

**“His Body Was Vigorous and His Intellect Powerful:” Gendered
Discourse in Two Early 20th Century British Columbia Textbooks**

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Dedicated to my parents.

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Introduction

Maps, like textbooks, are a taken-for-granted feature of the classroom landscape. We look at them and through them in order to access the information they contain. We rarely question the way in which this information is framed and presented. However, the manner in which information is offered has significance. Arno Peters, a German historian active during the late twentieth century, argued that traditional world maps are not the reflections of reality that we assume they are, but actually reflections of the ethnocentrism of powerful Euro-American nations and their cartographers.¹ When trying to represent our spherical earth using a flat, two dimensional map, cartographers depicted the basic, factual information about the world that they knew, like the shape of coastlines, but also unwittingly built in their own biases. In a Mercator-projection map, the traditional style which Peters criticizes heavily, the equator does not sit at the middle of the map but is rather pushed southwards. The result is that the northern half of the map, which contains Europe and North America, takes up two thirds of the available space while the global south is compressed into one third. One result of this is that China and Greenland appear to be of equal size when in reality China is four times bigger.² The result is a Eurocentric distortion.

In *New Canadian Geography*, a textbook approved for use in the province of British Columbia (BC) and published in 1899, many of the featured globes are created from a comparable perspective. There is a literal tilt of the globe towards a specifically British perspective and as I will argue, there is a figurative tilt within the text as well. As the author

¹ Stefan Müller, "Equal Representation of Time and Space: Arno Peters' Universal History: Equal Representation of Time and Space," *History Compass* 8, no. 7 (2010): 718. <http://tinyurl.com/y424wveq>.

² Ibid, 722.

describes the globe with pride, “[the] observer in this cut is supposed to be elevated over the British Isles. Part of South America and the whole of Australia are shown beyond the hemisphere.” This centering of the British culture simultaneously leads to a marginalization of other regions of the world and other cultures. South America and Australia literally fall off the map. This type of god’s-eye view, where the viewer has ascended from the British Isles to survey the rest of the planet, is used repeatedly in *New Canadian*



Figure 1: “Map Showing the World Ridge.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 4.

Geography. This British centered perspective also pervades the text of

History and Geography of British Columbia, a textbook authorized by the Department of Education for use in BC public schools and first published in 1906.

The question that the maps featured in these textbooks beg is one of framing - about how information is presented and from whose perspective. The choices as to what maps and images would be included and what information would be featured in the text, as well as how the text would be constructed, were the product of dominant worldviews. These texts were selected, authorized and distributed by the government of British Columbia’s Department of Education. This demonstrates that the content of the textbooks, the values buried within the “facts based” text, were also the sanctioned values of the government of British Columbia at the time. Consequently, this implies that these were the values the government wished to impart to its young citizens.

When analyzing these historical texts through the lens of gender, the implicit gender values or gendered discourses contained in the texts become visible. Gender ideals and expectations of appropriate gender expression were rigid in the early twentieth century. At the time that these two textbooks were published, those with social power (such as the Minister for Education, employees of the Department of Education, the textbook authors, and even teachers themselves), perceived various threats to the introduction and maintenance of these gender ideals in the province.³ The purpose these textbooks served, in terms of their discussion of gender, was to normalize, naturalize, and then universalize the gendered discourses they presented. School officials sought to instill character and morality as much as factual knowledge into the students of BC public schools.⁴ Encouraging appropriate gender expression was one aspect of this project.

The authors employ various methods within the texts to meet the goal of forming students' values. First, explicit gender and actual ideals are openly discussed and outlined. The discussion sometimes relates to actual people; at other times gendered concepts are addressed in a more abstract sense. Second, the authors discuss deviance from unacknowledged but implicit norms, (they make the ideal visible as the opposite of the “perversion” they present in the text). Race and religion link closely with gender in these representations. “Pagan” people and people

³ These threats were “rough” working class white men (miners, lumbermen, etc.), Indigenous people, and other people racialized non-white, particularly Asian people. The working-class white men's irreligion, their rowdy homosocial culture, and their relationships with Indigenous women were all perceived as threatening by government officials. The presence of other non-white racial groups in significant numbers threatened white demographic dominance and government control. Officials sought to create a respectable white settler colony and enacted policies designed to control these people. See Lynne Marks, *Infidels and the Damn Churches: Irreligion and Religion in Settler British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017) and Adele Perry, *On the edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

⁴ In 1898, the year prior to the authorization and publication of *New Canadian Geography*, Inspector Wilson writes of the teachers whose classrooms he inspected that “while for the most part their teaching has, no doubt, been done with the thought that *knowledge* is power, it is to be hoped that the greater truth has not been lost sight of, namely, that *character* is power.” D. Wilson, Inspector of Schools, “Report of Inspector Wilson, Victoria B.C., November 1898,” in *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia 1897-98*, Government of British Columbia. Department of Education (Victoria, BC: Richard Wolfenden, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, 1899), 1247.

racialized as non-white are often employed as foils by the authors for the form of gender expression they wish to elevate. Third, the authors employ silence (they avoid certain topics). The choice not to include narratives which represented a deviation from the ideal is indicative of the Department of Education's view of what qualifies as appropriate gender expression and what does not. My analysis will follow these three themes.

This investigation of gender in BC textbooks is important because textbooks were intended to impart facts and truths to children. In the course of learning, absorbing, and integrating the explicit historical and geographical teachings of the books, students would also have been absorbing their implicit and explicit messaging surrounding gender.

The textbooks were obviously not the only site where children would have been exposed to gendered discourses. During the nineteenth century many children were kept at home by their



Figure 2: "Key to Map of World Ridge." *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 5.

parents, particularly in rural settler communities where children's labour on the farm was essential and where school was considered of secondary importance.⁵

School, however, had become increasingly influential in children's lives by the early twentieth century.

Children, even in rural farming communities, were

attending school at very high rates and a public school education was seen as an advantage.⁶ These two

textbooks and ones like them, helped shape the worldview of generations of BC students.

⁵ Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, J. Donald Wilson, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (Calgary, Alberta, Canada: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1995): 126-127.

⁶ Ibid.

Historiography

Scholarly approaches to gender and its place in the history of British Columbia have evolved significantly over the past few decades. Following the women's movement of the sixties and seventies, historians of BC and western Canada began to investigate the lives of women.⁷ In this sense women's stories have been the object of scholarly inquiry at least since the 1970s, men's stories for much longer. However, gender more recently has been used in more nuanced ways as a historical lens which scholars have applied to their work investigating a variety of subject areas in the history of British Columbia.

To examine gender in a scholarly manner means seeing gender as a socially constructed, contingent, and "dynamic structure that gives shape to the identities of both men and women."⁸ Studying gender today means studying the meanings of masculinities and femininities in the past as well as its interactions with other facets of identity or social divisions. There are a variety of ways to analyze issues of gender in the past. This passage will provide an overview of the historiography of gender in British Columbia and will discuss some of the historians who have grappled with issues of gender, race, and class as well as agency in their work. It will conclude with an examination of some of the literature which deals with schooling and historical textbooks specifically.

In the autumn of 1996, an opinion piece entitled "W[h]ither Labour History: Regionalism, Class and the Writing of BC History" appeared in the journal *BC Studies*. In his article, the unapologetically polemical historian Mark Leier bitterly laments the absence of

⁷ See Gillian Creese and Veronica Strong-Boag, eds., *British Columbia Reconsidered: Essays on Women* (Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1992) and Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1999).

⁸ Adele Perry, *On the edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 8.

properly Marxist analysis in the historiography of BC.⁹ He also attacks what he labels the displacement of class as a category of analysis by “less fundamental divisions... such as gender and race.”¹⁰ The destructive effect of focusing on these categories, he argues, is that it distracts from the revolutionary “truth” that class and class conflict structure history more than gender and race conflicts.¹¹

Of the two other scholars of BC history who wrote in response to Leier’s commentary, the second reply stands out. It is the shortest piece to appear in the forum, by the historian Veronica Strong-Boag. She points out the growing scholarship on the “interconnectedness and, ultimately, the inseparability of different forms of oppression” and calls for historians to move away from ranking oppression and from “either/or” style dichotomous thinking.¹² Leier’s final response to his commentators was unrepentant; however, Strong-Boag’s suggestions did not ultimately fall on deaf ears. Many studies undertaken since this charged exchange have followed the general direction outlined by Strong-Boag.

The term intersectionality describes the feminist theory that systems of oppression or privilege related to different social divisions (for instance gender, race or class) intersect and interact to produce differing experiences depending on an individual’s personal identification with a specific set of markers or their affiliation with these markers in the eyes of the wider society. The most insightful approaches to the study of the history of BC are intersectional, meaning they *combine* analyses of race and gender (as well as other factors such as class).

⁹ Mark Leier, “W[h]ither Labour History: Regionalism, Class, and the Writing of BC History,” *BC Studies* 111, (Autumn 1996): 62.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 71.

¹¹ Mark Leier, “Response to Professors Palmer, Strong-Boag, and McDonald,” *BC Studies* 111, (Autumn 1996): 96.

¹² Veronica Strong-Boag, “Moving Beyond Tired ‘Truths:’ Or, Let’s Not Fight the Old Battles.” *BC Studies* 111, (Autumn 1996): 85.

Several scholars have undertaken this type of multifaceted analysis in the field of gender history.¹³

Adele Perry's book, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871*, published in 2001, in many ways seems to have "set the bar" for analyzing the interplay of gender, race, and class in the history of BC. In it, she discusses the backwoods homosocial culture of working men, their interracial unions with Indigenous women, and the policies that colonial officials imposed on them in an attempt to control this "unruly" behaviour. She examines the impact of racism and colonialism on the Indigenous peoples of BC, but she also goes deeper, examining the history of whiteness in British Columbia as well. As Perry explains, "[w]hite people, like peoples of colour, were racialized, and the historical processes by which whiteness was constituted and empowered can and must be excavated."¹⁴ Historians of British Columbia have applied this intersectional approach in their work examining topics ranging from religion and irreligion to state intervention into the lives of Asian women.¹⁵

Intimately linked to the intersectional approach is the concept that an individual can at once be oppressed and be an oppressor, and that these roles can shift depending on context and over time.¹⁶ Discussing oppression in this way also requires that scholars acknowledge the

¹³ See Sylvia Van Kirk, "Colonized Lives: the Native Wives and Daughters of Five Founding Families of Victoria," in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada*, eds., Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 171-199; see also Mary Leah de Zwart, "White Sauce and Chinese Chews: Recipes as Post Colonial Metaphors," in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West Through Women's History*, eds., Sarah Carter, Lesley Erickson, Patricia Roome, and Char Smith (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Perry, *On the edge of Empire*, 197.

¹⁵ See Lynne Marks, *Infidels and the Damn Churches: Irreligion and Religion in Settler British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017), Shelly Ikebuchi, *From Slave Girls to Salvation: Gender, Race, and Victoria's Chinese Rescue Home, 1886-1923* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015). See also Catherine. A. Cavanaugh and Randi R. Warne, *Telling Tales: Essays in Western Women's History* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, eds., *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), and Elizabeth Vibert, "Real Men Hunt Buffalo: Masculinity, Race and Class in British Fur Traders' Narratives." *Gender & History* 8, no. 1 (1996): 4-21.

¹⁶ Strong-Boag, "Moving Beyond Tired 'Truths,'" 85.

personal agency of the people they study. Agency is an individual's capacity to make choices for themselves, despite facing outside pressure which limits the options open to them.¹⁷ Students in British Columbia were immersed in androcentric and white supremacist discourses¹⁸ which were pervasive and influential; however, it is important to acknowledge that as individuals they had the capacity to resist and exercise choice.¹⁹

One volume which achieves this balanced view of the forces which impacted the lives of teachers and students in BC's past is *Children, Teachers and Schools In the History of British Columbia*. The essays brought together in this collection about the classroom experience in BC from the late nineteenth century to the present, discuss the tension between individuals, communities, and the British Columbian government as each party attempted to make schooling work to their benefit. Importantly, colonial intervention into the lives of Indigenous people and the eventual use of schooling to impose Anglo-Canadian culture on children is discussed over several chapters using various approaches.²⁰

¹⁷ See Melanie Buddle, *The Business of Women: Marriage, Family, and Entrepreneurship in British Columbia 1901-51* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uvic/detail.action?docID=3412893#>. See also Ruth W. Sandwell, *Contesting Rural Space: Land Policy and the Practices of Resettlement on Saltspring Island 1859-1891* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), Jean Barman, *Sojourning Sisters: The Lives and Letters of Jessie and Annie McQueen* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 239-240.

¹⁸ See Penney Clark, "'A Nice Little Wife to Make Things Pleasant': Portrayals of Women in Canadian History Textbooks Approved in British Columbia," *McGill Journal of Education* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2005): <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/docview/202730147?accountid=14846> and Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).

¹⁹ For a discussion of students' resistance to the introduction of a new style of schooling and through this schooling the imposition of the culture of bourgeois society see Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London, Ontario: Althouse Press, 1988), 16-18.

²⁰ See Jean Barman and Mona Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed. (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Brush Education Inc., 2003). For further reading on the history of education in BC see also Jean Barman, *Sojourning Sisters: The Lives and Letters of Jessie and Annie McQueen* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), and Helen Raptis, "Bending the Bars of the Identity Cage: Amy Brown and the Development of Teacher Identity in British Columbia," *History of Education* 39, no. 2 (2010): 199-218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00467600902812372>.

While the literature on teachers and classroom life in British Columbia is plentiful, there are significant gaps in the scholarly literature discussing the textbooks authorized by the Department of Education for use in the province's public schools. Internationally, various scholars have examined the crucial role played by textbooks in shaping students' educational experience. These studies have illuminated how the state provided textbooks, not only to encourage literacy and provide "factual" knowledge, but also to instruct young, future citizens in how to differentiate themselves based on nationality and how best to embody their appropriate role based on gender, race, and class.²¹ The verbal and pictorial imagery of textbooks has been shown to have had the power to reinforce entrenched social mores, and the power even to have instigated them in the first place.²²

In the context of British Columbia, Timothy J. Stanley has published extensively on the role of race and racism in the province's public schools throughout the twentieth century and has convincingly shown that textbooks were used to teach a white supremacist curriculum.²³ However, there has only been one analysis of BC textbooks undertaken using the lens of gender. In "'A Nice Little Wife to Make Things Pleasant': Portrayals of Women in Canadian History

²¹ See Stephen J. Heathorn, *For Home, Country, and Race: Constructing Gender, Class, and Englishness in the Elementary School, 1880-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), Lisa L. Zagumny and Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher, "The races and conditions of men': women in nineteenth-century geography school texts in the United States," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 15, no. 4 (August 2008): 411-429, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09663690802155637>, and Avril M.C. Maddrell, "Discourses of race and gender and the comparative method in geography school texts 1830-1918," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 16 (1998): 81-103, <https://doi.org/10.1068/d160081>.

²² Lisa L. Zagumny and Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher, "The races and conditions of men': women in nineteenth-century geography school texts in the United States," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 15, no. 4 (August 2008), 418. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09663690802155637>.

²³ See Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011) and Timothy J. Stanley, "White Supremacy and the Rhetoric of Educational Indoctrination: A Canadian Case Study," in *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed, edited by Jean Barman and Mona Gleason (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Brush Education Inc., 2003), 113-132. For more on this topic see also Mary Leah de Zwart, "White Sauce and Chinese Chews: Recipes as Post Colonial Metaphors," in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West Through Women's History*, Edited by Sarah Carter, Lesley Erickson, Patricia Roome, and Char Smith (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 129-147.

Textbooks Approved in British Columbia,” Penney Clark compares 15 textbooks from British Columbia and Ontario, published from the 1920s through to the 1980s, and concludes that despite significant societal changes, depictions of women remained relatively static over time. She concludes that most often women are invisible. Later in the century, they appear as a superficial supplement to a broader male-dominated narrative.²⁴ With this analysis, I hope to supplement the historical literature which analyses how gender is discussed explicitly and implicitly in textbooks authorized for use in BC’s public schools by focusing on the period prior to that studied by Clark.

²⁴ Penney Clark, “‘A Nice Little Wife to Make Things Pleasant:’ Portrayals of Women in Canadian History Textbooks Approved in British Columbia,” *McGill Journal of Education* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 258-260. <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/docview/202730147?accountid=14846>.

Positionality

My interest in the topic of textbooks and schooling and their relationship to gender in British Columbia stems in part from my family's background. On both my mother and father's side I am descended from several generations of white settlers of BC with origins in eastern Canada and the United Kingdom. On my mother's side, my great-great-grandmother's father arrived in BC from Nova Scotia and settled in Fort Langley with his family around 1885. Thereafter the family remained centred on the south coast. He was a teacher, and one of his granddaughters also became a teacher. My paternal grandmother's family came to the Okanagan Valley from Ontario around 1900, and my great-grandfather was born in Salmon Arm in 1913. My paternal grandfather's family came from Calgary to the Okanagan in 1912. In all likelihood members of my family would have used similar textbooks, if not the very ones I have chosen to study in the course of their education. Certainly, I know that my family members were educated in the common schools of BC. While I know that my paternal grandmother's parents left school early, my paternal grandfather's mother completed her education and then attended the Normal School in Victoria, becoming a teacher in 1928. Uncovering the gendered discourses present in these textbooks and researching the history of British Columbia has helped me better understand the lives of the older generations of my family. It has also provided a context for some of the gendered values that I have inherited and am beginning to examine as an adult.

Sources and Methodology

The two textbooks I will be analyzing, *New Canadian Geography* and *History and Geography of British Columbia*, are part of the British Columbia Historical Textbooks Collection. This collection is held at the University of Victoria McPherson Library and digitized for online viewing by UVIC libraries. Both textbooks were authorized by the government of British Columbia's Department of Education for use in public schools.²⁵ Children were the intended audience of both textbooks, with the stated aim of both books being to instill values and to instruct "the child."²⁶ Lawson and Young explain that it is their "earnest wish" that "the children learn to love better the grand and beautiful province that is their home," and that in the course of their reading they will resolve to make it "a great country."²⁷ In *New Canadian Geography* the author explains that after learning about climate and geology, once "the child has been logically prepared for the study of man himself," the different "races of men" will be presented "as they really appear in their everyday life and occupations."²⁸ The copyright page of *New Canadian Geography* states that it was published in 1899 however, later in the book census data from 1906 is cited.²⁹ It has been difficult to discern whether or how many subsequent editions were published. There is one textbook, published in 1939, also entitled *New Canadian Geography* which seems as though it may be a significantly revised and reorganized edition of

²⁵ *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), i <https://archive.org/details/newcanadiangeogr0000onta/page/n223> and Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 3, https://archive.org/details/history_geography_bc/page/n35.

²⁶ *New Canadian Geography*, iii, iv, 1, 2 and Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 7.

²⁷ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 7.

²⁸ *New Canadian Geography*, iv.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 116, 119.

the 1899 version.³⁰ This more recent textbook was authored by Alexis Everett Frye and Isaac Gammell.³¹ Unfortunately no author is credited with having written the 1899 *New Canadian Geography*. The preface states simply that the book is “based on the excellent Geographies written by Alex. Everett Frye.”³² In addition to the 1939 *New Canadian Geography* I have found several other books also written by Frye who was a prolific author of geography textbooks.³³ He was First Superintendent of Schools in Cuba when *Complete Geography* was published in 1900 and was still there when his *First Book in Geography* was published in 1910.³⁴

In contrast, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, first published in 1906, is the product of a collaboration between two women who settled in Victoria, Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young. Maria Lawson wrote the first part of the book, on history, and Rosalind Watson Young the second part, on geography.³⁵ Rosalind Watson Young was born in 1874 in Quebec.³⁶ Maria Lawson was born in 1852 on Prince Edward Island.³⁷ Lawson worked as a

³⁰ See A.E. Frye and I. Gammell, *New Canadian Geography* (Boston: Ginn and Company, [1939]).

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89095933198>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² *New Canadian Geography*, iv.

³³ See Alexis Everett Frye, *Advanced Geography* (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1901), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000120486257>, Alexander E. Frye LL.B., *Brooks and Brook Basins* (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1892), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433090741020>, Alex. E. Frye, *The Child and Nature or Geography Teaching with Sand Modelling* (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1892), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t2b856r4c>, Alexis Everett Frye, *Complete Geography* (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1900), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951d00182121e>, Alex Everett Frye, *Teacher's Manual to Accompany Frye's Geographies* (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1897), <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044097022529>. See also “Online Books by Alex Everett Frye,” The Online Books Page, accessed March 21, 2019, <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupname?key=Frye%2C%20Alex%20Everett%2C%201859%2D1936>.

³⁴ Alexis Everett Frye, *Complete Geography* (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1900), i, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/umn.31951d00182121e>. and Alexis Everett Frye, *First Book in Geography* (Boston: Ginn and Company, [1910]), i, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc2.ark:/13960/t45q4tm82>.

³⁵ Elizabeth Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet: Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island* (Vancouver, BC: Evergreen Press Limited, 1971), 58.

³⁶ “Rosalind Watson Young,” Memorials, Find a Grave, accessed March 28, 2019, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/79853585>.

³⁷ Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet*, 58.

teacher there until the age of 38, when, in 1890, she moved with her family to Victoria.³⁸ She continued to teach in and around Victoria and during these years she wrote a textbook on the history of Canada.³⁹ During this time she also co-authored *History and Geography of British Columbia* with Young, who was a geologist,⁴⁰ educated at McGill University.⁴¹ Rosalind Watson Young moved to Victoria and taught at the Victoria high school until 1904, when she resigned in anticipation of her marriage to Dr. Henry Esson Young.⁴² Her husband, Dr. Young, served for a time as British Columbia's Minister of Education under Sir Richard McBride⁴³ who was Premier of BC from 1903 to 1915.⁴⁴

In 1906, the same year their textbook was published, Maria Lawson left teaching and became women's editor of the *Victoria Colonist* at the age of 54.⁴⁵ Young gave birth to 5 five children between 1908 and 1916.⁴⁶ Lawson never married but was extremely well connected and remained an active member of the community into old age.⁴⁷ She and Rosalind Watson Young remained friends throughout their lives. When Lawson retired at age 82, Young and her husband hosted a reception in her honour at their home.⁴⁸ Lawson and Young, it seems, were influential and well-respected white settler women.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See Maria Lawson, *History of Canada for Use in Public Schools* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1908), <https://archive.org/details/historyofcanadaf0000laws/page/n3>.

⁴⁰ Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet*, 58.

⁴¹ "Chancellor of the University." *Daily Colonist*, August 22, 1912, 11, <https://archive.org/stream/dailycolonist57215uvic>.

⁴² "Local News, Interesting Announcement," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, January 30, 1904. <https://archive.org/stream/dailycolonist19040130uvic/19040130>.

⁴³ "Henry Esson Young, B.A., M.D., C.M., LL.D," *Canadian Public Health Journal* 30, no. 11 (1939), 564.

⁴⁴ Patricia E. Roy, "Richard McBride," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada, article published October 31, 2010, last edited March 4, 2015, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/richard-mcbride>.

⁴⁵ Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet*, 58-59.

⁴⁶ *Oak Bay Chronicles: Beyond the Tweed Curtain*. "Rosalind Watson and Henry Esson Young. Part 2: Families, Schools, Professions, Marriage, Children," in *Oak Bay Chronicles: Beyond the Tweed Curtain*, a blog by Peter Grant, Accessed March 26th, 2019, http://oakbaychronicles.ca/?page_id=600.

⁴⁷ "Birthday Greetings Extended Yesterday to Pioneer Writer." *Daily Colonist*, December 16, 1934, 3, <https://archive.org/stream/dailycolonist19341216>.

⁴⁸ Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet*, 59.

Both the 1899 edition of *New Canadian Geography* and the 1906 edition of *History and Geography of British Columbia* were published by W.J. Gage & Company, Limited, Toronto. A subsequent edition of *History and Geography of British Columbia* was published in 1913 by The Educational Book Co., Limited, Toronto.⁴⁹

Despite having been authored by two women whose level of education and professional attainment were unusual for the era,⁵⁰ *History and Geography of British Columbia* presents relatively conventional understandings of history and society. Maria Lawson was a member of the Victoria branch of the Victoria School Teachers Association and the Friendly Help Society and Rosalind Watson Young was a member of the Young Women's Christian Association.⁵¹ These organizations, along with other women's groups active in Victoria during this era, advocated for women's suffrage along with the Women's Christian Temperance Union (Lawson's sister was a member of this last organization).⁵² While the authors may have held personal political views that differed from those they present in the text this is not apparent to readers.

While it is unfortunate that the author of *New Canadian Geography* remains somewhat uncertain, *History and Geography of British Columbia* indicates that in the case of textbooks, the

⁴⁹ The only noteworthy changes come at the end of the first chapter of the geography section. In the 1906 edition the chapter closes with a discussion of the racial makeup of BC. In the 1913 edition this paragraph has been removed and replaced by a list of the major climatic differences between regions of the province. Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 85 and Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1913), 91. This seems to reflect a shift in sentiment which other historians have described. Whereas up to the turn of the century BC's status as a white settler society was tenuous, after 1900 confidence on the part of government grew that BC could become a respectable, white settler colony. Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 13-14, and Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 129.

⁵⁰ Many women became teachers, but few had university degrees, as in Young's case. Maria Lawson's position as women's editor at *The Victoria Daily Colonist* was also unique.

⁵¹ Melanie Ihmels, "The Mischiefmakers: Woman's Movement Development in Victoria, British Columbia 1850-1910," Master of Arts Thesis, (University of Victoria, 2013), Appendix 7, <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/5178>.

⁵² Ibid, Appendix 2, Appendix 3, and Appendix 4.

written texts are less products of the views of individual authors and more of the views of the state government which authorizes and distributes them. As Penney Clark explains, “textbooks present an approved and even ‘official’ version of how young people are intended to understand their world. They reflect the prevailing views of the historical period in which they are written and selected by the state educational apparatus, for use in schools.”⁵³ Given this, an analysis of textbook content as it regards gender can provide an explanation of the types of gender expression deemed desirable and appropriate by legislators and administrators in early twentieth century British Columbia.

I chose history and geography texts because they feature discussions of history and culture which other types of textbooks, like mathematics or even English, would not. I selected these two textbooks specifically at the suggestion of Pia Russell, a librarian and Master of Arts candidate in history, who manages the historical textbook collection and who has surveyed it in depth. These two books are representative of their era. Also, *History and Geography of British Columbia* is the only textbook which concerns solely British Columbia. The other books in the collection which discuss BC do so in the context of a discussion of all the Canadian provinces. *History and Geography of British Columbia* also has the added interest of having been authored by two women who settled in Victoria whose lives I was able to research more fully.

This analysis of *New Canadian Geography* and *History and Geography of British Columbia* has been undertaken using the approach of discourse analysis. This approach has been widely written about by historians of gender.⁵⁴ The premise behind discourse analysis is that

⁵³ Clark, “‘A Nice Little Wife to Make Things Pleasant,’” 259.

⁵⁴ For scholarship that utilizes discourse analysis as an approach see Penney Clark, “‘A Nice Little Wife to Make Things Pleasant:’ Portrayals of Women in Canadian History Textbooks Approved in British Columbia,” *McGill Journal of Education* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 241-265, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/docview/202730147?accountid=14846> as well as Shelly Ikebuchi, *From Slave Girls to Salvation: Gender, Race, and Victoria's Chinese Rescue Home, 1886-1923* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015).

reality is socially constructed through discourses “that generate knowledge about specific phenomena and that knowledge generates power.”⁵⁵ Joy Parr explains, “experience... is formed through discourses. Experiences are not made *by* discourses, but discourses are the medium through which experiences are comprehensible.”⁵⁶ In the context of the two textbooks then, this means that the authors and the government administrators who wrote about history and geography and who decided on curriculum goals and content, shared a perception of their past and present that was shaped by the dominant discourses of the day. Through the production and dissemination of these textbooks they were reinforcing a gendered discourse which they were immersed in and they were introducing it to, or reinforcing it for, the young students of BC’s public schools.

To engage in critical discourse analysis means “...analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” and “to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse).”⁵⁷ My analysis of the gendered language and ideas embedded within the texts follows this framework.

Another key premise of discourse analysis is that there is a link between knowledge and social action, meaning that the knowledge and beliefs the textbook authors expressed in writing had an actual (as opposed to abstract) impact on the lives of other members of their society.⁵⁸ Discourses shape people’s everyday lives by shaping social identity and social relations.⁵⁹ In

⁵⁵ Zagumny and Pulsipher, “The races and conditions of men,” 414.

⁵⁶ Joy Parr, “Gender History and Historical Practice.” *The Canadian Historical Review* 76, no. 3 (1995): 365, <http://tinyurl.com/y9oajbwz>.

⁵⁷ Ruth Wodak, “What CDA is About- A Summary of Its History, Important Concepts and its Developments,” in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2001), 3. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/10.4135/9780857028020.n1>.

⁵⁸ Shelly Ikebuchi, *From Slave Girls to Salvation: Gender, Race, and Victoria's Chinese Rescue Home, 1886-1923* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 198.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 16.

undertaking this type of analysis it is important also to recognize the context in which a given text was produced as well as the context in which “individuals or groups as social historical subjects, create meanings in their interaction with texts.”⁶⁰ The more influential or authoritative the source of the discourse, the more impactful it will be.⁶¹ Discourses that originate from more marginalized sources are less likely to be influential.⁶² This is why it is significant that the location of the gendered discourse I will be analyzing was the government authorized textbook and the public school. For this reason, I have also investigated and provided an analysis of the student experience in early twentieth century British Columbia.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 198.

⁶¹ Zagumny and Pulsipher, “The races and conditions of men,” 414.

⁶² Ibid.

School in Early Twentieth Century BC

Textbooks such as *New Canadian Geography*, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, and others like them were part of a larger system comprised of teachers, administrators, inspectors, and students themselves. Understanding the context in which students engaged with textbooks gives a fuller understanding of their importance in the classroom.

The end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth was a time of transition in schooling in British Columbia. The common, or public school system, as is recognisable today was established in 1872 and presented a contrast to the earlier forms of schooling that had been available to BC's small population of settler children in previous years.⁶³ The new Department of Education would oversee schools modelled after the common schools which already existed in other parts of Canada, particularly Canada West (present-day Ontario).⁶⁴ However, BC schools were from their inception much less religious than schools in other parts of Canada.⁶⁵ They were "strictly non-sectarian," meaning that no particular Christian denomination's doctrines were taught in preference of others.⁶⁶ As a matter of fact, no religious instruction was permitted at all, other than the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.⁶⁷ This compromise was necessary because the settler population of British Columbia was a mix of Catholic,

⁶³ Older schools had been based on the British or European model. They were administered by religious orders and offered an education steeped in specific religious values. They were also class segregated and families had to pay tuition fees. Barman and Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed., 14-16.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 17, 37.

⁶⁵ Unlike other Canadian provinces, the BC government also did not provide funding for separate Catholic schools. Only after decades of advocacy and complaints was partial funding for private schools, including religious schools, made available in 1978. See Lynne Marks, *Infidels and the Damn Churches: Irreligion and Religion in Settler British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017), 13 and Vincent J. McNally, "Challenging the status quo: an examination of the history of Catholic education in British Columbia," *Historical Studies* 65 (1999), 71. <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A30230014/CPI?u=uvictoria&sid=CPI&xid=d40cb1fa>.

⁶⁶ Barman and Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed., 19.

⁶⁷ Lynne Marks, *Infidels and the Damn Churches: Irreligion and Religion in Settler British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017), 13.

Anglican, and Protestant evangelical denominations such as Methodist, as well as people of the Jewish faith, and those of no faith at all. Non-sectarianism presented a compromise between rival forms of Christianity, irreligion, and other religions. This new common school system, developed and administered by the provincial government, was also to be free to attend and open to all children.⁶⁸ As will become evident, however, school was, in practice, not welcoming to *all* children.

The new school system grew rapidly. By 1878 there were 51 common schools in the province as well as a high school in Victoria which together enrolled 2200 students.⁶⁹ By the time the railroad arrived in 1886, there were 83 common schools including three high schools with a total student population of 4500.⁷⁰ During this era, the situation in schools in urban areas in BC (Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster and Nanaimo), was very different from that in the numerous rural schools scattered across the province. Students, as well as teachers, felt this difference and it was remarked upon with frustration by school inspectors.⁷¹

Schools in urban settings were physically superior, being new brick edifices, and they had more resources and generally more highly trained, male teachers. Schools in rural communities centred on resource extraction or agriculture were typically smaller, wooden structures. In addition, the teachers were often young women with less training than their urban male counterparts.⁷² Teachers and inspectors felt that these rural schools lacked the resources

⁶⁸ Barman and Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed., 28.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ The Report of Inspector Burns submitted in November of 1899 confirms this. "I have found, with few exceptions, the teachers striving to do their best, frequently under great disadvantages," he writes before going on to detail some of these disadvantages. William Burns, Inspector of Schools, "Report of Inspector Burns- Nelson B.C., 7th November 1899," in *Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia 1898-99*, Government of British Columbia. Department of Education (Victoria, BC: Richard Wolfenden, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, 1899), 250.

⁷² Barman, Sutherland, Wilson, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools*, 288-289.

necessary to teach students who were often working class, sometimes transient, perhaps non-white, non-English-speaking, and who had unpredictable levels of prior education.⁷³ Inculcating the middle-class, white, Christian values deemed desirable by the provincial government, in other words, teaching the curriculum, was more difficult in these settings.⁷⁴

In 1871, when British Columbia joined the Canadian confederation, the total population of the province was estimated to be around 36,000. Of this number about 8,500 were Europeans. There were about 25,000 Indigenous people, about 1,500 Chinese people (most of whom were adult males) and about 500 black people, many of whom had come north from California.⁷⁵ These statistics translated to more diversity in school rooms than many people now imagine existed. While common schooling was instituted by the colonial government with the goal of providing education to settler children, in the mid-nineteenth century the population in the interior and other rural districts was so sparse that for schools to meet the minimum quota of students and to remain open, Indigenous and metis students also needed to enroll in these schools.

This diversity in classrooms did not last. With the British North America Act of 1867, Indigenous people had become wards of the Canadian government and their education a federal responsibility. This created the conditions for a divide when British Columbia joined confederation in 1871. One of the terms agreed upon when BC became a province was that schooling would be the responsibility of the provincial government. The growing settler population meant that Indigenous children were no longer essential to the survival of schools and because they were wards of the federal government, the provincial department of education

⁷³ Barman and Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed., 269. Also, Burns, "Report of Inspector Burns- Nelson B.C., 7th November, 1899," 250.

⁷⁴ Barman and Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, 2nd ed., 10.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 39, 43.

received no funding to teach Indigenous students. Persistent racism was also a motivating factor in Indigenous children being edged out of common school classrooms.

By 1900 there were 14 residential schools and 28 Indigenous day schools in British Columbia and the federal government increasingly sent Indigenous children to them. So, while some individual children continued to attend provincial public schools up to the time of the First World War they “were exceptions rather than the rule.”⁷⁶ Attendance in federally run residential and day schools became compulsory for Indigenous children in 1920.⁷⁷ This is significant because the result was that Indigenous children were much less likely to be reading the provincial governments textbooks and were unlikely to be sharing a classroom with other non-Indigenous students.⁷⁸

The increasing segregation of classrooms had an impact on Asian students as well. School attendance became compulsory for all non-Indigenous children in 1901 in urban areas of the province and 1921 in more rural areas.⁷⁹ As discussed previously, in the late nineteenth century during the early years of the common school system, schools, and rural schools particularly, had difficulties meeting enrollment minimums. At that time there were very few Asian children in the province. In 1884 there were only 472 Chinese children in BC according to a census conducted for the Canadian Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration.⁸⁰ While for

⁷⁶ Ibid, 59.

⁷⁷ Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 97.

⁷⁸ Residential schools were run by religious organizations. The instructors teaching classes were often not trained teachers. The focus within classrooms was often on teaching Christian religious doctrine, the English language, literacy, as well as math, history and geography. However, the consensus among historians is that residential schools failed as educational institutions. Part of the reason being that children’s physical labour was required to keep them operational and cheap to maintain. Children often only spent two to three hours per day in class. This is less than half of the instruction time that students in the provincial system received. Many students only ever completed grades 1 and 2 during their time in residential school despite being required to stay until they were in their late teens. Mary Jane Logan McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History, 1940-1980* (Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 28-32 and Barman and Gleason, eds., *Children, Teachers and Schools*, 60-62.

⁷⁹ Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy*, 97.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 57.

the most part Chinese children were educated at home, they were at times welcome additions to classrooms in rural areas such as Quesnel Mouth in the Cariboo. In 1881, had it not been for the attendance of Chinese students, the local school would have been drastically below the required quota of students.⁸¹ With mandatory schooling, however, came the increased attendance of racialized Chinese and Japanese students at public schools across the province. Everyday community life was generally racially segregated in early twentieth century BC. White people did not consider themselves to be members of a shared community with racialized Asian people. Compulsory schooling introduced the possibility of the integration of these communities; triggering calls to exclude Asian students.⁸² While concerns over sexual indecency, immorality and disease were given as reasons for segregation, the reality was that this policy was the product of racism and simply meant “carrying into schools what already exist[ed] in every other institution of society.”⁸³

In 1908 the Vancouver district implemented separate classes for older “oriental” (Chinese and Japanese) boys within a larger school building, and Victoria began a program of housing Asian students in separate school buildings.⁸⁴ Other districts followed suit and this trend resulted in almost all racialized Asian students at provincial schools in BC during the early part of the 20th century, experiencing segregation for at least part of their education.⁸⁵ While Asian students attending public schools would have been reading the textbooks authorized by the provincial government, they would not have been learning alongside white students. As Timothy J. Stanley explains, “in practice this meant ‘white’ students were also segregated.”⁸⁶

⁸¹ Ibid, 98.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ T.W. Twigg, labour colonist, *Victoria Daily Times* quoted in Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 98.

⁸⁴ Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy*, 101-102.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 103.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

In 1906 the Department of Education established the free textbook branch.⁸⁷ The program began by lending the textbooks which the Department wanted students to use in the course of their learning however by the close of the 1911-1912 school year the Department transitioned to “the giving plan” and students were simply given the state’s sanctioned textbooks for use in the course of their education.⁸⁸ For white settler children, the textbooks would have often provided the most authoritative and perhaps the only information available on other people and cultures outside of Canada as well as Canadian and British Columbian people and culture. White settler children were learning from these textbooks in a culturally homogenous environment deliberately created by the policies of local, provincial, and federal governments. As we will see, the textbooks presented hegemonic discourses to students in a format, and as I have shown in a setting, which granted them a definitive status. Because students were commonly learning in a setting which offered no opportunities to interact or build relationships with children racialized differently than themselves, they were more likely to accept the racist and sexist narratives about cultures and people different from themselves which the textbooks contained.

⁸⁷ Pia Russell, “Uvic In Pursuit of Knowledge- Myths and Omissions: A Textbook History of British Columbia, 1871-1921,” A presentation feedback form, timeline, and list of further reading materials received via personal email correspondence with the author February 13th, 2019.

⁸⁸ Government of British Columbia, Department of Education, *Forty-Second Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia 1911-1912* (Victoria, BC: Printed by William H. Cullin, Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majesty, 1913), A53.

Ideals

The authors of *New Canadian Geography* and *History and Geography of British Columbia* convey gendered discourses using three methods. First, the authors use depictions of gender ideals to tell stories about other people and cultures or about the past. Second, the authors use depictions of deviance from gender ideals in the course of teaching about other peoples and about history. The third context in which gendered discourses are presented is unique in that silences or omissions, rather than ideals and deviancies, are what is notable. The authors, as historical, geographical, and even anthropological writers, selected particular “facts” and ideas to include within the text and not others. The authors avoided topics that would have been considered inappropriate. These silences are noticeable and informative. What was included, the depictions of ideals and the depictions of deviance, and what was left out, the silences, were reflections of underlying values. With these textbooks the Ministry of Education perpetuated the dominant discourses which were already present in British Columbia and introduced a new generation of students to these beliefs.

The depiction of ideals is the first context in which gendered discourses appear. These ideals are the preferred ways of being, or the best practices, of gender. These depictions of ideals present the *right* way of being in the world, the “natural” way, based on middle-class, white, British-Canadian values. In *New Canadian Geography*, the author uses stories about family life suffused with depictions of ideal gender roles to discuss the daily activities and culture of each of “the five races of men.”⁸⁹ Supposedly scientific and extremely racist classifications of differently

⁸⁹ *New Canadian Geography*, 38-49.

racialized people, like the five race taxonomy, were very popular among European scientists of the time.⁹⁰

Sometimes these cultural descriptions of family life reflect, or come close to reflecting, what would have been the reality; sometimes they are obviously inaccurate. Either way, the cultural judgement of the authors is visible in what they chose to include. In this way, “anthropological” accuracy of the descriptions is actually only of secondary importance.

Under the section on the “White Race” the reader finds a story of the children of Switzerland:

In the springtime the men and boys take their cattle and sheep higher up the mountain sides [sic] for pasture. They are to be away all summer, so the day of their departure is a day of great excitement... The day of their return is a day of rejoicing. Bells are rung, flags fly, and all the people who remained at home go out to meet those who have been away. The girls helped their mothers while their fathers and brothers were up the mountains.⁹¹

The author continues, saying that the girls, “mowed the grass, plaited straw hats, milked the cows and goats that were not sent up to the mountains, and made butter and cheese for market.”⁹² This vignette fits neatly into separate spheres discourse, which at a very simple level places women and girls as naturally belonging within a domestic setting and men and boys as

⁹⁰ The racial classification system which the author of *New Canadian Geography* uses comes from the “human taxonomist” Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840). He had many contemporaries, other racist men of science researching and writing on these ideas and coming up with rival classification systems. Blumenbach created a classification of five races: “the Negro or Black Race,” “the American or Red race,” “the Malay or Brown Race,” “the Mongolian or Yellow Race,” and “the Caucasian or White Race.” Blumenbach was the first to describe “the Malay Race” and add it to his classification system. He also invented the term “Caucasian” as it is used to this day to refer to white people. See Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2010), 70-86. This classification system is one example of scientific racism. Social Darwinism and the Eugenics movement were other expressions of the popular and pervasive racist beliefs held by western Europeans during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

⁹¹ *New Canadian Geography*, 48.

⁹² *Ibid*, 48-49.

outside, in the public sphere.⁹³ The author uses this style of storytelling and this pattern of depicting gender roles to describe each of the enumerated races.

Little boys of the “Black Race” watch over and defend the fields of crops with little bows and arrows. They come home and are fed supper by their mothers and sisters, who, in addition to preparing food also make the family’s clothing.⁹⁴ Little “Indian” boys of the “Red Race” are “trained to hunt and fish, and little girls learn to cook and work in the garden.”⁹⁵ The fact that “gardening” would have taken many different forms for different Indigenous peoples, if it was undertaken at all, is of secondary importance. It does serve to illustrate though, that the authors were crafting a particular narrative of family life for their young readers.⁹⁶ This narrative perpetuated Anglo-Canadian gender hierarchy. In reality, Indigenous ways of life with their non-European models of gender and sexual expression were profoundly threatening to the colonial government of the late nineteenth century, and governments took extreme steps to impose middle-class western models upon them.⁹⁷

⁹³ Separate spheres discourse was often more nuanced than a sharp public/private divide between masculine and feminine roles and spaces. Men obviously moved between domestic and public settings, but women also did in certain scenarios. Sometimes public activities and spaces could be gendered feminine, perhaps due to their Christian religious nature. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century women came to be seen as innately more pious and moral. Involvement in public organizations like churches and charities was a respectable pursuit which many women devoted significant amounts of time and effort to. Unlike working class women’s participation in the paid labour force, church and charity work did not challenge this popular discourse. For a discussion of how separate spheres ideology manifested itself in Victoria during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century see Melanie Ihmels, “The Mischiefmakers: Woman’s Movement Development in Victoria, British Columbia 1850-1910,” Master of Arts Thesis (University of Victoria, 2013), 30-38, <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/5178>.

⁹⁴ *New Canadian Geography*, 39.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 41.

⁹⁶ It is perplexing to note that the authors did not think that a nomadic lifestyle would be a challenge to the practice of conventional gardening which they allude to, with the line that immediately follows explaining, “they take down their tents and put them up again when their camps are moved.” *New Canadian Geography*, 41.

⁹⁷ See Sarah Carter, *The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915* (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: University of Alberta Press, 2008).

In a subsequent section, students are transported to the Arctic and the author informs them that inside the hut of an “Eskimo” family is a large lamp made from a hollow stone. The author then explains to students that “the oil is got from the whales, and the wick is made of moss. The lamp makes the air of the hut smell close, and fills the hut with smoke, but it keeps the children warm, and you may see how the cooking is done over the lamp, if you look at the picture on the next page.”⁹⁸ In the picture on the subsequent page, it appears that a woman is doing the cooking. This idea goes unacknowledged, since the fact that a woman would cook is taken for granted. A thrilling description of an active boyhood follows the depiction of home life. “An eskimo boy gets a great many splendid rides on his sled, drawn by his dogs. They run very fast over ice and snow.”⁹⁹ What his sister may be doing during this time remains a mystery. The authors certainly have not given her a sled. In this description of youthful masculine activity, the ideal middle-class western experience is universalized.



Figure 3: “A Java Girl.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 42.

Meanwhile, within a subsequent section, the author describes “the Malay or Brown Race.”¹⁰⁰ Within this section, there is a picture of “a Java girl” paired with text that reads “the little girl helps her mother in the house. She makes pillows with soft white down that grows on a tree near by [sic], and weaves dry grass into mats that are used as beds.”¹⁰¹ Her brother harvests coconuts and bananas and is also described as pounding the rice for breakfast. The latter task is

⁹⁸ *New Canadian Geography*, 45.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 46.

¹⁰⁰ This inaccurate racial classification is intended to describe peoples whom anthropologists now agree are linked only by their speaking languages belonging to the Austronesian language family. These peoples come from a variety of cultural groups spanning Oceania, Southeast Asia, and East Africa. Robert Andrew Blust, “Austronesian languages,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., published July 30, 2018), accessed March 27, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Austronesian-languages>.

¹⁰¹ *New Canadian Geography*, 42.

unusual, given the author's general tendency to link domestic chores like this with girls and women. However, the author subsequently returns to convention for when fruit-eating bats nibble away at the corn and the tender shoots of the palms, the boys of "the Malay Race" "set snares to catch them."¹⁰²

During the heat of mid-day, the people take shelter from the sun but, "by four o'clock, the air is cooler and the father goes back to the rice field."¹⁰³ The author thus depicts feminine homemaking and masculine agricultural labour as existing in virtually the same form across the world. Mothers and girls are found in the home; fathers and boys out in the field. In the description of "the Malay race" separate spheres discourse, which at a basic level situates women and girls in the domestic sphere and men and boys in the public sphere, is particularly visible. In these little vignettes, the family life of other peoples conforms to the same patterns expected of the citizens of British Columbia.

Patriarchy is another cultural ideal that pervades the text. Masculine governance and control in the Canadian context are discussed explicitly in both textbooks. This concept is also universalized within the section on governments when tribal governance, a "common form of rule among pagans,"¹⁰⁴ is described. "A number of savages living under one ruler, or chief, form a tribe. A chief generally has absolute power over the lives and property of his subjects, but as the tribes become more civilized the people secure more rights."¹⁰⁵ That a chief would be male is taken for granted. Matriarchy as a concept is not contemplated. Alternative models of gender hierarchy and different types of gendered power relations do not fall within the realm of possibility for the author.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 51.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Accounts of white men dominate *History and Geography of British Columbia*. White male explorers and colonial officials are revered and given prominence in the text as they and their stories embody the masculine ideal. Lists of explorers and cartographers go on for pages dotted with their portraits. As a matter of fact, duplicate portraits of these men appear throughout both books.¹⁰⁶ Ultimately, both textbooks glorify the same version of masculinity.

In *History and Geography of British Columbia*, being first and being hardy are praised. The story of Alexander Mackenzie, a Scotsman, which begins in Chapter IV “Explorations Overland,” offers an illustration. “Adventurous and enterprising, he determined to exchange the life of a fur-trader for that of an explorer. He left the fort on the third of June, 1789, and having cruised around Great Slave Lake, found its outlet, the great river now called by his name.”¹⁰⁷ This account gives the impression that Mackenzie explored the west independently and unguided when the reality is that he was part of a larger party in which Indigenous people and their knowledge of the land and water were essential.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ See “Capt. Cook, 1787.” in *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), British Columbia Supplement, 3. “Capt. Cook, 1787.” in Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 16. “Capt. Cook, 1787.” in Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: The Educational Book Company Limited, 1913), 16. See also “Captain Geo. Vancouver, 1792” in *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), British Columbia Supplement, 6. “Capt. Vancouver.” in Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 19. “Capt. Vancouver.” Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: The Educational Book Company Limited, 1913), 22. See also “Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 1793” in *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), British Columbia Supplement, 8. “Sir Alexander Mackenzie” in Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 30. “Sir Alexander Mackenzie” in Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia* (Toronto: The Educational Book Company Limited, 1913), 33.

¹⁰⁷ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 30.

¹⁰⁸ Alexander Mackenzie, *The Journals of Alexander Mackenzie: Voyages from Montreal, on the River St. Laurence, Through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans, in the Years 1789 and 1793. With a Preliminary Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Fur Trade of that Country* (Santa Barbara, California, USA: The Narrative Press, 2001), 123. <http://tinyurl.com/vyjwdvc5>.

Additionally, exercising dominion over territory and maintaining an unshakeable loyalty to England are praised. This is exemplified by how the explorers and colonial officials are described as giving their names to the places they “discovered” or claimed. One of the men singled out for his achievements is Simon Fraser, who, “in defiance of danger and difficulty,” opened new regions of BC to trade.¹⁰⁹ Lawson also praises productivity and industriousness. She constructs George Simpson, “master of all of Canada,” as a model man along these lines, explaining to students that he was the first governor of the united fur trading companies, and that “[f]ew men have ruled a wider territory.”¹¹⁰ This is a white, paternalistic masculinity. These masterful men, noted for their business ability and nobility of spirit, are remembered with great admiration:

Their skill in the management of the native races did much to save Canada from the horrors of Indian warfare, and made it possible for the more capable among the Indians to share in the occupations and adopt the pursuits of the white men. The Hudson’s Bay men, with few exceptions, treated the Indians of this coast as fellow creatures- kindly, firmly, honestly.¹¹¹

There are many other (and less positive) ways the authors could have told the story of exploration and colonization. That both books emphasized these stories of great white men demonstrates what type of masculine traits and gender expression the authors thought were worth discussing. In British Columbia, as has been shown to be the case in the United States, despite cultural and racial diversity “white, middle-class, masculinist identity was the standard for comparison and emulation.”¹¹² These norms were present in society and are therefore present

¹⁰⁹ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 31.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 33.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 33-34.

¹¹² Zagumny and Pulsipher, “The races and conditions of men,” 412.

in the textbooks. Textbooks are both the product of discourse and a way of reproducing discourse.¹¹³

Later emphasis on industry and agriculture also foregrounds masculine pursuits. The geography section of *History and Geography of British Columbia* contains a chapter on Vancouver Island that is very much concerned with enterprise and resource extraction. Of Victoria, Young says, “shipbuilding is an important and growing industry, and, in conjunction with the iron works [sic], gives employment to many men.”¹¹⁴ Young also discusses mining and logging in detail. Although many women worked outside the home by the early twentieth century in clerical and factory work as well as domestic service, their participation in the paid workforce is completely invisible.

In general, women do not feature in *History and Geography of British Columbia*. There are a select number of white women, however, who receive positive mentions within Chapter IX, “Churches and Schools.” In the preceding sixty-three pages, detailing British and European male achievement, Lawson only mentions women three times. The first two women are Queen Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, who each receive one sentence.¹¹⁵ The third woman mentioned is Mrs. Robert Staines who was a teacher at Fort Victoria in 1849. She is mentioned as part of her husband’s biography, and we never learn her name.¹¹⁶

It is not surprising that readers find the most extensive discussion of the activities and accomplishments of white women in British Columbian history within the section on religion and schooling. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Christian religiosity was

¹¹³ Ibid, 414.

¹¹⁴ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 1913 ed., 97.

¹¹⁵ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 24, 35.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 42.



Figure 4: “Craigflower School, Oldest in Vancouver Island.” Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 67.

increasingly becoming feminized, and in British Columbia, this was particularly true.¹¹⁷ Additionally, in the early twentieth century, Christian fidelity and church attendance were important measures of feminine respectability.¹¹⁸ The dominant gender ideology identified white women as innately more devout and moral than their male counterparts.¹¹⁹ Women

dominated the congregations of BC during this time and were more associated with Christian religiosity. As Lawson looks to the past, she calls attention to the good Roman Catholic sisters who established convent schools for girls across the province.¹²⁰ Also, she describes ministers’ wives who taught school at the Hudson Bay Company’s Fort Victoria¹²¹ and a Baroness who “endowed the Church of England in Victoria and, in 1860 sent out from England an iron church which is still in use.”¹²²

¹¹⁷ Marks, *Infidels and the Damn Churches*, 65.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, 15.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*.

¹²⁰ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 64.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 67.

¹²² *Ibid*, 64.

The majority of the few images of women in the textbooks also appear in the religion and schooling section. There is a portrait featuring the Bishop Edward Cridge and his wife. Mrs. Cridge, whose given name we never learn, is one of the aforementioned ministers' wives who taught school. There are also ladies present in a picture of Craigflower School, described as the oldest on Vancouver Island. Pictured alongside men outside the first school built to educate the children of Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) families, these women are identifiable by their full skirts. Whether these women were white in the eyes of contemporaries is unclear as many HBC men married Indigenous and metis women, but they are dressed in a European style. The final image in this chapter is of an Indigenous girl with short hair. It is entitled "Native Girl,

Civilized."¹²³ Taken in conjunction with another image featured later in the textbook entitled



Figure 5: "Bishop and Mrs. Cridge." Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 65.

"Totem Poles" which features a full-skirted woman with her hair bound on top of her head standing amongst a group of big houses and totem poles, the link between Christianity, feminine propriety, and the imposition of "civilized" culture, including dress, becomes clear. Myra Rutherdale has written about the desire of missionaries in BC to change the way Indigenous people dressed. Clothing and comportment became markers of civilization, and in some cases, missionaries felt that western dress signalled Christian conversion.¹²⁴ Interestingly, the image of the woman amongst the totem poles also appears in *New Canadian Geography* in a passage

¹²³ Ibid, 69.

¹²⁴ Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, eds., *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 230.

entitled “Canada Past and Present,” which firmly relegates the Indigenous people of Canada to

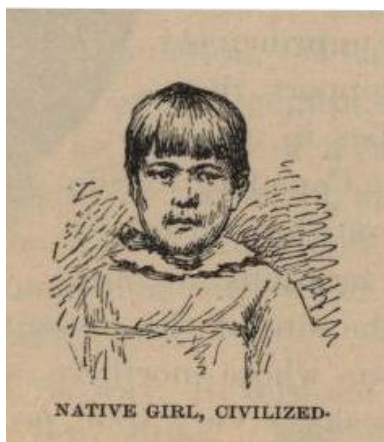


Figure 6: “Native Girl, Civilized.”
Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson
Young, *History and Geography of
British Columbia*, (Toronto: W. J.
Gage and Company Limited, 1906),
69.

the past. The author explains that “the camping grounds of the Indian by lake or portage trail, have become the sites of populous cities, loud with the hum of factories and the bustle of trade.”¹²⁵ While “a little more than four hundred years ago there was not a white man in the two Continents of America,” Canada has since “become the richest and most powerful of the great colonies of the British Empire.”¹²⁶

The religious women mentioned in this chapter and their male counterparts were part of a project to impose and then

cement British Canadian cultural values in British Columbia. Missionaries undertook the work of imposing a British model of femininity which valued feminine domesticity; sedentism; heterosexual, Christian, monogamous marriage; and traditional respectable women's work in the late nineteenth century BC.¹²⁷ This chapter of the text showcases a discourse which venerates these British values surrounding femininity.

Throughout both textbooks, the authors repeatedly use male pronouns and use ‘men’ as a noun to stand in for humankind generally. The discussion in the chapter on missions and schools offers a rare exception: “In many a lonely station both on the coast and in the interior, good men *and women* are quietly devoting their lives to the uplifting of the native races of the province” (emphasis added).¹²⁸ Christian religiosity was an important aspect of feminine propriety. This chapter mentions the white women who undertake Christian missionary work and provide

¹²⁵ *New Canadian Geography*, 67.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ Pickles and Rutherford, *Contact Zones*, 125-126.

¹²⁸ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 67.

religious instruction as a way to highlight what the dominant culture defined as admirable feminine behaviour. When Lawson discusses their presence at all in *History and Geography of British Columbia*, she acknowledges women as esteemed transmitters of Christian faith. They otherwise remain differentially invisible throughout the text.

While women are largely invisible, gendered concepts are visible in the way the landscape and the provinces are described in both textbooks. In *New Canadian Geography*, land is rated in terms of its relative fertility, in the case of flood plains, or barrenness, in the case of the Sahara desert. This association of land with the human and female body is more overt in *History and Geography of British Columbia*. The textbook begins with an introductory passage:

This little book has been prepared for the use of the public schools of British Columbia, in the hopes that the children who study it will derive both pleasure and profit from its perusal. Its aim is to show how, from a wilderness, this province has become the home of civilized men, who are preparing the country for a much larger population.

We shall see how the explorers came here, first by sea, afterward by land; how they were followed by the fur-traders, the fur-traders by the gold-seekers; and they in their turn by the miners, lumbermen, manufacturers, fishermen and merchants, who now occupy the settled parts of the province. In the course of the story we shall learn how, from a fur-trading territory, British Columbia became a province of the Dominion of Canada and was linked to her sister provinces by the great railroad which has done so much toward making of the inhabitants of widely separated provinces a united people.

Here, British Columbia is explicitly gendered feminine, and the “civilized men” who have come to settle this empty and awaiting landscape are racialized as white. This characterization plays into a trope, common in American literature, which imbues the (North) American west with a feminine quality. This may seem unremarkable, but as Annette Kolodny writes regarding the land-as-woman metaphor, the subject of her book, successful metaphors become so much a part of our language that we stop seeing them as metaphors at all. In no way, however, does the fact that these metaphors have become unremarkable mean that they do not

influence experience and behaviour.¹²⁹ Kolodny's central argument is that the American landscape has been experienced by settlers, particularly male settlers, "as the feminine principle of gratification itself, comprising all the qualities that Mother, Mistress, and Virgin traditionally represent for men..."¹³⁰ This idea, she argues, has been expressed in, and reinforced by American literature since the 1500s.¹³¹

Kolodny's observation applies to the introduction of *History and Geography of British Columbia* in that the men described in the passage are most certainly mastering "the beautiful and bountiful femininity of the new continent."¹³² Further, this mastery as a concept is taken to be a foregone conclusion. Constructing the new continent as feminine "was already to civilize it a bit, casting the stamp of human relations upon what was otherwise unknown and untamed."¹³³ In depicting the landscape as feminine and passive and the colonizers as masculine and active, Lawson and Young reinforce and then universalize and naturalize a normative conception of gendered power relations. Passages elsewhere in *New Canadian Geography* also conform to this pattern of characterizing the land as feminine. "The abundance of fish in the waters of her rivers and coast supplies a large part of British Columbia's trade," explains the author.¹³⁴ Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are also characterized as feminine. In discussing Nova Scotia's coastline and fine harbours the author explains that "these advantages account for her prominence in the fishing and shipping industries."¹³⁵ Of New Brunswick, the author explains "her forests of hard and soft woods are exceedingly valuable."¹³⁶

¹²⁹ Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (Chapel Hill, NC, USA: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 149.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 150.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 10.

¹³² *Ibid*, 139.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 9.

¹³⁴ *New Canadian Geography*, 115.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, 108.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 104.

Other scholars have elaborated upon Kolodny's ideas, remarking upon the global pattern of feminizing colonies and the ubiquity of imagery and metaphors in which colonized landscapes and women were to be exploited.¹³⁷ At times Indigenous women and the landscape come to symbolize each other. As Rebecca Blevins Faery explains:

Pocahontas is the American continent herself- luscious and irresistible, and even better, eager to be "taken" by the white settlers who are gentlemen and heroes, taking up arms against the Indians only when provoked and demanding no more in the way of land and love than they somehow believe themselves to be fully entitled to.¹³⁸

Amy S. Greenberg has described this concept as "personal annexation," for some of the American men she has studied the concept of seizing territory accompanied a fantasy, which they acted upon, of also seizing women.¹³⁹ This conflation of land and real women's bodies coexisted with another understanding whereby the actual Indigenous women, indeed Indigenous people, would simply disappear in the face of settlement.¹⁴⁰ *New Canadian Geography* dispassionately explains to students that "[t]hey [Indigenous peoples] are gradually dying off."¹⁴¹ This is the narrative which the Introduction of *History and Geography of British Columbia* subscribes to. The authors describe British Columbia as having initially been empty (unsettled) and uncivilized (civilization is a quality that white, male settlers bring). She is a savage wilderness, pure and open (virginal) that has been transformed, and is being transformed, by colonization.¹⁴² This passage repeats once more a narrative of white masculine dominance and power and of feminine passivity. The actual Indigenous people of British Columbia do not

¹³⁷ See Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (London: Duke University Press, 1995), 174.

¹³⁸ Rebecca Blevins Faery, *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race, and Sex in the Shaping of an American Nation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 165.

¹³⁹ Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 89.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁴¹ *New Canadian Geography*, 41.

¹⁴² Faery, *Cartographies of Desire*, 164.

feature in this story, but the landscape yields to these men. As Perry explains, “land lay at the heart of British Columbia’s colonial project.”¹⁴³ That the Indigenous population would recede before the advancing civilizers and that the land would ‘yield’ was an expression of the laws of nature.¹⁴⁴ Here in the Introduction of *History and Geography of British Columbia* colonization and settlement by white Canadians, the disappearance of Indigenous people, and masculine dominance and concomitant feminine submission are made to seem inevitable.

¹⁴³ Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 124-125.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 153.

Deviance

The second approach the textbooks employ to teach proper gender performance is the discussion and representation of deviance. The most overt depiction of deviance is found in *New*



Figure 7: “Races of Men.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 38.

Canadian Geography within the section entitled “Races of Men” in which the author details the ways of life of the “five races” of humankind.¹⁴⁵

Within the section describing “the Black race,” antiquated and racist language is used to describe some of the people of southern Africa. As discussed previously, while throughout most of this

section family life and gender relations are described in a manner that conforms to Anglo-Canadian expectations and universalizes these relations, there is one passage that is striking in its anomalous tone. It is a small passage describing people now known as the Khoisan, whom the authors refer to as “Hottentot.” The authors set up a contrast here saying, “They are usually very small men,” and following with “the Hottentot women do all the hard work about home.”¹⁴⁶ This is an inversion of gender expectations. This description introduces these particular people as

¹⁴⁵ The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw the rise of scientific racism. Racist beliefs and practices were increasingly justified by the theory of Social Darwinism. This theory premised that the white Anglo-Saxon race was innately superior (mental and physical fitness were in the blood) and that the other races of humankind were innately lesser. The eugenics movement was founded on these principles. For further discussion see Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2010) and Anna Davin, “Imperialism and Motherhood,” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, eds., Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley, California, USA: University of California Press, 1997).

¹⁴⁶ *New Canadian Geography*, 40.

backwards and as existing in opposition to the norms of physicality and natural gender roles. The reader is given to understand that women are supposed to be smaller, daintier, and weaker than men. For the men to be small and for the women to be doing hard work is deviant.

Masculine deviance is also subtly used in *History and Geography of British Columbia* to elevate one form of white masculinity at the expense of Indigenous men:

The natives of the province, unlike the Indian races of the Atlantic coast or of the plains, readily learn the occupations of civilized men. If they had not also learned to drink the white man's whisky (which, in spite of the law, is supplied them by unscrupulous traders), they could support themselves and their families in comfort.¹⁴⁷

Lawson, the author of this section, references several discourses in circulation during the early twentieth century. First, she refers to the ideal of the male breadwinner, capable of supporting himself and his family "in comfort."¹⁴⁸ In this context, it becomes obvious that she is not referring to Indigenous people generally in this passage but specifically to Indigenous men. She characterizes these men as universally intemperate, or as drunkards, who, though more than capable, have opted not to "learn the occupations of civilized [white] men."¹⁴⁹ The temperance movement, which supported abstention from alcohol and legislation against its sale, among other things, was popular among people interested in social reform and solving problems of poverty and violence. Lawson was a member of several groups associated with the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Victoria and her sister was a founding member of the local branch.¹⁵⁰ In this passage she references a discourse which elevates masculine restraint and self-control in all aspects of a man's life. Finally, she also refers to a discourse, which persists to this day, that

¹⁴⁷ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 70.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ihmels, "The Mischief Makers," Appendix 2, Appendix 3, and Appendix 4.

characterizes Indigenous people as indolent, willfully lazy, and dependent.¹⁵¹ John Lutz, in his book *Makúk*, explains that this discourse ironically coexists with historical evidence of Indigenous peoples participation in the capitalist economy following colonization until they were displaced from it by the late 20th century as a result of government policy.¹⁵² This discourse also diminishes traditional lifestyles and subsistence strategies.

Motherhood is another site of comparison. In *New Canadian Geography*, the author contrasts deviant representations of motherhood with an implicit norm. Repeatedly women racialized as non-white are described and shown to be carrying their babies on their backs as they engage in various tasks. At no point in either textbook are white women shown to be carrying their babies tied to their bodies and especially not as they work. This is a statement on proper (white, middle class) motherhood constructed using contrasting images of improper (racialized) motherhood.

Anna Davin has written about motherhood and imperialism at the dawn of the twentieth century and has shown how these two concerns were central to middle and upper-class reformers in Britain. These individuals were exceedingly preoccupied with declining birth rates and infant mortality among the English in Britain. Their primary concern was the expansion of empire and maintaining a hold on the colonies which Britain already possessed. Using social Darwinist theories and scientific racism they argued that British, Anglo-Saxon dominance was natural. Underlying this assertion, however, was a deep fear that the British would be supplanted by other “master races” or other nations like Germany or the United States.¹⁵³ In Britain, middle-class couples were encouraged to have more children; following the tenets of positive eugenics they

¹⁵¹ John Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 4-8.

¹⁵² Ibid, 282.

¹⁵³ Anna Davin, “Imperialism and Motherhood,” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, eds., Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley, California, USA: University of California Press, 1997), 88.

were the ideal progenitors of the next generation of British imperialists.¹⁵⁴ Additionally, initiatives to reduce infant mortality were undertaken because of a preoccupation with peopling territories such as the white dominions (Canada being one).¹⁵⁵ In this scenario, saving the lives of all British infants was desirable.¹⁵⁶

Those targeted as being most responsible for the birthing and rearing of the children of the imperial race were women. Mothering, but more importantly, a specific style of mothering, supplanted wifehood as the highest calling a woman was encouraged to aspire to.¹⁵⁷ Proper mothering involved bearing children within a Christian marriage, staying home with the baby, breastfeeding, cooking nutritious food for children, and abstaining from alcohol and paid labour.¹⁵⁸ A child's place was in the nursery. It was considered deeply inappropriate for parents to take



Figure 8: "Japanese." *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 2.

infants wherever they went, whether this was out of the house or out to work.¹⁵⁹ These practices were middle-class ideals, and working-class women were targeted for reform. Doctors and social workers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were adamant that women not engage in work that took them away from their homes and children. Connected to this was the belief that it was deeply inappropriate for anyone but the mother herself to be caring for her child; siblings, grandparents, and "child minders" were considered ignorant and likely to engage in practices that put the infant's health at risk.¹⁶⁰ Working-class mothers themselves were also labelled as ignorant. Failure to learn and obey "the laws of health was a sin; mothers were

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 99.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 130.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 91.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 104, 107, 112-118.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 134.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 92.

responsible to God for the lives of their children.”¹⁶¹ That poverty and unsanitary living conditions put infants at risk was vaguely acknowledged, but more often the responsibility for child mortality was put on women as individuals.¹⁶² Schools came to be seen as key sites where girls (whom it was assumed would inevitably become mothers in their turn) could be indoctrinated with appropriate mothering practices and domestic management.¹⁶³



Figure 9: “Scenes in Japan.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 44.
in the picture.”¹⁶⁴

In *New Canadian Geography*, this strategy of depicting deviant mothering as a contrast to the underlying Anglo-Canadian ideal is applied using foreign, racialized mothers. Japanese girls and women are pictured in two images entitled “Japanese” and “Scenes in Japan.” These images accompany a passage describing playtime for Japanese children: “[g]irls often go out to play with their baby brothers and sisters tied on their backs, as you see them

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 132.

¹⁶² Ibid, 136.

¹⁶³ Ibid, 117.

¹⁶⁴ *New Canadian Geography*, 44.

Then, in the space of two pages, readers are confronted with a veritable collage of similar images. Referring to people now known as belonging to the Bantu linguistic group, the text and images employ the racist term “Kaffir.” Images entitled “Kaffir Girl and Baby” and “Kaffir Huts” are grouped with an image entitled “Indians and their Camps” and an unlabelled image of an Indigenous baby strapped to a cradleboard.¹⁶⁵ Interestingly, the authors reuse this last image in *History and Geography of British Columbia* where it is entitled “Indian Cradle.”¹⁶⁶ Another image of a mother carrying her infant on her back, called “Fort Simpson-



Figure 11” “Kaffir Girl and Baby.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 40.



Figure 10: “Fort Simpson- Tsimpshean Indians in Foreground.” Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 37.

Tsimpshean Indians in Foreground,” appears later in *History and Geography of British Columbia* in a section of text describing the Hudson’s Bay Company’s establishment of forts on Vancouver Island.¹⁶⁷

Further on, in *New Canadian Geography*, an image entitled “Arab” features a woman covered entirely by her burka bearing her baby perched high on her back or

on her shoulders.¹⁶⁸ All of these images feature women or girls bearing their babies strapped to their backs. The exceptions are “Kaffir Huts,” where the mother has her child slung across her front, and the “Indian Cradle” image which depicts only a baby.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 40-41.

¹⁶⁶ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 14.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 37.

¹⁶⁸ *New Canadian Geography*, 178.

In *New Canadian Geography*, however, this image of the infant in its cradle is accompanied by text:

Indian babies have strange cradles. They are made of boards with cloth wrapped around them. The babies are tied in them with the boards at their backs, and then the cradles are tied to branches of trees, or placed against walls, or leaned against trees. Indian mothers carry their babies in their cradles strapped on their backs.¹⁶⁹

This practice is “strange.” Exotic. Like the people that this practice belongs to, students perceive that this practice is uncivilized. When compared to the ideal of white, middle-class motherhood and attentive nurturance, this practice of women and girls bearing infants strapped to their bodies is revealed as inferior.

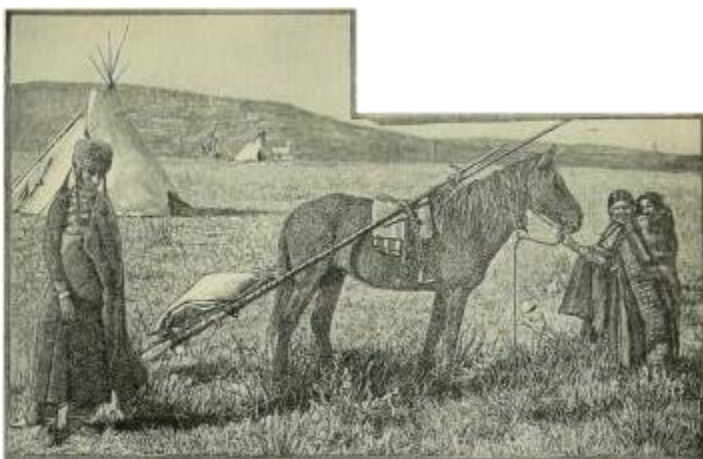


Figure 13: “Indians and Their Camps.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 41.



Figure 12 “Indian Cradle.” Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 14. This image also appears in *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 41.

Travelling

northward, the authors explain: “Eskimo babies sleep in bags of feathers and sometimes in large hoods in the skin coats worn by their mothers. When they are old enough they wear pretty suits of sealskin.”¹⁷⁰ This passage

is paired with an image of a cherubic infant swathed, presumably, in a pretty sealskin suit. This

¹⁶⁹ *New Canadian Geography*, 41.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 45.

image is also recycled later in *History and Geography of British Columbia* but is not tied to any particular passage of text.¹⁷¹

Sometimes these cultural descriptions reflect reality. Sometimes they are inaccurate. Whether the “races” or cultures discussed actually practiced carrying their infants this way does not matter. The significant element is the way that the authors foreground the practice. There is a contrast being made between idealized middle-class, white motherhood and inferior non-white motherhood. In the section on the “White Race” in *New Canadian Geography*, there are no images of women with babies tied to their backs. There is no discussion of how they carry their children. There are no images of white women bearing their children on their backs in *History and Geography of British Columbia* either. Although it passes unacknowledged, it is clear that the norm is not to do this.

In a similar discussion regarding the portrayal of women in textbooks, Zagumny and Pulsipher argue that the textbooks they analyzed constructed these “Other” women in deliberate contrast to American women. By emphasizing the drudgery, the labour, and the subjugation of women in other societies who are made to appear as though they possess none of the true femininity of American women and who have a low status within their own culture, white American women appear elevated in contrast.¹⁷² Christianity also elevated women who would otherwise, it was argued, be enslaved,



Figure 14: Untitled. *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 45 and Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1906), 29.

¹⁷¹ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 29.

¹⁷² Zagumny and Pulsipher, “The races and conditions of men,” 418, 421-22.

the butt of male cruelty, doomed to servitude, and sunken in ignorance the world over.¹⁷³ By depicting siblings caring for children or mothers carting their children about on their backs as they labour, even leaving their infants hanging in trees, the authors suggest that these other mothers are inattentive and lesser than ideal middle-class, white mothers.

In *History and Geography of British Columbia and New Canadian Geography*, the appearance and lifestyle of these othered women are implicitly contrasted with the ideal of white, middle-class, Christian motherhood. The most revered form of motherhood was the preserve of these women. They were best equipped to provide the physical and spiritual nurturance which produced the healthy children of the imperial race.¹⁷⁴



Figure 15: “Arab.” *New Canadian Geography: British Columbia Edition*, (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company Limited, 1899), 178.

¹⁷³ Reverend Robert Sedgewick, “Woman’s Sphere, 1856,” in *The Proper Sphere: Woman’s Place in Canadian Society*, eds., Wendy Mitchinson and Ramsay Cook (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 32.

¹⁷⁴ Nadine I. Kozak. “Advice Ideals and Rural Prairie Realities: National and Prairie Scientific Motherhood Advice, 1920-29,” in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West Through Women’s History*, eds., Sarah Carter, Lesley Erickson, Patricia Roome, and Char Smith (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 182.

Silence

The third method the authors use to convey gendered discourses to students is silence. The authors purposely avoid certain topics such as women's presence out in the world, interracial marriage, mixed-race people and women's suffrage. This choice is indicative of the opinion of the Department of Education regarding what constitutes success or failure in terms of adherence to gendered discourses. The authors deliberately skirt concepts which do not fit within the established norm.

In many ways, James Douglas might have fit better within a discussion of masculine ideals because Lawson writes about him in such glowing terms and portrays him as a model statesman in *History and Geography of British Columbia*. However, Lawson was only able to construct Douglas in this way because she purposely avoided discussing certain key aspects of his life. First, James Douglas was of mixed race. His mother, Martha Ann, was a “free coloured woman” who was born in Barbados in the 1780s. As a child, Martha Ann moved with her mother to the Guianas where she eventually met John Douglas, a Scottish planter. They never married, but over the course of their ten-year relationship, Martha Ann gave birth to three children, one of whom was James Douglas, born in 1803.¹⁷⁵ At age nine James Douglas left the Guianas to be educated in Scotland.¹⁷⁶ At age fifteen, his father arranged for him to be indentured to the North West Company and he left Scotland for Quebec, thus beginning his career in North America.¹⁷⁷ While working as a clerk at Fort St. James in 1828, James Douglas married Amelia Connolly, the sixteen-year-old daughter of his superior, Chief Factor William Connolly, who was of Irish

¹⁷⁵John D. Adams, *Old Square-Toes and His Lady: The Life of James and Amelia Douglas* (Victoria, BC, Canada: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers, 2001), 2.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 3.

¹⁷⁷Ibid, 6

ancestry.¹⁷⁸ Miyo Nipiy, Amelia's mother, was Cree. She was born around 1788 in present-day Manitoba, while William Connolly was born about 1886 in Quebec.¹⁷⁹ Both James and Amelia Douglas were mixed race, and so were their seven surviving children.¹⁸⁰ Lawson discusses none of this in *History and Geography of British Columbia*.

Instead, the account of Douglas' life begins with his coming to "what is now the inner harbor of Victoria City" when he was about forty years old.¹⁸¹ His early life is completely neglected. Students are given the impression that Douglas sprung from the forest: "He had been in the service of the fur traders since boyhood and had spent about twenty years west of the Rocky Mountains. Although he had passed most of his life in the wilderness, he was neither ignorant nor uncultivated."¹⁸² What is not discussed is significant, for these silences indicate that the facts of his life did not fit the desired narrative. Instead of discussing his actual life story, the authors instead portray him as embodying genteel, middle-class values. "His body was vigorous and his intellect powerful. He was a brave, honourable man and an efficient servant, whether of the Company or of the Queen."¹⁸³ Here the authors deliberately craft his image as a nobleman. He is able to embody the "stern but just" patriarchal ideal because he has been scrubbed clean of any threatening racial affiliations within the text and popular memory.¹⁸⁴ Non-white racial elements of his identity would have compromised his whiteness which in turn would have compromised his image as being the masculine ideal. The authors' solution was to not discuss these more "difficult" or "compromising" truths.

¹⁷⁸ Sylvia Van Kirk, "Colonized Lives: the Native Wives and Daughters of Five Founding Families of Victoria," in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada*, eds., Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 173.

¹⁷⁹ Adams, *Old Square-Toes and His Lady: The Life of James and Amelia Douglas*, 4.

¹⁸⁰ Van Kirk, "Colonized Lives: the Native Wives and Daughters of Five Founding Families of Victoria," 173.

¹⁸¹ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 35.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

The textbooks' explanation and discussion of the topic of governance is also riddled with omissions. These silences are indicative of popular attitudes and of what values were commonplace, normative, and acceptable. In *New Canadian Geography*, students learn that citizens and the electorate are men through the use of explanations like, "[it] is very important for everyone who will some day [sic] become a Canadian citizen to know something of the government of the country in which he lives."¹⁸⁵ The author reinforces this during a discussion of the Senate, explaining that a senator "... must live in the province he represents and own property to the value of at least \$4,000."¹⁸⁶ *History and Geography of British Columbia* utilizes male pronouns and the words "man" and "men" to describe both voters and elected officials throughout Chapter VI entitled "How We Are Governed." Lawson explains that members of school boards and town councils are chosen following each elector having voted "for the person whom he considers best fitted by character and ability to assist in making the laws of the country and in conducting business."¹⁸⁷ They later explain how ministers were selected, with the leader choosing "the men whom he considers most able to manage the affairs of the country."¹⁸⁸

White women gained the right to vote in BC in 1917. The federal election of 1921 was the first in which all white women were eligible to vote and run for office, but it was the culmination of almost a century of agitation and gradual initiatives to extend the franchise.¹⁸⁹ The women's suffrage movement had been active for many years. In Victoria, the movement had been active since the 1850s.¹⁹⁰ The topic of women's involvement in governance had long been a contentious part of the popular discourse.

¹⁸⁵ *New Canadian Geography*, 71.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 74.

¹⁸⁷ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 46.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 47.

¹⁸⁹ Catherine L. Cleverdon, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 138, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uvic/detail.action?docID=4730268>.

¹⁹⁰ Ihmels, "The Mischief Makers," iii.

The choice on the part of the authors of *New Canadian Geography* to gender those who hold public office as male is somewhat understandable given that it was published in 1899, earlier in the period. However, the first edition of *History and Geography of British Columbia* came out in 1906, and a subsequent edition was published in 1913. The authors made changes to the textbook between editions, but the section on governance went untouched. The authors, both women, chose not to address the question of who governs and votes at all, in either edition. The electorate and politicians are gendered male and students are given to understand that these men are white even though by 1910 the women's suffrage movement in Canada and internationally was reaching new heights of publicity.¹⁹¹ Public awareness of the movement and accompanying controversy was high across the country.¹⁹² In Victoria, certain white women gained the right to vote in municipal elections in 1873.¹⁹³ In 1884 women gained the right to vote for school trustees and in 1889 they were allowed to run as candidates. They lost these privileges again in 1891, however.¹⁹⁴ The textbooks do not acknowledge this contemporary debate over women's suffrage. The authors of *History and Geography of British Columbia* were white women who would have benefitted from the women's suffrage movement, however, they did not discuss it. This, despite the fact that during the late nineteenth century Rosalind Watson Young signed a petition in support of women's suffrage, and both authors belonged to women's organizations that came together to advocate women's suffrage.¹⁹⁵

Probably, the Department of Education would not have authorized Lawson and Young's text unless it reflected normative values. Women's suffrage was still too radical to be considered

¹⁹¹ Cleverdon, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada*, vi.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ihmels, "The Mischief Makers," 68-71.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 107-110.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, Appendix 2, Appendix 6, and Appendix 7.

appropriate for classroom discussion. Women are depicted as not having any role to play in government at present or in future. Their contemporary absence within the system of governance is taken for granted. What is most bleak is how this absence is rendered doubly invisible with the phrase, “the members of both provincial and federal parliaments are chosen by manhood suffrage, only Indians and Chinese being prohibited from voting.”¹⁹⁶ Here, the evidence of the disenfranchisement of women of all races is erased.

¹⁹⁶ Lawson and Young, *History and Geography of British Columbia*, 49.

Conclusion

Textbooks like *History and Geography of British Columbia* and *New Canadian Geography* were written and distributed across the Province of British Columbia beginning in the late nineteenth century with the goal of socializing children to accept and strive to live up to white British values on the basis that they were superior to any others. Through the use and juxtaposition of images, maps, and text, the authors elevate some modes of gender expression and stigmatize others. White male heroics, Christianity, British Canadian family life, patriarchy and traditional femininity are accorded value and constructed as natural in these two texts. These patterns in the text make these ideals appear universal. In contrast, other lifeways are introduced as foreign and exotic, and in their inclusion, they are juxtaposed against an invisible but clearly grasped norm. Racialized, “uncivilized” and exotic mothers are used this way in *New Canadian Geography* to subtly highlight a better, Christian, Anglo-Canadian, middle-class way of being and nurturing. This purposeful inclusion of some types of text and imagery indicates a simultaneous purposeful exclusion of other possibilities. Deliberate choices to exclude other people and topics such as women’s presence outside of the domestic setting, mixed-race identity, interracial relationships, and women’s suffrage also highlight what behaviours were considered appropriate and what sort of people were deemed acceptable in early twentieth century British Columbia. The omissions and silences are noticeable. *History and Geography of British Columbia* and *New Canadian Geography*, ostensibly texts that deal with the facts of history, topography, botany and international trade among other concepts, are in reality steeped in the gendered discourses of the early twentieth century.

The fact that this messaging was interwoven with ‘objective’ facts and figures gave these gendered discourses an unquestionable status. This would have made it difficult for students to

even notice, let alone question the gender values they were being taught. One direction future researchers might take would be to investigate whether or how students contested these teachings. Although these books are now more than 100 years old, the insights gained through this research on textbooks and the values they contain is relevant to contemporary issues. Some of the gender ideals found in the texts are still current, and issues of gender and racialization are still inextricably bound together in contemporary society. School and the education system are still sites for gender learning and the inculcation of values. This critical reading of two historical textbooks demonstrates the continued importance of being aware of how gender and other hierarchies can remain invisibly embedded in the curriculum both past and present.

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