became involved in political organizing later in life that Mazie felt that she really came into her own. As a survival strategy, Mazie's father had downplayed his cultural roots, and this meant that, for much of her life, Mazie was largely disconnected from Squamish culture. She wanted her own children to understand what it meant to be Squamish and began advocating for cultural revival on the reserve, putting special emphasis on language education for youth. Her efforts made her a number of enemies who preferred the status quo, and she quickly developed a reputation as a troublemaker. But Mazie never took "no" for an answer, and this made her an excellent advocate for the Squamish people and culture. She also worked with a number of other Squamish women to protest the patriarchal policies of the male-dominated band council, and she fought municipal, provincial, and federal laws to increase the power of the Squamish people, especially of Squamish and other Indigenous women. While Mazie died in 2011, the power of her stories lives on in Johnston's book and will continue to offer a number of important lessons for those interested in Indigenous women's political organizing in Canada. These stories of struggle and survival are worthy of wider recognition

and critical reflection in today's era of so-called reconciliation.

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### ***Community Forestry in Canada: Lessons from Policy and Practice***

Sara Teitelbaum, editor

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017. 416 pp.  
\$34.95 paper.

ERIKA BLAND  
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**I**N *Community Forestry in Canada*, Sara Teitelbaum brings together a rich array of case studies – including four cases focused on British Columbia – that depict the remarkable variation in regional dynamics within community forestry politics and practice from coast to coast. This is the first anthology on the subject of community forestry to specifically examine the Canadian context. The incisive analyses offered by its twenty-five contributing authors are tied together through an overarching analytical framework that rests on four key principles that help to define community forestry: participatory governance, rights, local benefits, and ecological stewardship.

Taken together, the cases show how an increasing number of Canadian communities are enacting these principles to acquire “rights and responsibilities for specific public forest lands in their vicinity in order to achieve some collective benefit” (3). But the uptake of community forestry practice has by no means been uniform across Canada. In some cases, groups have successfully taken advantage of windows of opportunity opened by shifting political and economic circumstances – such as the decline in the pulp and paper industry in Newfoundland (Kelly and Carson) or the mountain pine beetle epidemic in British Columbia (McIlveen and Rhodes) – while in other cases, specific geographical and political circumstances have limited their success (Leclerc and Chiasson; Beckley; Palmer, Smith and Shahi).

This volume provides insights into how policy and governance surrounding community forestry in Canada is being reshaped through strong public processes initiated by local residents and organizations (Leslie). In exploring how community forestry is emerging as a form of governance elsewhere, a reading of *Community Forestry in Canada* is enriched by Bullock and Hanna’s (2012) work: *Community Forestry: Local Values, Conflict and Forest Governance*. Bullock and Hanna inform us about key aspects of grassroots environmentalism as they play out in community forestry beyond Canada, in the United States and Scandinavia. These works together help to contextualize community forestry within a global trend to devolve control over forest resources to more decentralized and place-based actors. They lay essential groundwork for further study of the politics of community forestry in Canada, the kinds of benefits that are generated through community forests, and how these are distributed

within communities. Both texts begin to grapple with the ways in which embedded assumptions about sovereignty and the state affect how relationships are negotiated between communities, individuals, and governments (Shaw 2004). We learn from these case studies how forest management in Canada is increasingly dependent on the specific actors and communities that sustain it.

A common aspiration is implicit in this work: to learn from past and current circumstances in order to cultivate and strengthen community forestry praxis in Canada into the future. The implementation of novel forest management agreements in British Columbia and in the Great Bear Rainforest (see Smith 2010; Price, Roburn, and McKinnon 2009; Armstrong 2009), new precedents set in Aboriginal case law (*Tsilhqot' in Nation v. British Columbia* 2014), and the ongoing negotiation of modern treaties on the west coast are all arguably shifting the way that governance and management of land and property are envisioned and will be carried out. How will these kinds of political-economic negotiations affect the ongoing development of community forestry in British Columbia as well as in other parts of Canada? For people on the ground grappling with these questions, Teitelbaum's compilation provides a vital starting point.

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## *Canadian Countercultures and the Environment*

Colin M. Coates, editor

Calgary, AB: University of Calgary  
Press, 2016. 320 pp.  
\$34.95 paper.

JAMES RHATIGAN

*University of British Columbia*

CONTEMPORARY environmental debate owes a lot to the counterculture movements of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. This is one of the main contentions of *Canadian Countercultures and the Environment*, the fourth book published under the University of Calgary's Canadian History and Environment Series. Edited by Colin M. Coates, the collection of essays in this volume explores the environmental politics of the Canadian counterculture of the 1970s and 1980s. It examines the successes and failures of various grassroots efforts to contest mainstream culture and to foster new ways of practising environmental politics. While the Canadian counterculture was certainly not the only force shaping environmentalism in the late twentieth century, the collection argues that many of the fundamental issues within contemporary environmental debate

– such as urban transportation and bicycling, recycling, and renewable energy – were first popularized within the countercultural movement.

And yet, as *Canadian Countercultures and the Environment* makes clear, the Canadian counterculture was never a coherent or cohesive movement. Although united by a common concern for the environment and a desire to live outside the norms of mainstream society, the counterculture encompassed an amorphous and diverse set of lifestyles, practices, and approaches to environmental politics. While Coates establishes the broader historical context of the Canadian counterculture in his introductory chapter, the particularities of these diverse practices are examined in the collection's ten substantive chapters. Grounded in richly detailed local case studies, these chapters are organized into two broad sections: environmental activism and counterculture lifestyles. While at times this division can seem somewhat arbitrary, these broad sections do help to structure the disparate themes and issues covered in the collection.

Section 1 focuses on environmental activism and emergent forms of political praxis within the counterculture movements of the 1970s and 1980s. Including case studies from British Columbia, Montreal, and Toronto, the chapters in this section showcase the broad range of the counterculture's political and environmental goals and the tactics adopted to achieve them. Highlighting the international nature of the Canadian counterculture as well as its complicated relationship with the state and local communities, these chapters tease out the tensions, conflicts, and coalitions that emerged through the counterculture's environmental activism. Of particular note in this regard are Ryan O'Connor's chapter on the history of Toronto's Blue Box recycling system and

Nancy Janovicek's study of a community-based environmental research project in the Slocan Valley of British Columbia. In detailing the countercultural origins of Toronto's Blue Boxes, O'Connor's contribution highlights the important role that state funding played in the project and traces the unexpected connections between the city's counterculture and business. Janovicek's examination of the 1970s Slocan Valley Community Forest Management Project draws attention to the importance of coalitions formed between older settler communities in the Kootenay region and the more recently arrived "back-to-the-landers." In doing so Janovicek provides an insightful corrective to common narratives of environmental politics that pit workers against environmentalists.

Section 2 is titled "People, Nature, Activities." Organized around countercultural "lifestyle choices" and the environmental politics and perspectives upon which they were based, the chapters in this section form a somewhat less cohesive whole than do those in Section 1. The counterculture's complex links with the state and with local communities do, however, feature prominently in most of the chapters. Both Henry Trim's account of the New Alchemy Institute's Ark bioshelter project in Prince Edward Island and Matt Caver's discussion of back-to-the-land groups along the Sunshine Coast in British Columbia shed light on the importance of state funding in sustaining countercultural projects and the divisive local politics that such support could engender. In one of the collection's strongest chapters, David Neufeld reflects on the complex relations between Indigenous communities in Dawson City, Yukon, and counterculture youth newly arrived in the area, highlighting instances of both tension and collaboration. Section 2, and the volume as a whole, is rounded off by

two chapters that draw out more personal reflections on life in the Canadian counterculture. In the only sustained discussion of counterculture gender politics, Megan J. Davies uses interviews with midwives and mothers to trace the history of counterculture homebirth in the Kootenay region in the 1970s. Alan MacEachern and Ryan O'Connor ground their chapter on childhood experiences of the counterculture in oral interviews with people who grew up in back-to-the-land communities in Prince Edward Island.

With five of its ten substantive chapters examining case studies in British Columbia, *Canadian Countercultures* offers much that readers of this journal will appreciate. This geographical bias is, however, one of the collection's most obvious weaknesses. While British Columbia was certainly a hotbed of countercultural activity during the 1970s and 1980s, the overwhelmingly western focus of the collection means that it fails to reflect fully Coates's assertion that the counterculture "was a truly pan-Canadian phenomenon" (2). Overall, however, *Canadian Countercultures* is a well-researched survey of the broad range of approaches to environmental politics fostered by the Canadian counterculture. In focusing on the legacies of these actions, it highlights the countercultural antecedents of many contemporary environmental debates and situates taken-for-granted environmental practices within this cultural history. While several aspects of the Canadian counterculture remain to be further explored – the intersections between the counterculture's environmentalism and gender and racial politics, for example – *Canadian Countercultures and the Environment* provides an insightful and engaging overview of this understudied aspect of Canadian environmental history.

*Unfree Labour? Struggles of  
Migrant and Immigrant  
Workers in Canada*

Aziz Choudry and  
Adrian A. Smith, editors

Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2016.  
224 pp. \$21.70 paper.

SARAH MARSDEN

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CANADA HAS a long history of reliance on the labour of both permanent immigrants and migrant workers. In recent decades, the number of migrant workers entering Canada has increased significantly relative to permanent immigrants. A core component of Canada's policy on migrant labour is to restrict the labour mobility of migrant workers: in many cases, they are only permitted to work for the employer who has obtained permission to hire them, and only in the specific job for which they were hired. Many migrant workers thus cannot circulate freely in the labour market as can permanent residents and Canadian citizens, which leads to a heightened power differential between migrant workers and their employers. These workers' vulnerability to abuse and exploitation at worksites is well documented, as is their social and economic marginalization. Drawing on the Marxist concept of unfree labour, the chapters in *Unfree Labour?* offer analytical and practical responses to the subordination of immigrant and migrant workers in Canada in the context of domestic and globalized neoliberal policy. As a whole, the work acknowledges the structural causes of these workers' subordination and emphasizes local sites of organization and resistance and their potential for

effecting material change in workers' conditions. The volume's contributors are scholars and/or front line activists. The collection emphasizes migrant workers rather than immigrant workers, but many analytical components are applicable to immigrant workers as well; some chapters, such as Polanco's on fast-food work, touch directly on the interests of immigrant workers.

Most of the chapters in *Unfree Labour?* consider specific labour segments in which migrant labour is prevalent. Mark Thomas demonstrates the role of the state in reproducing modern forms of unfree labour through the example of Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Worker program. Adriana Paz Ramirez and Jennifer Jihye Chun provide a historical perspective on migrant farmworker organizing and emphasize the need to call out migrant farmworker programs as a form of racial apartheid and to consider multifaceted organizing approaches. Chris Ramsaroop critiques Canada's failure to provide Employment Insurance benefits to migrant farmworkers and takes issue with organized labour's advocacy in this area, arguing that transnationalism provides an alternative frame for the distribution of benefits. In the context of domestic workers, Jah-Hon Koo and Jill Hanley draw on empirical work to document workers' resistance strategies and to implicate the state's requirement of private sphere worksites as a barrier to effective labour organizing. Geraldina Polanco considers the use of migrant labour in fast-food services, drawing on fieldwork to highlight the devaluing impact of foreign work programs on vulnerable domestic workers and emphasizing the need to organize domestic and migrant workers alongside each other.

The remaining chapters deal with grassroots and policy responses to migrant worker struggles. Calugay,

Malhaire, and Shragge emphasize the importance of understanding structural factors in workers' countries of origin as well as developing trusting relationships and organizing across ethno-cultural lines. They elaborate on the material and political challenges of organizing workers and the importance of organizing across cultural communities, building relationships, and utilizing both legal and extralegal strategies. In terms of more policy-based responses, Abigail Bakan offers a critique of federal employment equity law based on its ineffectiveness in dealing with embedded forms of systemic discrimination such as those inherent in the live-in caregiver program. Sedef Arat-Koç situates Canada's foreign work programs within the context of neoliberal policy and labour market restructuring, framing the migrant work program not only as a source of cheap labour but also as a subsidy for Canada's welfare state. She argues that, in order to respond meaningfully to migrant workers' struggles, it is necessary to overcome romanticized nationalist narratives and make oppositional politics more explicit. Two chapters (Paz Ramirez and Chun, and Polanco) draw on fieldwork and organizing experience with migrant worker groups in British Columbia, specifically with regard to the agriculture and fast-food industries. As a whole, this collection addresses the impact of national policy and organizing methods that bear directly on the situation of migrant workers in British Columbia, whose labour market engagement and barriers to equality are closely analogous to those evident in Ontario and Quebec (the focus of several chapters).

This collection is significant in its contribution to labour migration studies. It includes multiple empirical chapters in which critiques of law and policy draw directly on interviews with migrant workers. It also contributes theoretically,

elucidating critical relationships between Canada's labour migration policies and transnational relations, considering the potential of grassroots organizing, and problematizing the relationship between migrant workers' struggles and the "traditional" (white, union-based) labour movement, particularly in terms of its failure to adequately contest racism. Its greatest strength, however, lies in the grounding of its analysis in the insights of organizers and activist-scholars directly involved with the material struggles of migrant workers. This work will be of interest to advocates, scholars, and activists involved with migrant workers. It will also appeal to those interested in critical perspectives on labour in the new economy and to anyone who wishes to consider strategies to resist the subordination of migrant workers in Canada.



*Drawn to Change: Graphic Histories of Working-Class Struggle*

Graphic History Collective,  
editors

Toronto: Between the Lines, 2016.  
208 pp. \$29.95 paper.

*Storming the Digital Divide: The PovNet Story*

Penny Goldsmith and Kara  
Sievwright

Vancouver: Lazara Press, 2016.  
64 pp. \$12.95 paper.

ERYK MARTIN

*Kwantlen Polytechnic University*

A DECADE AGO, the labour historian Paul Buhle suggested in *Reviews of American History* that graphic novels and non-fiction comics would become an increasingly important medium for the exploration of historical topics. Since then, the publication of graphic histories has only accelerated. *Drawn to Change: Graphic Histories of Working-Class Struggle* and *Storming the Digital Divide: The PovNet Story* are two recent examples of this evolving genre that relate to British Columbia. Focused on histories of community organizing and radical politics, these two works excel at using a mixture of visual imagery and written text that is both captivating and intellectually stimulating.

*Drawn to Change* is an edited collection comprised of nine different graphic histories of working-class activism in Canada from the late nineteenth century to the present day. The people behind *Drawn to Change* are artists, activists,

educators, and academics affiliated with the Graphic History Collective. Specific topics in the book include the Knights of Labour; Indigenous labour organizing; the Industrial Workers of the World; Bill Williamson, the radical photographer and veteran of the On-to-Ottawa Trek and the Spanish Civil War; the 1935 Corbin Miners' Strike; the feminist labour organizer Madeleine Parent; the Service, Office, and Retail Workers' Union of Canada; class struggle in 1990s Ontario; and a history of Filipina live-in care workers and their community activism over four decades. The collection also includes short essays that explain and contextualize each graphic history, a preface on the importance of the medium by Paul Buhle, and a bibliography that identifies the secondary and primary sources used in each piece.

*Storming the Digital Divide* is a smaller work than is *Drawn to Change*, and it focuses on the origins, activity, and significance of the online communication network, PovNet. Authored by PovNet members Penny Goldsmith and Kara Sievewright, along with additional artwork by Nicole Marie Burton, the work explores the issues confronting anti-poverty activism in British Columbia since the 1970s (although most of the book is focused on the period since the late 1990s) and the communication tools activists have used to confront them. While *Storming the Digital Divide* is a fascinating exploration of anti-poverty activism, it is also a history of technological change and the impact of the internet on community organizing.

Although the content and scope of these two works are quite different, they are both excellent examples of the potential of graphic histories of the left. Activists, students, artists, educators, and others interested in the social history of activism in Canada will find much that is enjoyable and useful within these two

works. They are carefully researched and engagingly presented. For a general audience, both works provide beautifully composed stories about the struggle for a more just and equitable world, often in ways that make the connections between past and present abundantly clear.

In addition to these general strengths, I believe that these two works offer something special to teachers who want to address social justice topics in their classrooms. In both cases, the graphic form has the potential to capture student interest and to encourage enthusiastic critical engagement in ways that traditional analytical prose often does not. Over the last several years I've used a range of graphic histories to teach Canadian history at the university level – including *Drawn to Change* – and I've found these visual narratives to be powerful tools for getting undergraduate students to engage with the political and methodological dynamics of historical representation. When historical narratives are communicated through images – when these interpretations of the past appear on the page as visualized people, objects, and geographical settings – I've found that students have a clearer body of evidence through which they can assess the objectives, styles, and implications of a given author's work. With *Drawn to Change* in front of us, for instance, I have asked my students: What does resistance to capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy *look like* to a given author or authors, and why are those visual choices important? *Storming the Digital Divide* could raise similar (and different) questions. In my experience, students have enthusiastically taken up such questions in response to graphic histories, with fantastic results. Consequently, I see *Drawn to Change* and *Storming the Digital Divide* as engaging and inspiring books for scholars and activists, and I suggest that instructors will also find

them particularly useful for engaging students' developing historical skills and understandings in the classroom.

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### *Protest and Politics: The Promise of Social Movement Societies*

Howard Ramos and Kathleen Rodgers, editors

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 376 pp. \$45.00 paper.

MIRIAM SMITH  
*York University*

OVER THE last ten years, Canada has seen recurring waves of protest, including Occupy, Idle No More, and Black Lives Matter, among others. This collection provides an account of the role of protest in contemporary politics in Canada in comparative perspective and includes sixteen chapters that cover both the sociological study of social movements as well as empirical topics ranging from the environment and human rights to the role of the state and the policing of protest. Some of the topics are unique to this volume and provide coverage that is not easily found elsewhere. For example, there are chapters on protests over the oil sands, immigrant mobilization, and the deployment of festivals as protest by the creative class.

The collection is centred on an examination of the thesis of the social movement society, pioneered in American sociology by Meyer and Tarrow (and updated for this volume by Meyer and Pullum), who contribute

a chapter updating their original ideas. According to this thesis, social movement protest is an increasingly common and regularized feature of conventional politics rather than an outside or insurgent phenomenon. In their opening chapter, Ramos and Rodgers consider the thesis as applied to Canada and rightly point out the impact of the state on social movements in Canada, especially with respect to federal funding of various social movement organizations. One of the strengths of the volume is its examination of the shifts in federal policies on advocacy during the Harper period, including a chapter by Corrigan-Brown and Ho that empirically examines the evolution of environmental groups from the Martin to the Harper periods.

While the authors mention the plural nature of Canadian society and Dominique Masson's chapter specifically explores the pattern of state-movement interaction in the women's movement in Quebec, this is something that could have been more systematically developed through a comparison of Quebec social movement organizing with that of the rest of Canada. In addition, the book does not specifically consider the extent to which Indigenous political mobilization should be examined from a social movement perspective as compared to, say, a postcolonial perspective (see Ladner 2015). Social media are mentioned throughout the volume, but there is no specific consideration of their role in contestation or of how new forms of political consumerism (Stolle and Micheletti 2013) might contribute (or not) to the social movement society.

Several chapters merit particular attention. Fetner et al.'s research on the Christian Right is particularly instructive, pointing to ways in which differences in cultural policy affect the impact of radio in the United States as compared to Canada. This chapter

expands the reach of institutional analysis to include regulatory and cultural institutions that provide opportunities (in the United States) or obstacles (in Canada) for social movement influence. Phillipe Couton's chapter on collective mobilization by immigrants points to the non-contentious nature of immigrant organizing and its impact on social and political integration as well as on economic success. Suzanne Staggenborg situates anti-globalization protests within the mobilizing structures of cities to identify the factors that facilitate the social movement society in local sites. Randolph Haluza-Delay's detailed empirical account of contention over the oil sands in Alberta demonstrates that social movement challenges to economic development have not been regularized or institutionalized as the social movement society thesis might suggest.

Overall, because of its specific focus on the idea of a "social movement society," this high-quality collection will appeal mainly to sociologists. It makes an important empirical contribution, especially because of the many chapters that deal with aspects of activism that are not often canvassed in Canadian scholarship. As such, it will be of interest to political scientists and other social scientists who are engaged with the study of contestation in Canadian society.

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#### *Queer Mobilizations: Social Movement Activism and Canadian Public Policy*

Manon Tremblay, editor

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015. 336 pp.  
\$34.95 paper.

#### *Disrupting Queer Inclusion: Canadian Homonationalisms and the Politics of Belonging*

OmiSoore H. Dryden and  
Suzanne Lenon, editors

Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2015.  
208 pp. \$29.95 paper.

ANIKA STAFFORD

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**I**N RECENT years, Canada has extolled itself as a bastion of queer rights on the global stage. British Columbia, in particular, puts forth an image of itself as progressive. But what histories do these claims erase? Which queer lives are masked? Two UBC Press anthologies bring together queer histories and the complexities of current queer activism to explore these lines of inquiry: *Queer Mobilizations: Social Movement Activism and Canadian Public Policy*, edited by Manon Tremblay, and *Disrupting Queer Inclusion: Canadian Homonationalisms and the Politics of Belonging*, edited by OmiSoore H. Dryden and Suzanne Lenon.

Fitting for a Canadian era in which many LGBTQ people have legal rights on paper, *Queer Mobilizations* focuses on how queer lives are "regulated, or even repressed ... based on the premise that heterosexuality is the norm and that LGBTQ desires and sexualities are acceptable only when they ape

heterosexual ones" (7). Each chapter is divided into sections: Historical Background, Queer Activism Today, and Queer Activism and Public Policy. The policy sections each offer three or four case studies that give concrete examples of the "agenda, actors, resources, strategies" (34) within their arenas of activism. The cases provide an overview of high-profile issues such as work for marriage equality and school inclusion. As a whole, the anthology offers a wide geographic scope: federal, regional (Atlantic Canada, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec), and municipal (Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto, and Halifax). Tremblay situates the book within social movement theory and public policy analysis. As the editor, she sidesteps critique as to whether or not identity politics risk essentialism and dualities (e.g., gay/straight) and argues that the goal of the scholarship is to "consider ways [identity politics] contribute to the study of LGBTQ activism and its interactions with governments in Canada" (4).

The case studies are numerous but brief and can therefore lack nuanced analyses of the racism and colonialism for which they provide an overview. For example, Tremblay comments that the "federal government and Aboriginal peoples are inescapable interlocutors since they are trapped in a colonial relationship in which the latter are dependent on and subjugated to the former" (31). Given that the state generated "dependence" in order to subjugate Indigenous nations, this brevity leaves further investigation to be desired. One could argue the opposite, that the Canadian nation-state is dependent on Indigenous land for its continued usurped rule. Rochu-Ingram's "Building Queer Infrastructure: Trajectories of Activism and Organizational Development in Decolonizing Vancouver," stresses the need for diverse spaces and

resources to serve a wide range of queer populations; and Simon Fraser University criminologists Burtch, Pescitelli, and Haskell discuss issues facing urban, two-spirit, Indigenous youth in the conclusion of their chapter, "LGBTQ Movement in Western Canada: British Columbia." However, such discussion does not loom large within the larger anthology.

In *Disrupting Queer Inclusion*, Dryden and Lenon provide a rare in-depth exploration of intersections of the Canadian nation-state, Indigeneity, and queer activism. The chapters provide critical challenges to "rights"-based activism from an array of prominent scholars and activists. All centre on the following:

racialization structured by white supremacy; current and ongoing settler colonialism; neoliberalism that works with white supremacist settler capitalism to constitute the contemporary Canadian nation-state; and the persistence of imperialist mythologies that continue to position Canada as a peace-keeper, a middle power, and a land of freedom (8).

The book's ten chapters cover a generative mix of topics: correspondence projects that seek to bring queers who are incarcerated into a sense of shared queer community, the construction of the racialized Other in the ban on gay blood in Canada's blood banks, and the ideologies of modernization and persecution in gay refugee cases.

Through the sites addressed in *Disrupting Queer Inclusion*, authors challenge the idea that equity is achieved simply by adding gay rights to dominant institutions. For example, in "Pink Games on Stolen Land: Pride House and (Un)Queer Reterritorializations," Sonny Dhoot addresses Vancouver's nationalist

discourse when hosting the 2010 Olympic and Para-Olympic Games. He examines how notions of “gay friendly” and “progress” co-constitute each other in producing Canada as a forward-thinking and inclusive nation. This discourse was particularly noteworthy through the creation of a “Pride House” for gay athletes and community during the games. However, at the same time, the Olympics perpetuated colonial violences, continuing “land theft, and irreversible ecological and cultural destruction of Indigenous territories” (50). Coining the generative term “homocolonialism,” Dhoot describes Pride House as not only a “(re)making of the space that once belonged to Indigenous peoples but also a pronouncement of Canadian sovereignty over that space: homocolonialism” (58).

The chapters illustrate the fantasies required of both Canada and sexuality in order to construct the Canadian nation-state as an epitome of sexual progress. In her examination of the 2011 BC Supreme Court Reference decision on polygamy, Suzanne Lenon explores the implications of how the decision imagines monogamy both as the basis of the nation-state and as the ground upon which Canadian queers can become acceptable citizens. She quotes the Reference’s claim that monogamy promises that “men and women are treated with equal dignity and respect, and that husbands and wives (or same-sex couples), and parents and children provide each other with mutual support, protection and edification through their lifetimes (para. 884)” (87). Throughout the court case, monogamy was positioned as the bedrock upon which Canadian “civilization” is built (87). According to Lenon, such clearly unsubstantiated promises position non-monogamous practices as “foreign” and regressive.

While *Disrupting Queer Inclusion* provides complex interrogations of

normative life, the integration of disability is given surface attention in contrast to the in-depth analysis provided for other intersections. However, the anthology offers formidable insight for all those interested in research and activism whose tactics do not perpetuate oppression. The two anthologies would work well together as textbooks for courses on sexuality, activism, and nationalism, the first providing surveys of the contexts and contents of a range of movements, the second providing enriched investigations into the implications of such movements, challenging readers to think beyond dominant conceptualizations of action and activism.

*Growing Up Weird: A Memoir  
of an Oak Bay Childhood*

Liz Maxwell Forbes

Victoria: Osborne Bay Books, 2017.  
293 pp. \$22.95 paper.

CAROLINE DUNCAN  
*Oak Bay Archives*

**I**N *Growing Up Weird: A Memoir of an Oak Bay Childhood*, author Liz Maxwell Forbes provides a very personal account of childhood in a BC community in the 1940s and 1950s. Drawing from her early experiences, Forbes describes a family life disrupted by the Second World War, her parents’ divorce, and her struggles to find independence away from the tensions of home and the expectations of society.

Although at times a disturbing and candid reminder of the vulnerability of childhood, Forbes’s account is punctuated with humour and guarded nostalgia. She describes her favourite hideaways among the abandoned outbuildings of Oak Bay’s old estates, places of escape in which to

read and dream. She recalls afternoons at the beach exploring McNeill Bay and summers spent swimming and boating at Deep Cove. She brings to life the neighbourhoods and businesses of Oak Bay, including Carley's Stables and Willows Beach, Monterey School and Oak Bay High, local churches and the shops along Oak Bay Avenue. There are many wonderful descriptions of local landmarks. The places, however, form a backdrop to a more complex story.

Forbes was born in 1939 at the old St. Joseph's Hospital in Victoria. In October that year her father, a clerk with the BC government, enlisted with the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry and served overseas during the Second World War. The separation was difficult for the family, and her parents divorced a few years later. Her mother remarried in 1944, and Forbes's complicated relationship with her stepfather is a central theme of the book. Forbes was raised by her grandparents for a time and moved several times during her childhood to homes throughout Oak Bay. She skilfully captures the conflicts that exist within families. It is not the story of a perfect childhood but an honest and bold telling of her experiences.

Forbes's narrative contributes to a broader understanding of Oak Bay's past and provides a valuable insight into the experiences of girls and women, something that is often missing from the historical record. It is an account that might be found within an oral history collection at a local archive, but Forbes has instead delivered it in a clear and readable format.

The book is well illustrated with black-and-white family photographs. Forbes includes a family tree at the end of the book, together with a list of the key people about whom she writes. The inclusion of a map showing the location of family homes and community features

would have been helpful for readers unfamiliar with Oak Bay. The book lacks an index, but the chapters follow clear themes and are organized more or less chronologically.

Although set in Oak Bay, the story might take place in any small community in British Columbia in the mid-twentieth century. It is hoped that Forbes's work will encourage others to come forward with their own memoirs.

### *Gently to Nagasaki*

Joy Kogawa

Halfmoon Bay, BC: Caitlin Press,  
2016. 214 pp. \$24.95 paper.

SUSAN KNUTSON

*Université Sainte-Anne*

Joy Kogawa's place in literary history has been secure since 1981, when *Obasan* swayed more hearts and minds than art can generally hope to do. Told from the point of view of a six-year-old girl, *Obasan* recounts the internment, impoverishment, and scattering of British Columbia's Japanese Canadian communities during the Second World War and after, and the destruction of families and communities that resulted. At the close of the novel, the mystery of the disappearance of Naomi's mother resolves into the horror of the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki, Japan.

In *Obasan*, good and evil are clearly distinguished, but *Gently to Nagasaki* is a different kind of book. Destined to be read by fewer people, it is just as beautifully written and even more profound. A memoir committed to complex truths, it is framed by the dark irony of the West's destruction of the Christian community of Nagasaki, with its cathedral and university. Kogawa's

quarrels and meetings of mind with friends dealing with racism and abuse are carefully recorded. One personal, irresolvable contradiction lasts for decades and moves effortlessly between Toronto, Vancouver, Nagasaki, and Okinawa:

The truth was that the person I loved and admired more than anyone in the world, the one with whom I most identified, the one who told stories and made life fun, who wept and laughed and sang, who was good and did not give up, the one in whom I could see no wrong and who saw no wrong in me, my father, a visionary and charismatic priest in the Anglican Church, a man who had served his scattered flock and his people without letup: my adored father was a paedophile. (52)

This is, she writes, her “Nagasaki, a barren place of no light” (158). Or, she might have said, her Auschwitz, for that darkness too lurks in the shadows of this book and is not forgotten.

She finds her path, however, and walks us gently into a kind of community of the whole, all of us, erring humans and those others we harm, cats and plants and spiders and children, as we recklessly indulge our capacity for denial and violence.

Imagine a Dresden firebombing museum in London and New York, an Armenian Genocide Museum in the centre of Istanbul, a Nanking memorial museum beside Yasukuni shrine, the names of every Palestinian and Israeli killed in that conflict etched into the walls that divide them. Imagine memorials of war in which the victor is forced to

experience the suffering of the victim. Imagine the shock of discovering that all war is friendly fire, that we have mistakenly slaughtered our beloved only child. (195)

The reference is to Abraham, patriarch of the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish faiths. Kogawa never abandons her Christian faith, but she does introduce a theological reading that is perhaps more than a nuance. *Gently to Nagasaki* explores the hidden Christian traditions of Japan, where official persecution led to a secret but profound identification between the Virgin Mary and Kannon, the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. A syncretic figure of the divine feminine, she is associated with water and named as “the amniotic deep” (16), the image linking her to the opening passage of *Obasan*. Now, in her memoir, Kogawa reads the goddess’s influence into the patriarchal myth as “She who had the last word at Moriah” (205). Moriah is where Abraham would have obeyed God’s command to sacrifice his son. Linking to the present, Kogawa writes:

From the beginning of our human story, the Lieutenant Colonel Chos and Major Sweeneys, good and loyal servants, have obeyed the command to kill. Christians, along with our siblings, Jews and Muslims throughout the world, have done the same. We, the heirs of Abraham, have received our guidance from our foundational myth ... But by choosing the path of blind obedience rather than the path of mercy, we have deflected the human journey into the ways of war (169).

Among the many whose voices are heard in these pages is Father George Zabelka, a Christian priest with the US military in 1945, who said prayers over the missions of August 6 and 9. He later repented of this and publicly spoke out to “expose the lie of killing as a Christian social method, the lie of disposable people, the lie of Christian liturgy in the service of the homicidal gods of nationalism and militarism, the lie of nuclear security” (23).

The closing lines of *Gently to Nagasaki* affirm this way forward.