Joy Parr and Jon van der Veen, *Megaprojects,* **http://megaprojects.fims.uwo.ca/.**

Megaprojects brings together three multimedia collections as part of Joy Parr and Jon van der Veen's ongoing exploration of the relationship between technology, risk, environment, and culture: 1) Val Morton: A Guided Archive; 2) Lostscapes; Visiting Old Iroquois; and 3) Sounding Danger in and Around the Bruce Nuclear Power Site. Drawing from oral histories and other documentary evidence to describe the relationship between local residents and the 'megaprojects' that disrupt their lives, the collections make an important contribution to the history of public memory and environmental change in twentieth-century Canada.

"Val Morton: A Guided Archive" uses images, audio interviews, and written remembrances to create a rich narrative of the life of Val Morton, a rancher whose land in the Kootenay region of south-central British Columbia was expropriated in 1968 as part of the Columbia River Treaty. The site explores the ways that disruptions to water, soils and wildlife caused by the expropriations and the subsequent construction of three reservoir dams in the late 1960s and early 1970s are reflected in the personal disruptions experienced by Val Morton as a result of the same events. Ejected from his land, Morton comes to lead a peripatetic life in a camper truck, "[remembering and grieving] his old life by returning to an archive of pictures, maps, and written accounts of bygone day-to-day activities at his ranch." It is this very intimate archive that viewers are invited to explore, together with several video and audio clips from interviews with Morton.

Navigating the site requires some practice. Introductory text for each chronological section appears and fades before I finish reading it, and I can't find a way to go back without reloading the page. Images pan quickly to the left and right as I move my mouse, making it difficult to target a particular image or text excerpt for viewing. It takes me a few moments to figure out that the material moves, counter-intuitively, in the opposite direction of the cursor. Three reference maps accompany the chronological collage entries: a hand-drawn sketch of the Morton ranch annotated with areas of significance in Val's memory of his daily activities; a 1963 topographical map of Nakusp and the Arrow Lakes area; and an aerial photo of the area in 1960. While these maps provide useful context, they are difficult to compare. Some indication of the location of the Morton ranch on the topographical map or the aerial photo would have made these materials more useful. For all these criticisms of the functionality of the site, however, the material is rich and evocative, and creates a haunting reflection on the profound sense of belonging created by daily routines in place, and the disorientation incurred by the loss of that place and those activities.

The second project on the Megaprojects website, "Lostscapes: Visiting Old Iroquois", presents a virtual tour of the Ontario town of Iroquois in 1953, before it was flooded to make way for the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1958. The tour pieces together photographs of the town's built environment with audio reminis-

cences from interviews with former Iroquois residents. A selection of tour start-
ing points, indicated on a 1953 aerial photo of the town, allows me to stroll—vir-
tually—along the town's two main thoroughfares from east to west or west to east,
an indicator of my location moving along with me. As I move along, black and
white photographs of the homes and businesses of King Street appear in succes-
sion on my screen, reconstituting a lost streetscape. A former resident begins to
speak about the excitement she felt about buying a family home along the river,
and the deep sense of loss that followed when the town was relocated further
inland. Another describes in intimate detail the storefront of a local business, and
the role it played in the town. No unifying narrative appears here: instead, towns-
people recreate their town from memory, relating stories from multiple viewpoints
about the old town and its relocation in 1957, the effects of the move on residents,
and the embodied memories of the town's physical environment—the constant
sound of the river, its role in people's lives and livelihoods, and changes in its flow
and physiology after the Seaway is constructed.

The last project, "Sounding Danger in and Around the Bruce Nuclear
Power Site," comprises four audio "compositions" drawn from interviews with
workers of the Bruce Nuclear Power Facility and Heavy Water Plant in
Kincardine, Ontario and with nearby residents. The first composition, "Equate
Things," highlights the use of often misleading analogies by plant managers and
trainers to educate workers and residents about radiation risks. The second,
"Inverhuron Park," overlays a series of voices relating the shock and disappoint-
ment experienced in losing access to overnight camping in a nearby park due to
the heavy water plant's emissions of hydrogen sulphide gas. One resident's com-
ment, "these are the same people who have been saying 'it's been safe, it's been
safe, it's been safe,'" repeats as a refrain throughout the composition. The third
composition expands upon the theme of risk by detailing a plant protocol to train
all workers in radiation safety rather than relying on specialized safety personnel.
The fourth, "Baffles," explores the challenges residents faced in comprehending
plant operations and impacts—among them, tractor trailers pulling machinery
parts cartoon-like in their immensity, time frames for environmental impact that
stretched into tens of thousands of years, and massive income gaps between plant
positions and traditional occupations in the area, such as farming. Together, the
compositions offer an aural meditation on the challenges of containing risk, and
the divide apparent between the knowledge structures of plant managers and
those of workers and residents.

On the whole, *Megaprojects* presents an impressive collection of informa-
tion in innovative and often challenging ways. Each of the collections is framed
as a form of collage, from the aural compositions of "Sounding Danger" to the
visual and aural recreation of Iroquois and, perhaps most evidently, the "bulletin
board" appearance of Morton's personal archive of place. Each, like a collage,
challenges the viewer to explore material in non-linear ways: overlaid voices and

looping sound clips in "Sounding Danger" challenge the listener's expectations of an oral history interview, while the multiple starting points offered in "Lostscapes" allow a certain degree of flexibility in approaching the town's history. The positioning of material "outside the frame" in Morton's archive follows the same principle of non-linearity, but because of the problems with the functionality of the site outlined above, it does so less successfully.

Unfortunately, problems of consistency and functionality detract from the pleasure of exploring these compelling collections. The site's introductory page, for example, might have been more successful had it adopted the same formatting to present each of the projects (instead, the first two collections are presented through a page link while the third collection outlines all of its contents on the main page). An introduction to the site and its creators would also have been useful here. Consistency of browser navigation tools is another problem: in some collections, the browser's back arrow moves you back a slide; in others, it takes you out of the collection entirely and back to the main page. As a reviewer I was compelled to practice using the unfamiliar navigational tools provided on the site; other viewers will not be so patient. Addressing these technical points would go a long way towards retaining site visitors and improving the accessibility of collections that contribute greatly to our understanding of environmental change, perceptions of risk, and embodied memories of place in twentieth-century Canada.

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Alvin Finkel, *Social Policy and Practice in Canada: A History* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2006).

I like to teach against the textbook. So I will often assign for background reading something bland and vaguely right-wing. A textbook like that gives students something to sharpen their intellectual teeth on. And if what is missing in the text is a class or race or gender analysis, then students adopt these perspectives as they discover the deficiencies in the textbook. The risk in assigning Finkel's *Social Policy and Practice in Canada* will be that what students will 'discover' is the absence of a coherent account of right-wing or centrist economics or a discussion of modern psychologically-oriented social work theory. Thus, perversely, in telling a clear and often compelling story of the gender, class, and race dynamics of Canada's welfare state, Finkel may incite students to champion the perspectives and policy orientations he critiques and dispatches. The very features that make this book so attractive—such as its moral vision, its attention to popular agency, its emphasis on material interest as fundamental to explanation, and the breadth of its conception of welfare—open it to critique and may give right-wing critics persuasive points of purchase that need not be offered to them.