

complexity and productivity of colonial discourse" (87); historians Robin Fisher and Hugh Johnson give Vancouver Island an inappropriately "congenial reputation in the history of contact and colonialism." (193) The impact of Clayton's many critiques dwindle in relation to the sheer volume of them.

Islands of Truth is well-conceived and executed, but it is not as singular as its author would sometimes have it. Clayton's comment that he sees "the work of empire where others scholars do not" (xxi) is belied by the recent publication of a series of works that ask similar questions about similar places. Like Cole Harris' *The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism in Geographical Change* (1998), Clayton's is a reconsideration of British Columbia's history in light of post-colonial thinking. Like Elizabeth Vibert's *Trader's Tales: Narratives of Cultural Encounters in the Plateau, 1807-1846* (1997) and Christopher Bracken's *The Potlatch Papers: A Colonial Case History* (1997), Clayton's is a rethinking prompted by post-structuralist insights into the nature of historical inquiry. And, however much Clayton distances himself from the existing historiography of contact and the fur-trade in British Columbia, his analysis ultimately reconfirms some of its central claims, namely of the decreasing influence of Aboriginal agendas throughout the nineteenth-century.

Islands of Truth takes some significant chances and makes some important contributions. But it also leaves one big question essentially unaddressed. Clayton exposes the centrality of imperialism to Western knowledge in general and to British Columbia's history in particular. What he does not ask is whether he, as an author writing in a very scholarly – and very Western – tradition, can be an effective critic of something he is so obviously a part of. I wish *Islands of Truth* had raised the question, but suspect that the answer is yes – the best critics often speak from within the very thing they challenge. At any rate, historians of British Columbia, Canada, North America and empire have found a critic worth listening to in Daniel Clayton.

Adele Perry
University of Manitoba

Sol Dollinger and Genora Johnson Dollinger, *Not Automatic: Women and the Left in the Forging of the Auto Workers' Union* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000).

Part revisionist history, part clarion call for action, and entirely unrepentant, Sol Dollinger's book *Not Automatic*, links the personal and the political in a powerful and at times touching manner to explain the creation of the United Auto Workers union. Dollinger, who worked at a number of automotive companies in the 1930s and 1940s during the heyday of unionization in the auto

industry, has crafted a memoir/history of the UAW's nascent years which provides a first-hand account of the brutal battles which eventually led to Big Three recognition of the UAW. Genora Johnson Dollinger, the author's late wife, plays a large role in the book, not only as one of the key figures in the very important battles that women led in unionizing the auto industry, but also because her words, in the form of transcribed oral histories, make up a large section of the book. Her struggle, along with other women in the movement, form a central focus of the story, which maintains an unabashedly rank-and-file view of the formation of the UAW. Sol Dollinger contrasts this perspective to later histories which have emphasized either the role of leaders such as Walter Reuther or the importance of certain segments of the union's membership, such as the Communists. In doing so, Dollinger beseeches his readers to abandon what he sees as the accommodationist weaknesses of the present-day UAW leadership and return to a militant stance which holds the Big Three more accountable and protects the average auto worker. Dollinger is only partially successful in his effort.

The book is composed of three sections. Part one is Dollinger's tale of the various episodes of the early days of the UAW, from the first sit-down strikes at Toledo in 1934, through the street-warfare which led to union recognition at General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, to the political intrigues which led to the ascendancy of Reuther as the uncontested leader of North American auto workers by the late 1940s. Part two is a textual rendering of oral interviews given by Dollinger's wife, Genora Johnson Dollinger, which details the story of women unionists during these heady, challenging days for the labour movement. Because she played such an important role in those early battles yet never wrote of her experiences, Sol Dollinger thought that it was essential that a written record of Genora Johnson Dollinger's account be made available. The final part of the book, "Setting the Record Straight," is devoted to Dollinger's revision of the historical account of the UAW's eventual victory. Here he challenges interpretations by various labour historians such as Henry Kraus and Sidney Fine, contrasting their interpretations with what he believes really happened during the dramatic UAW takeover of Chevrolet's Plant No. 4 in February, 1937, which led to GM's acceptance of the union.

Dollinger's telling of the creation of the UAW from the rank-and-file point of view is useful and important. Though not an academic history, *Not Automatic* is competently researched and written. Because Dollinger doesn't pretend to be objective, we are exposed to a side of the UAW that might not normally receive extensive treatment. This becomes apparent in Dollinger's detailing of the fractured, embryonic period of the movement, which witnessed internecine warfare as various camps battled for control of the union. Dollinger was in the thick of these battles: Dozens of socialists, Trotskyites, Communists, Reutherites, Addes-adherents, and Marxists fly in and out of the narrative at a bewildering pace. While Dollinger's mental catalogue is amazing in

remembering who was who in these political and ideological battles, the casual reader who may not be familiar with this labyrinthine factionalism can easily get lost in the detail.

Nevertheless, the book is full of fascinating anecdotes of heroic and horrible events. The UAW's early struggle was a physically brutal affair, and Dollinger does not spare the reader from even the most personal details. Most poignant is his very moving telling of the savage beating Genora Johnson Dollinger received at the hands of company toughs who broke into the couple's apartment and attacked them while they slept. Genora Johnson was left partially paralyzed by the beating, and suffered from health difficulties for the rest of her life. One feels that the book is, in a way, as much a testament to the woman as it is to the labour movement Dollinger feels so passionately for.

The personal nature of the tome is also apparent when Dollinger relates another incident involving his wife. In 1977 GM invited various members of the union to share in a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the first GM-UAW contract. While most of the union hierarchy attended the meeting, Genora Johnson Dollinger appeared in Detroit to denounce the union for "supping with the enemy." The decision by the UAW hierarchy to attend the dinner provides an opportunity for Dollinger to lambaste union officials for their willingness to be co-opted by the corporation, and a chance to illustrate his late wife's determination to stand up for the rights of workers. This determination to fight for auto workers, Dollinger maintains, is in short supply in the present UAW leadership.

Dollinger's revision of past events, while worthwhile, become at times too personal to be effective. His disdain for Walter Reuther is apparent throughout the book, and is strongest when Dollinger assesses other UAW histories. In Dollinger's eyes, Reuther is nothing like the labour hero as portrayed in these books. While the author gives Reuther some credit for leading the General Motors strike, Dollinger argues that the UAW leader betrayed the labour movement on issues such as the World War II no-strike promise, the expulsion of communists in the union, and postwar bargaining matters. Instead, Reuther comes across as unprincipled, opportunistic and power-hungry. Dollinger's bitterness is so palpable it comes close to undermining his own credibility. And while Dollinger is certainly correct in arguing that women's role in the creation and sustenance union has been relatively neglected, there have been a few other works, such as Pamela Sugiman's excellent *Labour's Dilemma: the Gender Politics of Auto Workers in Canada, 1937-1979*, which have made great headway in addressing the issue.

Not Automatic is very useful for those interested in the history of the UAW and of the labour movement in general. Dollinger's book provides a different perspective and a refreshing challenge to the conventional wisdom found in many labour histories of the auto industry. While he may not always be

persuasive, Dollinger reminds us that the personal sacrifices of the average people who led the labour fight are stories worth telling.

Dimitry Anastakis
York University

Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

Kristin Hoganson's study of gender and U.S. imperial politics ranks among the most important contributions to the recent wave of scholarship on U.S. empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Over the past century, historians have debated the motivations behind the burst of expansionist projects that emanated from the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. Until recently, however, scholars of "1898" have treated the issue of gender as a marginal concern, if they have addressed it at all. In this provocative study, Hoganson sets out to show how gender politics played a pivotal role in the formation of U.S. policy and political culture at the turn of the century.

Hoganson seeks to redefine the parameters of a historical debate that long revolved around the question of whether U.S. intervention in 1898 was driven by "rational" or "irrational" motivations. She rejects these categories and proposes instead to explain how putatively "irrational" preoccupations regarding the preservation of "American manhood" became central to the geopolitical strategies of U.S. officials in the late 1890s.¹ The book begins with an interpretation of the rise of the "jingo," who played a critical role in advocating U.S. intervention in Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and other domains of Spanish empire in the Pacific. The jingoes included Civil War veterans, journalists, and military strategists such as Alfred Thayer Mahan, who gained fame in the 1890s as author of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*. United by sex (nearly all jingoes were men), this loose coalition shared a belief that the strength of the republic depended on its masculine character, and that war and other strenuous activities were essential for the cultivation of manly virtues. Influenced by Social Darwinism, this concept of manhood was also closely bound up with beliefs in the superiority of whites over other racial groups.

Hoganson's analysis of the advent of the jingoes focuses on the debate surrounding the arbitration treaty signed by the United States and Great Britain in 1897. She attributes the failure of the treaty in the U.S. Senate to increasing concern among many men regarding the growing influence of women in electoral politics. Opponents of arbitration raised alarms about the feminization of the republic and pointed to the prominence of women among the arbitrationists to bolster their case against the treaty. She then considers how the