

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*People of the Saltwater: An  
Ethnography of the Git lax m'oon*

Charles Menzies

University of Nebraska Press:  
Lincoln and London, 2016. 198 pp.  
\$45.00 cloth.

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“Git lax m’oon, people of the saltwater” are more commonly known as the Gitxaala; their principal village, Lach Klan, is located on what is now called Dolphin Island, a little to the south of Prince Rupert. The Gitxaala are part of the Tsimshianic language family, but in *People of the Saltwater*, Charles Menzies stresses their distinctiveness: “Gitxaala people ... have always understood ourselves to be a unique people” (14). As this comment suggests, the book is, in part, an account of a personal journey. Indeed, elsewhere Menzies describes his approach as “autoethnography,” stating that he “tells the story of the Gitxaala from a perspective situated within the Gitxaala world” (25). The book includes a variety of descriptive accounts and recollections of life on the

land and waters (with echoes of Hugh Brody’s *Maps and Dreams*), together with more abstract discussions of the underlying principles of the Gitxaala world – what it means to be Gitxaala. The first four chapters address names, governance (*Smgigyet*), territory (*Laxyuup*), and history (*Adaawk*), respectively, and the linkages between them. Menzies is concerned here with emphasizing the continuity in the Gitxaala world – both the time depth of occupancy (millennia) and the continuing relevance of “traditional” structures, procedures, and values as well as the linkage between names and territory. Hence persistence is resistance – especially in a colonial context. History is important, but it is only treated episodically – the arrival of the K’amksiwah (white people), the imposition of reserves – and Menzies chastises some writers for their treatment of these topics, although not always accurately. There is a looseness in the treatment of historical documents, at least from an academic perspective. Both here and in the second part of the book, Menzies stresses the involvement of the community in gathering information about resources – frequently for disputes with government.

The latter half of the book concentrates on the changing relationships between the Gitxaala and various fisheries – salmon, herring, and abalone. In this section Menzies emphasizes the need for sustainability and the need for local/Indigenous involvement in the management of these resources. At the same time, he makes the point that First Nations shape and have shaped their environments: *Laxyuup* (Gitxaala territory and waters) is not a pristine wilderness. There are similarities here to the growing recognition of the role of “cultivation,” or management, of various plant resources and the ingenuity and labour involved in producing clam gardens.

This is a relatively slim volume and there are issues that it would have been interesting to see addressed – for example, the impact of Christianity, education, the disappearance of the sea otter – but this would have required a different book. Even so, *People of the Saltwater* could have been better served cartographically; Susan Marsden’s exemplary 2011 map of Gitxaala territories, for example, would have been a valuable addition.

Menzies recognizes the importance of William Beynon (the “unsung hero” of Tsimshianic research) both to his own work and to the study of Tsimshianic peoples generally. There are also elements of similarity between Beynon and Menzies as ethnographers, each with a foot in two worlds. However, the latter has been shaped by, and participated in, a different environment than had the former: the revival of First Nations in Canada and the ongoing struggles for sovereignty, title, and reconciliation. This is a journey that has a long way to go, as the response to Canada 150 demonstrates. *People of the Saltwater* represents a contribution to that journey.

*This Is Our Life: Haida  
Material Heritage and Changing  
Museum Practice*

Cara Krmptich and Laura Peers, with the Haida Repatriation Committee and staff of the Pitt Rivers Museum and British Museum

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013.  
320 pp. \$34.95 paper.

*The Force of Family:  
Repatriation, Kinship, and  
Memory on Haida Gwaii*

Cara Krmptich

Toronto: Toronto University Press,  
2014. 240 pp. \$26.95 paper.

*Red: A Haida Manga*

Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas

Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre,  
2014. 120 pp. \$19.95 cloth.

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ALL THREE BOOKS included in this review contribute significantly to the body of work concerning the Haida First Nation in British Columbia, with the added importance of bringing Haida voices to the fore in the discussion of repatriation, kinship, and oral traditions as well as in emphasizing the continuity of Haida ways of knowing and doing.

The repatriation of ancestors’ remains and the material culture held in museums across the globe are issues faced by

First Nations in British Columbia and Indigenous peoples elsewhere. First Nations have been instrumental in bringing museums into negotiations concerning repatriation and in finally gaining access to collections. While repatriation is usually situated within the wider political landscape of land claims, treaties, and sovereignty, two books authored or co-authored by Cara Krmpotich of the University of Toronto, *This Is Our Life* and *The Force of Family*, return the project to the heart of the Haida community by focusing on the need to be reunited with lost family and property. Both of these books present the Haida motives for repatriation and stand as a testament to the endurance of the Haida and to their maintenance of the core cultural value of *yahgudang*, or respect. Read together, these two books offer insightful accounts of places and people joined either by the presence or absence of material culture and the remains of their ancestors, whether in the museum or in the homeland.

*This Is Our Life* tells of the 2009 encounter between a delegation of twenty-one Haida from Old Massett and Skidegate and two museums – the British Museum in London and the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. The title aptly captures the vitality of all participants, both people and objects, whose professional and personal biographies are woven together by lead authors Krmpotich and Laura Peers of the Pitt Rivers Museum into a highly readable narrative of the engagement between museums, collections, and source communities. This book offers insight into the logistics, dilemmas, anxieties, anger, and joy that combined for a “bittersweet” experience for museum professionals and the Haida through the six months of preparations and during the three-week visit. The book’s organization follows a chronological

timeline extending from planning through visiting, reflection, outcomes, and ongoing future relationships. The ethnographic style of *This Is Our Life*, with the unobtrusive guiding voices of Krmpotich and Peers, combined with the personal accounts of the museums’ staff and the Haida Repatriation Committee delegates, makes the book an important record of how museums can play a role in the living communities represented in their collections. Towards this end, three central themes are explored – handling, emotional responses, and repatriation. These themes ensure that *This Is Our Life* is suitable for use in museum, material culture, and First Nations studies.

The first theme, the handling of objects and the need to balance physical wear and tear with the value of experientially produced knowledge, reverberates throughout *This Is Our Life*. The Haida delegates’ accounts of their need to touch objects are particularly moving and demonstrate the power of the Haida concept of *yahgudangang*, or mutual respect, which appears to have softened the curatorial resolve to limit handling. Relationships between Haida and museum staff were based, in turn, upon the relationship each group had with the collections of objects, which illustrates the second theme – sensorially triggered emotional responses. Through engaging with one another, and with the objects, these accounts explore the acquisition of knowledge – artefactual and ancestral – and articulate unleashed emotions, such as, for conservators, anxiety provoked by a loss of control and, for Haida, the joy, or grief, of reconnecting with their ancestors.

The third theme of repatriation strikes at the heart of the encounter between the collectors and the collected. The Haida readily acknowledge their desire to have ancestral remains repatriated for burial to Haida Gwaii and for

objects – not all, but some – to return to their home communities. In turn, the museum-based authors honestly address the discomfort felt by UK museums about repatriation, while presenting the Haida Project as an important institutional step towards involving “source communities” in collections management, research, and display. Thus, the book speaks to the changes museums have undertaken thanks to the protests of formerly colonized Indigenous peoples in Australia, Canada, and the United States. *This Is Our Life* and the Haida Project are primarily concerned with access to collections that foster the repatriation of knowledge, not of the objects themselves. Museums acquire cultural knowledge to add to their databases and to facilitate the accurate and sensitive care and display of their collections, while the Haida repatriate the fragmented knowledge of their “hidden culture” (188) to inspire and strengthen the living Haida culture at home on Haida Gwaii. This exchange, and generation of new knowledge and understandings, emerges from understanding the British Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum as “contact zones”: places where new, collaborative understandings can be reached.

The last two chapters of *This Is Our Life* explore the importance of maintaining the relationships born from the Haida Project during, for example, an event such as the return of an ancestor’s remains from the Pitt Rivers Museum. Akin to a rite of passage, all involved – the members of the Haida delegation and the staff who met them – are changed by the emotional intensity of the experience and, in keeping with the sentiments of kinship, embrace mutually respectful cooperation. While providing an optimistic vision of how museums can become postcolonial institutions, the book is tempered by a final realistic assessment of the challenges that remain –

for example, accommodating Indigenous classifications within museum databases, championing access and handling over preservation, and funding repatriation.

*The Force of Family: Repatriation, Kinship, and Memory on Haida Gwaii*, Krmpotich’s account of her 2005–06 fieldwork on Haida Gwaii, which shaped the subsequent 2009 Haida Project, focuses upon repatriation from the perspective of Haida motivations. Through interviews and experiences, she reveals repatriation as an outcome of the enduring ties of kinship, the responsibilities of the living towards their ancestors, and their need to return ancestors’ remains and material culture to strengthen the home community. This sensitively written and insightful ethnography takes repatriation out of the control of museums and places it in a specific community as it tries to repair the damage inflicted by over a century of social and cultural trauma. *The Force of Family* provides a synopsis of the history of contact, of changing relationships with museums, and, more important, concentrates upon Haida attempts to reconcile the past with the present and to maintain continuity through colonial rupture.

In their interviews with Krmpotich, Haida drew attention to reincarnation as a means to strengthen and calm the contemporary community. They believed that the return of over four hundred ancestors would continue this genealogically and spiritually significant process. The connections between kinship, material culture, and memory are so well developed in *The Force of Family* that it must be considered as a text for social anthropology courses. Krmpotich clearly explains kinship and *yabgudang*, as do the Haida whose voices are present throughout the book. It is this strength of family through time and place and the cultural value of doing what is

right – of acting in a respectful manner towards oneself, towards kin, towards one’s matrilineage, and towards the interdependent lineages of the moiety structure – that underscore the need to return displaced ancestors to their homeland. Krmpotich charts the Haida Repatriation Committee’s exhaustive efforts and the desire of the Haida community to return, welcome, mourn, and ceremonially inter their ancestors. She makes it clear that this is the Haida way: a returning to normal.

One of the Haida Repatriation delegates, Jaalen Edenshaw, reflecting upon a bentwood box made by his ancestor Charles Edenshaw, noted that the master Haida artist had not been “bound by many of the modern conventions” (171) that have become standard in Haida art, a comment that also captures the work of Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas’s *Red: A Haida Manga*. This sumptuous graphic work, derived from Haida art and Japanese manga, captures the flexible telling of a Haida oral tradition and offers opportunities for many interpretations. *Red* will appeal to anyone interested in graphic novels, Japanese manga, First Nations art and oral traditions, and in a good story told and effectively visualized.

Not a quick read, *Red* is worthy of lingering, of tracing with fingertips, and of flicking backwards and forwards as the story unfolds. Filled with loss and tragedy, the story concerns the orphan Red, the abduction of his sister, and his desire for revenge. The telling of this cautionary tale is full of beauty, colours, and flowing black formlines that lead the viewer through interlinked scenes packed with vitality. Yahgulanaas gives permission to destroy the book and to reassemble it with another copy as a panel so as to reveal the flow of the narrative and the depth of the graphic asides: glimpses of domestic life, fishing, forests,

animal species, art, and material culture. In a manner that bridges the past and the present, *Red* brings alive the world of the Haida ancestors whose remains are now being repatriated.

This is a contemporary telling of a traditional story with an abiding message regarding the negative consequences of fear, anger, and revenge. Red’s desire to be reunited with his sister, his kin, resonates with the Haida motivations behind the repatriation of the remains of abducted ancestors that is discussed in *This Is Our Life* and *The Force of Family*. Unlike Red, the Haida Repatriation Committee, upholding *yahgudangang*, does not succumb to emotions so easily consequent upon the legacy of colonialism. Like any good story, *Red: A Haida Manga* will continue to be relevant with every telling, and its visual, emotional, and intellectual appeal will ensure that it is read and reread.

*Mixed Blessings: Indigenous Encounters with Christianity in Canada*

Tolly Bradford and Chelsea Horton, editors

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016. 226 pp.  
Illus., \$95.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

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*Mixed Blessings* is a collection of papers developed for a May 2011 workshop, “Religious Encounter and Exchange in Aboriginal Canada,” capably edited by historians Tolly Bradford and Chelsea Horton, whose helpful introduction and conclusion pull together the disparate interests of the contributors. The collection does

not claim comprehensiveness either in theoretical scope or in geographical coverage (12), yet, considering the uneven quality of the chapters, I would quibble with the editors' promise that the volume offers a "fresh way forward" (12). I would instead highlight their view that readers "should approach this collection as a reconnaissance project that seeks both to sketch out basic terrain and encourage ongoing research and dialogue" (4). Cognizant of that more modest self-appraisal, I found the collection appealing, for it does allow one to gauge interdisciplinary interest and approaches to the topic in Canada. It was once thought that works about missionaries and Indigenous people should be focused on the missionary-as-hero or missionary-as-villain or on the White colonizer/Indigenous victim binary. However, studies of the encounter have now shifted towards examining a more layered and contested history, illuminating the reformulation of the Native American religious landscape and the complex role of individual missionaries and converts. Examples of this more nuanced approach that have advanced scholarly understanding of the missionary encounter in British Columbia include studies by Neylan (2003), Brock (2011), Bradford (2012), and Robertson (2012) as well as articles by Galois (1997-98), Tomalin (2007), and Lowman (2011) appearing in *BC Studies*.

The editors have divided *Mixed Blessings* into three parts: (1) Communities in Encounter, (2) Individuals in Encounter, and (3) Contemporary Encounters. Authors in the first part examine religion as a locus of cross-cultural communication and contested power. Drawing upon seventeenth-century Jesuit records, Timothy Pearson explores how the performance rituals of the Hurons and Algonquins in early contact zones built upon an existing social solidarity

and attempted to generate a shared experience of sacred power to all willing participants, missionaries included; in contrast, the Christian priests used ritual to exclude the uninitiated, mirroring such discriminatory attitudes in their written texts. The importance of ritual to strengthen community unity is also a theme of Elizabeth Elbourne's chapter. She examines the Haudenosaunee's use of Anglicanism to broker ties with the British, along with the political implications of their varying degrees of religious expression. The third contribution, by Amanda Fehr, discusses how, in the 1930s, a Stó:lō community in British Columbia's Fraser Valley erected a granite Christian memorial as an innovative means to articulate identity and to assert territorial claims.

Part 2 begins with Cecilia Morgan's look at the engaging story of the marriage of a devotedly evangelical Englishwoman, Eliza Field, to Peter Jones, a mixed-race Mississauga missionary, illustrating how the encounter for this nineteenth-century missionary couple was both intimate and transnational. Inspired by recent publications in the field of the sociology of religion, Jean-François Bélisle and Nicole St. Onge bring to the fore the religious content of Louis Riel's thought, thus emphasizing the importance of religion as one of the central dimensions of Métis interrogation of colonialism and highlighting how Riel's redefinition of the world was "constructed on the basis of a geopolitically reconfigured faith" (113). This article breaks new ground and is a welcome addition to the volume. Part 2 ends with Tasha Beeds's summary of the intellectual legacy of Cree-Métis missionary Edward Ahenakew. Beeds states that she consciously attempts to work "on the inside of language" (119), as Kiowa writer Scott Momaday has proposed. However, as worthy as the Ahenakew story and attention to both

his Cree and Christian foundations may be, Beeds's profuse use of Cree terms, employed without the linguistic insights or masterful prose that are central to Momaday's approach, becomes distracting. Nothing is gained, for example, by using the term *napêw* instead of "man" or *mâmitonêyihcikan*, said to mean "thinking" (136-37).

Part 3, Contemporary Encounters, opens with Sipiwe Dube's critical examination of religion's role within the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Using a series of piercing questions revealing Christianity's ambiguous role as both offender and healer, Dube concludes that "the onus remains only on the wronged Indigenous communities to positively reinscribe the religion in question (in this case Christianity) so that it still makes sense" (159). No doubt this reinscription will rely upon the methodologies and processes discussed by Denise Nadeau in her chapter on teaching a course on Indigenous traditions. Nadeau suggests that instruction about colonialism through the lens of Indigenous knowledge systems exposes all students to a new world perspective and encourages self-reflection. The final chapter in Part 3 is an auto-ethnographic account by Carmen Lansdowne, a member of the Heiltsuk First Nation and an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. Lansdowne thoughtfully reflects not only upon the history of missionaries and lay preachers among her people and the scholarship that has illuminated this relationship but also upon her frustration and discontent with the methodological limitations of that work.

*Mixed Blessing* is a highly readable update on what is happening in the field of missionary interactions. It exposes the silences – the factual voids in our understanding of the complex Indigenous encounters with Christianity in Canada

– and for that reason, I recommend the book to those interested in achieving reconciliation.

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*The W̱SÁNEĆ and Their Neighbours: Diamond Jenness on the Coast Salish of Vancouver Island, 1935*

Barnett Richling, editor

Oakville, ON: Rock's Mills Press, 2016. 208 pp. \$24.95 paper.

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ANTHROPOLOGIST Rolf Knight  
launched a new chapter of

Indigenous history in 1978 with the publication of *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930*.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to his fellow historians and anthropologists who cast the region's Indigenous peoples as fading relics of the pre-contact era, Knight took a different approach and highlighted their roles as vital and ongoing members of the twentieth-century world. Chapter by chapter, he described their contributions to the region's commercial fishery and canneries as well as the logging, sawmilling, mining, packing, and other sectors. He turned the tables on the "Museum Age" (1880-1920) by showing how "Indian" carvers, basket-makers, historians, and storytellers capitalized on the ethnographic trade.

For forty years, a cast of colourful ethnologists and curio collectors combed the Indigenous communities of British Columbia for artefacts to fill the shelves and glass cases of newly established museums in Berlin, New York City, Washington, Boston, Chicago, and Ottawa.<sup>2</sup> The New York-based Franz Boas (1858-1942) of Columbia University set the tone for much of this work. Worried that the cultures of the region were fast succumbing to Westernization, he and his students fanned out across the province in search of *real* "Indians" living in isolated nooks and crannies "according to [their] own customs, not influenced by European customs."<sup>3</sup> They then pumped

them dry for information and stories and logged their findings in field journals – which they quickly turned into published monographs.

That even the most remote and isolated of their interviewees were several generations removed from their imagined pristine contact point did not deter them. The Boasians produced thousands of pages of ethnographic text set against the backdrop of the golden age past. Only in their letters, field diaries, and journals did they disclose details of the gap between their vision of a pristine, ancient world and that of the living worlds of their interviewees.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the past two decades, numerous scholars have highlighted this gap as a potentially rich research domain.<sup>5</sup> Knight paved the way by showing how the Indigenous peoples of the region had responded to (and profited from) the ethnographic trade. Another 1970s anthropologist, Madrona Holden, added to his work by showing how Coast Salish narrators had adapted their so-called traditional stories for the ethnographic trade.<sup>6</sup>

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*Franz Boas: Letters and Diaries of Franz Boas Written on the Northwest Coast from 1886 to 1931*, ed. Ronald Rohner, 6 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, David Murray, *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing and Representation in North American Indian Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Michael Harkin, "Past Presence: Conceptions of History in Northwest Coast Studies," *Arctic Anthropology* 33, 2 (1996): 1-15; Rosalind Morris, *New Worlds from Fragments: Film, Ethnography, and the Representation of Northwest Coast Cultures* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994); Charles Briggs and Richard Bauman, "The Foundation of All Future Researches: Franz Boas, George Hunt, Native American Texts, and the Construction of Modernity," *American Quarterly* 51, 3 (1999): 479-527.

<sup>6</sup> Madrona Holden, "Making All the Crooked Ways Straight: The Satirical Portrait of

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<sup>1</sup> Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978).

<sup>2</sup> See Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> Franz Boas, quoted in Ronald P. Rohner and Evelyn C. Rohner, "Franz Boas and the Development of North American Ethnology and Ethnography," in *The Ethnography of*

All of this is by way of introduction to a new book, *The WSÁNEĆ and Their Neighbours: Diamond Jenness on the Coast Salish of Vancouver Island, 1935*. Annotated and edited by Barnett Richling, a senior scholar in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Winnipeg, the book features a rare ethnographic report on the WSÁNEĆ communities of the Saanich Peninsula of Vancouver Island (just north of the city of Victoria). Richling discovered the report while working on a biography of a prominent Canadian anthropologist, Diamond Jenness (1886–1969).<sup>7</sup> Jenness had compiled the manuscript from notes he gathered during a five-month field trip in the fall and early spring of 1935–36 under the auspices of the federal government’s Victoria Museum in Ottawa. Founded in 1910 by the Canadian government, the museum (and its Anthropology Division) had a direct link to Boas through its first head, Edward Sapir, who had studied under Boas and made it his mission to introduce the latter’s research model to Canada. Jenness joined the unit in 1920 and took over as head when Sapir left in 1925.

Richling provides some of this background in his preface to *The WSÁNEĆ and Their Neighbours*. Because he neglects to draw on the critical insights of Knight, Holden, and others, however, some of his commentary will confuse readers. For example, he writes that Jenness’s twelve interviewees (two women and ten men) had gained the bulk of their knowledge of “the old ways” from sitting “at the feet of parents and grandparents who knew no other life” (vii). What to make of the “old ways” in the 1930s and

peoples alive at the time who knew “no other life”? Does Richling mean *pre-contact* life? Or early nineteenth-century life? Such phraseology will unsettle those with even a sketchy knowledge of BC history because Jenness’s field site – southern Vancouver Island – had changed dramatically from the early 1800s to the mid-1930s. The eldest of Jenness’s interviewees, for example, were born in the mid-1850s, which meant that few had parents and grandparents with direct experience of the pre-contact period (the late eighteenth century). By the 1930s, as Holden stressed in her study of Coast Salish stories, the “old ways” (as conveyed through stories told to outside collectors) must be seen for what they were: products of artificial, two-way exchanges (often involving communication through trade languages and foreign translators, many of whom were missionaries) that addressed, in different ways, the onslaught of settler colonialism (including the 1860s smallpox epidemic, missionaries, the Indian Act, reserve formation, settlement, residential schooling, and so on).

The critical literature on the Boasian research paradigm offers answers to many of the questions that Richling raises in relation to Jenness’s project. Take, for example, Jenness’s decision to remove all of the names of his Indigenous interviewees from his report along with descriptions of his interactions with such persons. Richling is perplexed by this decision. Had he consulted scholars such as John Van Maanen (*Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*), he would have learned that Jenness was simply following the anthropological convention of the day, which was to “pose as an impersonal conduit” and “pass on more-or-less objective data in a measured intellectual style ... uncontaminated by personal bias,

Whites in Coast Salish Folklore,” *Journal of American Folklore* 89, 353 (1976): 271–93.

<sup>7</sup> Barnett Richling, *In Twilight and in Dawn: A Biography of Diamond Jenness* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2012).

political goals, or moral judgments.”<sup>8</sup> The main rule was to avoid all mention of the “actions and words of singular persons” in favour of portraying a picture of the “common denominator people.”<sup>9</sup>

Richling explains that Jenness wrote 130 typescript pages of text arranged under sixteen chapter headings that covered everything from fishing and clothing styles to childhood training and marriage rituals. He was surprised to find that Jenness’s fieldnotes on “guardian spirits, illness and medicine, and winter (or spirit dances)” did not make it into the final report. Once again, this speaks to the ethnographic conventions of Jenness’s day: quick data-collection trips culminating with a full written report or monograph. Clearly, Jenness faced problems when he tried to work with his five months of notes on tough subjects such as religion and ceremonialism. He needed more trips and interviews to do it properly. Richling explains that he, as editor, dealt with these gaps and omissions by taking editorial liberties such as inserting the names of the contributors into Jenness’s report wherever he could verify them through Jenness’s fieldnotes and turning Jenness’s rough notes into three new chapters (Chapter 9, “Man and Nature”; Chapter 10, “Illness and Medicine”; and Chapter 2, “Spirit Dancing”).

Despite these issues, Richling has made a major contribution to the history of anthropology with the release of Diamond Jenness’s 1935 study of the Coast Salish. As long as readers approach it with caution – as the culmination of a complicated, five-month exchange between a government anthropologist

and a small collection of Indigenous elders – it will be of value. It is telling, for example, that Jenness applied for the job of assistant superintendent general of Indian affairs when the infamous Duncan Campbell-Scott vacated the post in 1932.<sup>10</sup> The link between the federal government’s Anthropology Division and its Department of Indian Affairs was that strong at the time.

The most valuable contributions to the book are the forty-five stories that follow Jenness’s general ethnographic summary. In contrast to Boas’s pattern of stripping the names of storytellers from their stories at the publication stage, Richling published all forty-five stories with the names of the storytellers attached.

*Settler Anxiety at the Outposts  
of Empire: Colonial Relations,  
Humanitarian Discourses, and  
the Imperial Press*

Kenton Storey

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016.  
312 pp. \$65.00 cloth.

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IN MAY 1861, the *British Colonist*, a local newspaper in Victoria, Vancouver Island, reported on a “Horrid Massacre in New Zealand.” According to the *Colonist*, Maori warriors had launched a surprise attack on a small British settlement south of Auckland. Relying

<sup>8</sup> John Van Maanen covered this fully in his chapter on ethnographic realism in his *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 47.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> For more on the political ramifications of Jenness’s anthropological offerings, see Peter Kulchyski, “Anthropology in the Service of the State: Diamond Jenness and Canadian Indian Policy,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 28, 2 (1993): 21–50.

on a report carried by the Hawaiian newspaper the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, the *Colonist* reported that the British settlers had been murdered “in the most inhuman manner.” Farmers had been “butchered,” pregnant women cut open, and “small innocent children had their hands and feet cut off.”

None of this was true. Both the *Colonist* and the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* had “fake news” down to a fine art, 158 years before Donald Trump alerted us to it. However, the appearance of the story in a newspaper published eleven thousand kilometres from where the event supposedly occurred demonstrates that, in the nineteenth century, “news” circulated throughout the British Empire and the world, creating and perpetuating colonial discourses and anxieties about interracial violence.

Kenton Storey’s *Settler Anxiety at the Outposts of Empire: Colonial Relations, Humanitarian Discourses, and the Imperial Press* examines these discourses and anxieties, the role of the colonial press in their perpetuation, and how humanitarian discourses stimulated public debates over the rights of Indigenous peoples on Vancouver Island and in New Zealand. Newspapers proliferated in both colonies. Under examination by Storey are, from Victoria, the *British Colonist*, the *Press*, and the *Victoria Gazette* in both its iterations. These were the four longest-lived publications that emerged in Victoria between 1858 and 1862. From New Zealand, Storey considers primarily the *Taranaki Herald*, the bilingual *Te Karere Maori*, the *New Zealander*, the *Southern Cross*, and the *Auckland Examiner*.

Storey argues that, by employing the language of humanitarianism, colonial editors created idealized versions of public opinion, while at the same time

promoting their own political and economic interests. In doing so they both drew upon, and stoked, settler anxiety about Indigenous violence and what they perceived to be British metropolitan scrutiny of colonial affairs.

Storey finds that the press in New Zealand, with its belief in the influence of humanitarianism and its strong connections to the Australian colonies and Britain, thought that metropolitan Britons read everything that was reported locally. This meant that they formulated their stories of interracial conflict with due deference to Maori rights as bestowed by the Treaty of Waitangi. The press in Victoria, on the other hand, which felt less hampered by the imperial gaze, had less regard for Indigenous rights and emphasized the prevalence of Indigenous violence to agitate for the removal of First Nations peoples from Victoria. Nevertheless, the Victoria press used humanitarian discourses to try to influence colonial executives on matters of Indigenous policy. The use of humanitarian language hid anxiety over Indigenous violence and reflected the inability of colonists to employ “coercive strategies” to assert their dominance.

Storey’s work illustrates how most British colonists, wherever they sought to establish hegemony, perceived Indigenous peoples as a hindrance to the spread of British civilization, which was, by definition, superior to any Indigenous culture. The way colonists dealt with “the native problem” varied according to how closely the colonists thought they were watched. The relative remoteness of Vancouver Island and British Columbia from the metropole meant that, in those colonies, newspaper editors could give full range to their racial prejudices as local circumstances and personal ambition dictated.

Storey’s text successfully marries the

discursive strategies of dispossession as evidenced in the colonial press with the actual practice of colonization – with what happened on the ground, so to speak. He provides ample context for colonial print culture by outlining the Indigenous histories of both territories and the manner in which they were drawn into the British imperial network or, in other words, invaded.

Storey gives the reader considerable insight into the motivations of colonial editors, demonstrating that, despite pronouncements of balance and objectivity, their newspapers were partisan vehicles for political ambition. This may stimulate the reader to wonder if anything has changed in the last 150 years.

Writing a comparative history requires the historian to consider multiple sources and literatures. *Settler Anxiety at the Outposts of Empire* is meticulously researched and engagingly written. The colonial intrigues of the mid-nineteenth century are suffused with a freshness that draws readers in, as if they were reading about current events. It is a valuable addition to our understanding of the colonization process in New Zealand and on Vancouver Island.

### *The Life and Art of Arthur Pitts*

Kerry Mason

Salt Spring Island, BC: Mother  
Tongue Publishing Limited, 2017.  
142 pp. \$35.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT

*Cambridge University*

KERRY MASON begins *The Life and Art of Arthur Pitts* with a question: “Why haven’t I heard about this artist?” (x). By the end of the book the reader is persuaded that we should indeed take

Pitts seriously, though precisely why remains open to further discussion.

Born into an impoverished British family in 1889, Pitts apprenticed as a learner designer while taking night courses at the London City Centre School of Arts. By 1910, he was a fully qualified commercial artist or, in Edwardian parlance, a show-card writer. He subsequently sold his humorous sketches and line drawings to newspapers and magazines while living in England, South Africa, and Canada. He worked for various advertising agencies. And, in his spare time, he painted and took photographs.

In South Africa he photographed Zulu men and women dancing, threshing grain, building huts and weaving baskets, and he collected their “native curios” (15). After arriving in Canada in 1914, Pitts followed George Catlin, Paul Kane, and Emily Carr by recording Indigenous peoples and their villages up and down the coast of British Columbia. Confident that his “Indian Collection” would be of interest to British collectors and galleries, he returned to his homeland in 1935. However, the prospects of generating interest only resulted in a small exhibition at Selfridges department store in London. Applying the “vanishing theme” to London’s streets and buildings proved to be more profitable. In 1946, Puttick and Simpson bought his entire series. This enabled Pitts to return to Victoria where he lived with his wife Peggy until his death in 1972. But the question remains: Why could Pitts not make it as a full-time artist?

Like E.M. Forster’s impoverished clerk Leonard Bast in the novel *Howard’s End* (1910), Pitts was culturally and socially an outsider. True, he was a member of the Victoria Sketch Club and the Island Arts and Crafts Society. But so were

many other amateur artists. True, he took evening courses at the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts and spent six months at London's Westminster School of Art. But this hardly put him at the cutting edge: he had studied at London's most traditional art school and with Vancouver's most traditional artist, Charles Scott. True, many artists, like the Ontario Group of Seven, began their careers as illustrators. But, unlike Pitts, they were able to leave their advertising jobs and to establish themselves as full-time artists. True, once again, Pitts recorded Indigenous peoples when that subject was not popular. But the paintings he produced in the 1930s are stylistically little different from the unimaginative work that Carr painted before her encounter in 1910 with Fauve and Expressionist artists in Paris. (Pitts's "Indian Collection" did not find a home until the provincial museums in Victoria and Calgary divided the paintings between themselves in the early 1950s.)

I am not suggesting that Arthur Pitts is unworthy of investigation, and I certainly acknowledge that, thanks to her use of a large collection of diaries, Mason has given a cogent year-by-year account of his life. I do, however, think that Arthur Pitts's career path, rather like that of Leonard Bast, might also be viewed as a sociological phenomenon bound by his class origins, limited by his lack of connections, and (frankly) constrained by his own innate talent. All of this helps us to understand why most readers had never heard of Arthur Pitts until this study became the tenth volume in a series that is aptly named *The Unheralded Artists of BC*.

*Imagining Uplands:  
John Olmsted's Masterpiece of  
Residential Design*

Larry McCann

Victoria: Brighton Press, 2016. 377  
pp. 169 illus. \$55.00 cloth.

RHODRI WINDSOR LISCOMBE  
*University of British Columbia*

THIS IS A MOST handsome book and a most intelligent analysis of the dense process of realizing a design concept. Larry McCann has allowed his telling of the Uplands history to be imaginative, if not literally the "imagining" perceptively chosen for his title. Perhaps such liberality of critical approach explains why social geographers have assumed a leading position in scholarly inquiry about the social landscape. Fully evident are the theoretical and disciplinary underpinnings of McCann's interpretation (one of those older terms that merit retention in the nonetheless refreshing wash of deconstruction). However, he is prepared to animate archival data with personal experience, contacts, or preferences, factors too often dismissed as mere anecdote. In fact, the conception, constitution, and construction of the Uplands design in British Columbia's imperial city of Victoria depended on an amalgam of acquaintance, ambition, and even accident. Accident here encompasses the broad sense of being subject to the vagaries of economy and politics – in this instance, the volatility of British, American, and French economies and its effects on real estate investment, plus the world wars and intervening Depression.

Through those harsh events, the First World War in particular, poleaxing Sir Wilfrid Laurier's prediction that

the twentieth century would belong to Canada, the inherent quality and potential of John C. Olmsted's scheme for an artistically subdivided residential development endured. Built out chiefly after the post-1945 Reconstruction of Canada managed under Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent, the Uplands remains Olmsted's finest work as a landscape architect and among the finest international examples of a landscaped suburb.

The book's seven chapters lead the reader in a picturesque manner through the temporal topography of this erstwhile section of the Hudson's Bay Company's Uplands Farm, which occupied the outskirts of Victoria, at the margin of the British Empire's senior dominion. In using the term "picturesque" I am referring not only to the meandering rather than lineal nature of the Uplands but also, and equally, to the nature of much of Olmsted's enterprise and his very design motive. The genealogy of Olmsted's mode of thinking and array of reformatory urban planning, from garden suburb to neighbourhood unit, is rooted in the Franco-British Picturesque. In Olmsted's practice – tutored by his celebrated stepfather, Frederick Law Olmsted, and studies in Britain – the Picturesque married pictorial with topographical and proto-functional imaging/imagining. Recall English landscape architect Capability Brown responding to the lay of the land with the imagined vistas of French landscape painter Claude Lorrain in mind, or John Nash seeing both the aesthetic and profitable potential of rejigging London's Regent Street and reinventing the Royal grazing fields north of Oxford Street as the fashionable residential Regent's Park.

Quite legitimately, in placing Uplands in its more immediate temporal

context, McCann concentrates on the subsequent transatlantic legacy of pleasant subdivision or improved company town. Similarly, he provides an enlightening review of Olmsted's process of learning his vocation and operating it as a business. Here McCann's willingness to attend to the ostensibly trivial incident is especially welcome. For example, he describes a time when a missed railway connection forced Olmsted to spend a cold November night in 1909 in the Empire Hotel in Wolseley, Saskatchewan. The nomenclature, no less than Olmsted's itinerary and letter written that night to his wife, vividly evokes the material and mental fabric of those times when Olmsted practised his artistic trade coast to coast on either side of the forty-ninth parallel. McCann also confronts the alienation of Aboriginal land title but situates it within the attitudinal landscape of the day. Nor does he overlook the larger scene, such as the CPR's subdivisions in Vancouver or Calgary and the influence of other actors, such as the itinerant English landscape architect-planner Thomas Mawson.

Consequently, McCann views the Uplands as a record of deeds (pun intended) as well as an experiential space, visually evoked by the fine sepia-tone historic photographs so nicely bled into the text throughout the beautifully printed book. The result is a fascinating perambulation through the quasi-kinship domain of early twentieth-century real estate entrepreneurship (perhaps Harold Innis should have extended his Empire of Communication to track that enterprise) and through planning/architectural production in relation to privileged social culture. This is a significant contribution to regional and continental economic, social, and

design history as well as a persuasive case for the heritization of Olmsted's masterly Uplands.

*Tax, Order, and Good  
Government: A New Political  
History of Canada, 1867-1917*

E.A. Heaman

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-  
Queen's University Press. 2017.  
600 pp. \$39.95 cloth.

MICHAEL J. PRINCE  
*University of Victoria*

E.A. HEAMAN has produced a decided masterpiece on a topic too often thought to be dry as a bone. Taxation, with its underlying legitimacy of consent, is the lifeblood of the state, supplying it with vital financial resources and policy tools that radiate outward through laws, staff, agencies, and program activities connecting to individuals and households and to markets and communities. Taxation and the corresponding appeals for tax fairness and demands for tax relief have continually been part of debates about public intervention, the role and size of government, the relation between the state and the economy, and the nature of citizenship and a fair and good society. As Heaman observes: "All taxing communities are always already in the middle of a debate about wealth, poverty, and taxation" (5).

For readers of *BC Studies* and especially for students of BC politics, matters of taxation are central to modern provincial political debates and public policy decisions. The bungled attempt by the Gordon Campbell Liberal government to introduce a harmonized sales tax (combining the

federal goods and services tax with the provincial sales tax) is but one example. Contemporary links between taxing and governing are myriad: the carbon tax on carbon dioxide emissions, a low-income climate action tax credit, small business income tax relief, the film incentives BC tax credit, the Vancouver foreign homebuyer's tax, the abolition of bridge tolls, and the phasing out of premiums for financing the Medical Services Plan. As in our history, governments today pursue a remarkable variety of economic, financial, social, cultural, and political goals through taxation rates, obligations, credits, penalties, and exemptions. At the level of municipalities, provinces, territories, First Nations, or the federal government, we have a tête-à-tête with taxation.

Heaman provides an engaging account of Canada's first half-century through the lens of tax policy. Her objectives are to document the cultural and social history of the politics about taxation by examining discrete tax revolts by various popular interests and by showing how taxes are mediated between wealth and poverty. Her contributions are to write poverty back into the political narrative of Canada from 1867 to 1917 and to pay close attention to public opinion and populist agency in debates over the state collection and allocation of financial resources. We see this history of tax policies and tax debates from the vantage point of local publics as well as from provincial and national politicians.

A chapter devoted to British Columbia – the first province, in the mid-1870s, to introduce direct provincial taxation on the general public – describes a tax system designed to sustain British identity and white settler rule through "racialized taxation" of Chinese and Indigenous peoples. A major conclusion about tax history

from this case study and the overall book is that “unchecked, the rich will tax the poor and stigmatize them as tax evaders, and wherever possible increase both indignation and taxation by racializing that stigma” (463).

A fundamental development from 1917 onwards was the introduction and expansion of a progressive income tax system, a system informed by the ability-to-pay principle and designed to take a larger percentage of the total income of higher-income than of lower-income earners. Another integral principle – equalization – introduced in 1957, commits the federal government to transfer payments to certain provinces to ensure the provision of reasonably comparable public services across the provinces at reasonably comparable levels of taxation. Thus the Victorian liberal state of Canada’s early decades, so well chronicled by Heaman, became an administrative state; laying a foundation for the social welfare state of the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. This terrific book helps us better understand the contested nature of fiscal citizenship and our inevitable rendezvous with the quintessentially political issues of revenue, wealth, and poverty.

*An Exceptional Law: Section  
98 and the Emergency State,  
1919–1936*

Dennis G. Molinaro

Toronto: University of Toronto  
Press, 2017. 325 pp. \$32.95 paper.

LARRY HANNANT  
*University of Victoria*

**F**OR MOST OF the past eighty years, Section 98 of Canada’s Criminal

Code has been seen as an “exceptional law” in a way that differs from how Dennis Molinaro regards it. Because of its limited life (from 1919 to 1936), the wide-ranging powers it conferred on police and political authorities, and its notoriety for being used in an unprecedented legal assault aimed at destroying the Communist Party of Canada (CPC), the law was considered to be aberrant.

It was also highly unpopular. It became the focus of an energetic and pioneering civil rights campaign in the mid-1930s that aimed at striking it from the Criminal Code. After the 1935 electoral repudiation of R.B. Bennett (disparaged as “Iron Heel” Bennett) and his Conservative Party, which had championed its use, the law was overturned by W.L. Mackenzie King’s Liberal government.

Molinaro regards Section 98 as exceptional because it defies the norms of liberal democracy, which are taken to include standards such as the rights to political dissent, to freedom of speech, and to freedom from punishment based on arbitrary and ill-defined pretexts. More than that, because it illustrates the tendency towards the use of repression in this country’s history, he sees it as a sign that the Canadian elite regards principles of liberal democracy as dispensable in its quest to carry out its prescribed nation-building vision.

Molinaro traces the key elements of Section 98 to 1917, when Prime Minister Robert Borden’s cabinet attempted to snuff out the rising labour revolt by creating Privy Council Order 2384, an order-in-council authorized under the War Measures Act. In this way, legislation that was intended to see only temporary use at a certain moment of national emergency – the First World War – became normalized and applicable during peacetime whenever authorities

decreed that an emergency existed, regardless of objective fact.

In 1919, with the war over but labour resistance undiminished, Borden folded many parts of PC 2384 into Section 98 and Section 41 of the Immigration Act, which together saw extensive use when the Great Depression began in 1930, ushering in a decade of impoverishment and mass resistance. Bennett's government used the Immigration Act provisions to deport people deemed to be "undesirables and communists" (70) and Section 98 (in conjunction with the Ontario government) to jail eight leaders of the CPC as well as for selected other prosecutions.

Even the supposed revocation of Section 98 in 1936 did not halt the use of exceptional law as critical parts of it were inserted into other sections of the Criminal Code, which, Molinaro contends, "demonstrated the ongoing process of normalizing of emergency measures" (214).

Examining emergency legislation of various forms over two decades, Molinaro justifiably argues that neither Canada nor other Western states (such as Britain and the United States) are full-fledged liberal-democratic states. Instead, they can better be described as "states that *practise* liberal democracy" (230, emphasis Molinaro's). That is, they uphold democratic values not consistently but, rather, when the elite deems it appropriate.

In identifying this general pattern, Molinaro is unerring. Where he strays, indeed where he passes beyond the strength of his case study, is in claiming that the process "started with Section 98" (228). Any close reading not just of Canadian history but also of what happened in Britain and the United States shows a long pattern of the use of repressive legislation for the purpose of capitalist nation building. For instance, the perceived revolutionary emergencies

of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries – although they were not active revolutions in any of the three Western states mentioned – were dealt with through the introduction and use of exceptional law, such as the 1798 Alien and Sedition Act in the United States, the benign-appearing stamp duties on newspapers in Britain, and the sedition laws under which Robert Gourlay was banished from British North America in 1819.

Even resistance that could never have been considered a significant threat to the Canadian state – for example, the Fenian movement in the 1860s and the Riel-led uprisings in 1869–70 and 1885 in the Canadian west – was put down brutally (although not by means of new legislation). Indigenous and mixed-blood peoples, therefore, might well ask Molinaro to expand his vision of the ways that the Canadian state has employed violence for the goal of narrowly defined nation building.

Molinaro also overlooks the use of "unexceptional" law as a repressive mechanism. High profile as Section 98 was in prosecuting CPC leaders in 1931, petty laws such as vagrancy and trespass sent far more activists to prison during the 1930s than did Section 98.

*The Last Gang in Town: The  
Epic Story of the Vancouver  
Police vs. the Clark Park Gang*

Aaron Chapman

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press,  
2016. 208 pp. \$24.95 paper.

MATTHIEU CARON  
*University of Toronto*

THE PAST DECADE has witnessed a surge in Vancouver criminal and

nocturnal history, from Daniel Francis's *Red Light Neon* (2006) to Diane Purvey and John Belshaw's *Vancouver Noir* (2011) and Belshaw's edited collection *Vancouver Confidential* (2014). Aaron Chapman has been at the forefront of this drive, with his previous books on Vancouver entertainment landmarks the Penthouse Nightclub (*Liquor, Lust, and the Law*, 2012) and the Commodore Ballroom (*Live at the Commodore*, 2014) engaging wide audiences with controversial aspects of local history. His newest account, *The Last Gang in Town*, is another highly accessible read based on the tenets of public and oral history. An enticing narrative of an era when youth street gangs gathered in Vancouver's municipal parks, it is structured around thirty interviews that he conducted over the last decade with former gang members and retired police officers. The spotlight here is on the Clark Park Gang, a group of twenty to thirty young men that coalesced around the green space and playing field at the corner of 14th Avenue and Commercial Drive in east Vancouver.

Tattoos, muscles, leather jackets, petty thefts, countercultural lifestyles, and strong-arm police tactics are all integral to this story. Although Chapman does not refer to substantial secondary literature or present a powerful thesis, the gang's story is soundly and sympathetically situated in British Columbia's urban and working-class histories through careful attention to east Vancouver's socio-economic hardships, "rough" notions of masculinity, and the contested moral authority of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Chapman demonstrates how ideological clashes transpired in physical confrontations between rival gangs and, at times, with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD).

The work can be understood in three parts, stretching from the mid-1960s to

late 1970s. The first part examines the upbringing of future gang members. Many were subject to domestic violence and wound up in the Juvenile Detention Home. The second part demonstrates the Clark Park Gang's transition from mere "teenage ruffians" into a "criminal problem," as epitomized by their involvement in two of Vancouver's infamous riots: at the Rock and Roll Revival Concert of 1970 and the Rolling Stones concert of 1972. Following these events, the VPD grew suspicious of the Clark Park Gang and began surveilling their activities by assembling a semi-official anti-park gang unit known as the Heavy Squad, composed of the VPD's most burly men, who often played by their own rules. The final part describes intensifying confrontations between the Clark Park Gang and the VPD, which culminated in a chase near the Biltmore Hotel where gang member Danny Teece was "unintentionally" shot and killed by an officer. The ensuing morose atmosphere among Clark Parkers, combined with new hangouts and the inevitable responsibilities of adulthood, contributed to their disbandment. The Clark Park Gang was one of the most feared gangs of its kind in Vancouver, but it was also one of the last.

Historians often treat east Vancouver as a redoubt of working-class consciousness and political activism. However, Chapman shows that the Clark Park Gang had no political agenda. It was simply a motley crew aimlessly looking for a good time, wearing the "badge of villainy with pride" (88). A revealing comment comes from gang member Danny "Mouse" Williamson, who, after being approached by Marxist-Leninist agitators to help them wreak havoc, said "[they were] big on 'liberation' – we didn't even know what the fucking word meant. We didn't give a shit about politics" (72). Decades later, when reflecting on their

pasts, former members of the Clark Park Gang describe how their personal histories were likely woven into the history of east Vancouver as a tough, gritty, blue-collar part of the city.

One of the greatest strengths of this work is a product of Chapman's ability to establish a trusting relationship with interviewees who were willing to tell what they knew about the history of such an ephemeral, criminal "underworld." *The Last Gang in Town* was awarded the Canadian Historical Association's Clio Prize for British Columbia in 2017. Well researched and written, with a narrative impulse that will appeal to a wide public, it will fascinate anyone interested in the urban histories of youth, crime, and policing in twentieth-century North America.

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### *Beyond Mile Zero: The Vanishing Alaska Highway Lodge Community*

Lily Gontard and Mike Kelly

Madeira Park, BC: Lost Moose (Harbour Publishing), 2017. 224 pp.  
\$24.95 paper.

STEVE PENFOLD  
*University of Toronto*

THE ALASKA Highway runs from Dawson Creek, British Columbia, to Delta Junction, Alaska. Built by the American military for defence purposes during the Second World War, it was opened to the public in 1948 and became a key spine of northern development. Resource companies, truckers, and tourists drove the road; roadside businesses grew up to feed off the traffic. *Beyond Mile Zero* is a portrait of the "Lodge Community" that served the road – the families, partners, and workers who made a living, and built their lives, beside the Alaska Highway.

Interviews with former and current lodge owners and several stunning colour photographs form the core of the book. Most lodges were (and remain) small family businesses, relying on husband-wife-children teams supplemented by hired staff during the summer. Owners tell of hard work and frustrations, but the book is mostly optimistic in tone, despite the word "vanishing" in the title. Most owners say that running a lodge made for a good life, while many photographs feature smiling husband-wife teams, well-stocked bakery counters, and quirky signs, serving to reinforce the generally affectionate tone of the text.

The "vanishing" in the title comes from the general recognition, articulated by several interviewees, that the heyday of the highway business has passed. In

1955, there was a service outlet every twenty-five miles, but sixty years later you had to drive at least four times that distance to find a business (26). Highway straightening and fuel-efficient cars were two enemies of lodge culture: today, drivers go much faster, drive further in a day, and need to stop less frequently than before. The peak came in the early 1980s, when bus tours continued to fill parking lots along the highway. There was a temporary boom by the turn of the twenty-first century tied to petroleum development. But, as one owner laments: “Everything slowed up here two years ago . . . There’s virtually no activity in the oil field-related stuff – basically the operator just looks after the infrastructure.” For this owner, business has declined by 40 percent (51).

This kind of boom-bust cycle is different from the standard seasonal pattern of the lodge business, mentioned several times but not thoroughly explored in the book. In the heyday of the lodge, most owners closed down in winter but some stayed open all year. *Beyond Mile Zero*, however, focuses on the summer. Even the photographs mostly feature leafy stretches of road, with few parkas and winter boots in view.

The authors are correct to say that too many highway books focus on heroic builders rather than on the ordinary people who made the road work over time. *Beyond Mile Zero*’s focus on lodge owners and community is welcome. By the end, the narrative structure does start to feel stale and standard – a family opens a lodge, bakes cinnamon buns, struggles with generators, enjoys the life, sells the business to someone else, and the cycle continues. You start to wish for something different or deeper, perhaps more reflection on what “community” means in the context of a highway. The term signals the human focus of *Beyond Mile Zero*,

but what makes these geographically scattered families, who mostly pursue their own lives, into a “community”? Owners get to know a few regular customers, send their kids to nearby schools, and participate in bonspiels, but interviewees says little about connections to each other. Do lodge owners have common institutions, see each other, or make up a community of their own? These questions are not really explored.

Overall, however, *Beyond Mile Zero* is a good read: an engaging and refreshingly human portrait of the roadside.

*The Queen of the North Disaster:  
The Captain’s Story*

Colin Henthorne

Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2016. 224 pp. \$24.95 paper

HOWARD STEWART

*Denman Island*

AS ONE MIGHT expect from a competent and conscientious career mariner, Colin Henthorne’s account of the sinking of the *Queen of the North* on 22 March 2006, a little south of Prince Rupert on British Columbia’s north coast, is detailed and well organized. He is obviously still haunted by this event that forever changed the lives of those who lived it. Henthorne describes how this vessel – which he dearly loved – was built and laid out, how it operated, and who did what on board. As in many crime novels, the deed is done – the boat sunk – scarcely a quarter of the way into the book, but Henthorne has not written a suspense thriller or a whodunit. And, unlike BC Ferries senior management and the courts – but in common with

some technical specialists who have considered the *Queen of the North* puzzle at length – Henthorne does not buy that the sinking was the fault of a single negligent fourth mate. Like the BC Ferries' own erstwhile director of safety, health, and environment, Captain Darin Bowland, Henthorne believes instead that, "given the state of the company's safety practices and protocols, the fleet [in early 2006] was an accident waiting to happen ... [and] that systemic problems that affected the whole fleet ... might have been the cause, or one of the causes, of the sinking of the *Queen of the North*" (67). Henthorne had only recently become a BC Ferries manager when his ship went down, following a long, diverse, and respected maritime career. Like Bowland, he had been vocal in his criticism of shortcomings in the fleet. Bowland chose to resign his position after the *Queen of the North* disaster, stating: "the company scares me and I am not willing to carry on within the current culture and organisation" (68). Meanwhile Henthorne was absolved of blame for the sinking and instead praised for the practised expertise with which he and his crew promptly evacuated the rapidly sinking ship on that dark, rainy March night.

The contrast with the sinking of the ferry *Estonia* in the Baltic Sea a few years before is striking. Henthorne briefly refers to this disaster but does not dwell on it. The *Estonia's* fate is a chilling reminder of how truly dreadful a ferry sinking can be. After that ship went down, the sea was strewn with over eight hundred dead passengers, and European news media were full of surreal images of corpses floating in bright blue waters on the sunny day after – some still inside their flooded life rafts. That the *Queen of the North* sinking did not result in a similar tragedy, despite the well-documented

deficiencies of the BC Ferries' safety and operating systems, had much to do with the skill and bravery of its captain and crew. Henthorne's reward was to be fired. So it's not surprising that much of this book reads like a highly technical, fact-finding and hair-splitting sort of twenty-first-century *J'accuse*, looking at the *Queen of the North* affair, and the way BC Ferries Corporation chose to deal with it, as a telling indicator of what is wrong at the core of this essential public service in the BC heartland.

Now, if I had written such a book, people could rightly complain of my bias against the senior management of this corporation. After all, over the past fifteen years, it has done much well-documented harm to the coastal communities it is meant to serve, reducing schedules, jacking up fares far beyond the rate of inflation while giving its bloated management cadre healthy bonuses and generally doing its best to stoke the flames of the low-level class warfare that often lurks between decks in this fleet. Unlike me though, Henthorne apparently believed in the fresh broom that was to have mucked out the stables of the newly privatized BC Ferries early in the century. He had lived through the silly years when a government of the left had appointed an old mill worker to oversee the construction of expensive new "fast ferries" that, predictably perhaps, proved unmitigated disasters. So Henthorne's disappointment was bitter as he was confronted with growing evidence of the blithe disinterest among the new management of the "new BC Ferries" with regard to the growing list of safety concerns being raised by people like Bowland and himself. Henthorne contends that his firing was the result of his having raised such concerns, even after becoming a manager, and thereby embarrassing the corporation's senior management. They almost said as much,

criticizing Henthorne for not being a team player on their “management team.”

The most important results of this fiasco were the presumed deaths of passengers Shirley Rosette and Gerald Foisy, whose remains have never been found, and the imprisonment of Fourth Mate Karl Lilgert. It ought to have also led to a permanent upgrading of the fleet’s safety and emergency response capacities, procedures, and skills. Alas, the corporation’s response appears to have been disturbingly Trump-like, with much attention to reputation management, blaming of underlings, and shooting of messengers. Near the end of his book, Henthorne states: “I am alive today because I had a crew that could have launched the lifeboats and life rafts with their eyes closed. I don’t think that could be said of many of today’s crews – not because of any deficiency on their part, but because the equipment they have been saddled with cannot be exercised on a regular basis” (155). Is this true? If so, it is not reassuring for those of us, roughly 20 percent of British Columbia’s population, who depend on these ferries as an essential service, let alone for anyone boarding them for pleasure. Will it take an *Estonia* on our coast before these issues are addressed?

*Culture Gap: Towards a New World in the Yalakom Valley*

Judith Plant

Vancouver: Transmontanus 22, New Star Books, 2017. 108 pp. Illus. \$19.00 paper.

*The Woods: A Year on Protection Island*

Amber McMillan

Gibsons, BC: Nightwood Editions, 2016. 224 pp. \$19.95 paper.

ANDREW SCOTT

*Sechelt, BC*

TO SEEK A NEW and better way of life in a new and better community is surely a basic human compulsion. The more dissatisfied we are with our old lives, the greater our interest in alternatives. If we are to judge by the number of recent books that deal with alternative communities – both fictional and actual, contemporary and historical, utopian and dystopian – then our current level of dissatisfaction must be sky-high.

Two new books about BC communities – *Culture Gap: Towards a New World in the Yalakom Valley*, by Judith Plant, and *The Woods: A Year on Protection Island*, by Amber McMillan – approach the subject from rather opposite angles.

Plant, an editor and long-time publisher at New Society on Gabriola Island, has written a touching, elegiac tribute to lost youth and thwarted idealism. She revisits the site of Camelsfoot, a commune founded in the early 1980s in a remote valley northwest of Lillooet. Plant is a romantic. She and her friends – mostly Simon Fraser University students, led by their mentor, a philosopher and SFU instructor named Fred Brown – want

to create an intentional community: a “new world that would nurture people and place, a new culture that would be resilient in the face of the crumbling old world” (8).

McMillan, a poet and teacher, is much less ambitious; she seeks to flee Toronto for somewhere affordable, lightly populated, and “surrounded by water and trees.” Sick of endless winters and traffic nightmares, she imagines a place where people “move around slowly,” “grow their own food,” and “hike through the woods every day.” In 2014, she and her family relocate to Protection Island, a short boat ride from the city of Nanaimo. For a few islanders, Protection is a kind of utopia or ideal community: “a car-free paradise.” But the society described by the author feels more like an anti-community: most residents seem to be there solely to put their own ideas and dreams into practice, and to heck with everyone else.

Plant and her fellow communards are dedicated, intelligent young people and are willing to endure much discomfort, but their naivety and inexperience are shocking: they prove utterly unable to put their big ideas into practice. They have, for instance, no power or running water. A planned micro-hydroelectric project, which involves digging a deep, lengthy trench; laying pipe; and installing a penstock, turbine, and generator, never happens. In the meantime, water for sixteen people (including Plant’s three children) has to be hauled by hand and heated in a barrel. Then Fred Brown becomes terminally ill. Winter draws near. It’s hardly surprising that most commune members grow disillusioned.

Protection, by comparison, is not an alternative or intentional community in any way, and McMillan never suggests such a thing. It’s a collection of people who choose to live in a place that’s difficult to reach yet close to civilization. A few of them are friendly and interested

in cooperative goals. Others are mean and narrow-minded, or just plain strange. There are problems with island life: ferries are expensive and private boats unreliable; the only jobs are in Nanaimo. *The Woods* never really analyzes community dynamics; it’s more a series of vignettes about the island’s residents. This format often feels disjointed: there are abrupt chapter endings and awkward transitions, and dialogue seems on occasion to spin out of control.

Plant lasts two years at Camelsfoot; McMillan abandons Protection Island after only twelve months. Yet both authors claim to have discovered much of value during their brief sojourns. Plant and her companions find “something precious and vital in ourselves, something that, unless nurtured to life, lies dormant in all of us like a frozen seed, a potential that sits waiting to germinate.” McMillan learns “that a fantasy is a fantasy, no matter how real the photographs. What I found is what my mother has been telling me my whole life: *Wherever you go, you take yourself with you.*” The lesson for the rest of us might be: if you’re looking for an experience of community, don’t hide yourself away.

*The Regulation of Peace  
River: A Case Study for River  
Management*

Michael Church

Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley  
Blackwell, 2014. 278 pp. \$185.95 cloth.

UNDINÉ THOMPSON  
*Canadian Wildlife Service*

THE PEACE RIVER is an impressive natural system, flowing from the Rocky Mountains of northeastern British Columbia to the Arctic Ocean,

and it has been historically (and prehistorically) a vital part of the region. From serving in the eighteenth century as the boundary between the hostile Dane-zaa and Cree peoples (see Ridington, *Where Happiness Dwells*, 100), thus ending decades of unrest (and getting its moniker); to supporting an agricultural boom in the twentieth century, which was quickly followed by the development of local timber and coal industries; and, more recently, to mineral, oil, and gas extraction, the Peace River has not only helped shape the communities around it but has also been physically shaped to address the demands of its surrounding communities and industries.

Starting with the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam in 1967, “the Peace” has been continually, and sometimes considerably, reshaped through direct human manipulation (especially by building hydroelectric dams and their subsequent reservoir, Williston Lake) and through long-term impacts due to river flow changes. In *The Regulation of Peace River: A Case Study for River Management*, Michael Church and five contributors not only provide a detailed snapshot of this large northward-flowing river in its current state but also – through an impressive dataset spanning fifty-five years of research, including seventeen years of air photographs and hydrological records from prior to the damming of the river – provide one of the most comprehensive longitudinal case studies of the impacts of a major dam on a river of its type to date.

*The Regulation of Peace River* makes an impressive contribution to the study of the impacts of river regulation (damming) on fluvial geomorphology. It is a useful text for both upper-level students and professionals trying to gain a better understanding of the dynamics at play in a regulated river. Chapters on

ice and water flows, aggradation and degradation of the riverbed, vegetation, flooding, hydraulic geometry, and other topics provide in-depth detail pertaining to the many variables that are affected by the damming of a river. The book is broken into a very practical set of stand-alone chapters, with the research clearly presented through the use of numerous maps (by Eric Leinberger), full colour as well as black-and-white plates, and clear graphs, tables, and charts. The study methods are clearly laid out in each chapter, and the chapters are truly interesting to read, though this would have been made easier by a glossary.

In the prologue, Church explains that the Peace lends two particularly exceptional features to this study: its strong seasonal ice effects and its similarity to other yet undammed rivers around the world. The Peace River, however, is also an exceptional case study due to the controversy that surrounds it. The Site C Clean Energy Project, a hydroelectric dam that is in the process of being developed on the Peace fewer than ten kilometres southwest of Fort St. John, is a contentious project, pitting Treaty 8 First Nations, farmers, and other concerned citizens against BC Hydro and the province. The science that is presented in this text represents decades of dedicated research, and although it ends with chapters discussing the future state of the Peace River and the implications that this research may have for river management, the author(s) remain silent on the proposed Site C dam.

Church concludes this book by stating: “Peace River represents an ongoing experiment in the relative influence of water and sediment as governing conditions of river form and process” (272). Clearly, the end of this experiment is nowhere yet in sight; but, in the meantime, Church’s book lays a solid foundation for further learning.

## REFERENCES

Ridington, Robin, and Jillian Ridington in collaboration with elders of the Dane-zaa First Nations. 2013. *Where Happiness Dwells: A History of the Dane-zaa First Nations*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

*In the Spirit of Homebirth:  
Modern Women, an Ancient  
Choice*

Bronwyn Preece, editor

New York: Seven Stories Press, 2015.  
416 pp. \$18.95. paper.

MEGAN J. DAVIES  
*York University*

THIS EDITED volume of modern BC birthing stories will be a compelling read for anyone with a personal or professional interest in the rich drama of childbirth. Not intended as a scholarly text, the sixty multi-authored contributions are testimonials, memoirs, manifestos, poetry, and photo essays by women who chose to have their babies off the mainstream medical grid. Lasqueti Island home-birthing mum, writer, and improv artist Bronwyn Preece pulled together the collection as a resource for expectant parents, inspired by *Spiritual Midwifery*, Tennessee midwife Ina Mae Gaskin's iconic 1977 counterculture birthing bible.

I read the book in one long evening, riveted by tales that both complicated and confirmed my own research on 1970s and 1980s home birth and community midwifery in Canada's western province. Most of the book contributors regard hospital birth today as a substandard, disempowering, even soul-destroying event, suggesting that letting dads into the birthing room in the 1980s was a

decorative flourish rather than part of a substantial makeover of obstetrical care. Dr. Michael Klein, one of the original architects of British Columbia's midwifery system, would likely agree, citing excessive caesarean sections and a medical education system that favours the technological fix. Reading Preece's extensive and rather eclectic collection, I discovered that dissident doctors are still out there, quietly subverting the system. But midwives – who kept safe many radical birthing mums determined to give birth far from hospital during the 1970s – are now sometimes regarded as part of an unhelpful birthing establishment while their sister doulas, a new quasi-professional group of health workers, appear to be doing the low-paid personal support work that unregulated community midwives did in earlier decades. From this book I also learned that, in spite of the establishment of a midwifery school at UBC in 2002, there is still no BC-licensed midwife north of Smithers.

For the mothers, partners, sisters, midwives, and doulas whose stories are presented in *In The Spirit of Homebirth*, labour is not a medical event but, rather, is graphically real and deeply connected with emotions, nature, community, and cultures reclaimed and invented. I lost count of the number of women who recalled vomiting during labour and the collective hours of back massage delivered by supportive life partners, doulas, and female friends. In these birthing narratives women wander out into the garden to rest against the rough bark of a cedar tree between labour contractions. They create plaster casts of their rounded bellies. The powerful voices of Nuu-chah-nulth, Klahoose, and Cree women within this book introduced me to reclaimed Indigenous rituals of moss bags and belly button ceremonies. And I met East Indian grandmothers-to-be

busy preparing mouth-watering meals, simultaneously evoking a culture in which birth is profoundly female-centred and multi-generational, and wondering aloud why their daughters were rejecting the excellent medical services of the Canadian hospital.

As the above reference to Indigenous birthing practices suggests, home birth is also a highly political act for many of those whose stories fill the pages of this book. Historically and today, many Indigenous women are forced to leave their communities to give birth in distant institutions, so birthing at home is understood by them as a key element in the project of decolonization. The notion of decolonization through reclaiming lost power and women-centred ways, however, threads through many of the narratives in this book. Placed in a wider perspective, this collection is about the need for a humanist health care system, in which each of the examples I have underscored is given equal weight. The grassroots voices that are given a public life in *In The Spirit of Homebirth* need to join with those advocating for increased hospice provision, more compassionate dementia care, and mental health funding that goes beyond a ten-minute consultation with the psychiatrist and a pharmaceutical prescription to create a collective push for community-centred health care that heals the whole person.