

Acknowledgements

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Frederick Mills
Editor-in-Chief, 2011

Editor's Introduction

It is a pleasure to offer in this year's edition, the journal's seventeenth, four highly literate and provocative essays, as well as five critical reviews. The first essay, by Caroline Lieffers, is a lucid reinterpretation of the myriad factors involved in the creation of Canada's first National Park, Banff. Specifically, Lieffers assiduously argues that "rich nineteenth-century health theories..., particularly medical geography...drove Banff's early development as a health and pleasure resort." Her essay situates the town's establishment and its growth in heretofore neglected intellectual terrain—the fertile intersection of medical and environmental histories.

IV

Daniel Sims' contribution focuses on the liberal arts' equivalent of the uncertainty principle. That is, what consequences and contradictions emerge when an individual is charged both to observe and to fundamentally change a society? Sims' analysis probes the life of Oblate missionary Adrien Gabriel Morice and his contradictory enterprise to ethnographically record and religiously convert the Western Dene. He concludes that Morice, though tasked with incongruous aims, was successful and left a lasting legacy as both an ethnographer and a missionary.

Ryan Holroyd's article reveals the lurid, complex and dynamic world of Columbian paramilitary and guerrilla politics at the turn of the twentieth century. Specifically, he explores and charts the aims and objectives of the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* and investigates its transformation from a paramilitary-adjunct of central state authority to an outlawed organization of cocaine producers and peddlers. The fratricide of Carlos Castaño by his subordinates in 2004, argues Holroyd, signalled a fundamental and underexplored change to the structure and mandate of the AUC.

The final piece in this year's edition, written by W. Mikkel Dack, surveys the early history of eugenics in Alberta and deconstructs the historiographical edifice that surrounds the 1937 amendment to the Sexual Sterilization Act. He systematically challenges and undermines conventional notions about the continued popularity of eugenic thought in Alberta at a time when the movement's national and international respectability was waning. Dack concludes with a clarion call to the scholarly community to reinvestigate the relationship between eugenics and Albertan society and politics, and he proposes a number of potentially fruitful lines of inquiry.

These short summaries serve to entice readers to proceed and to discover what this year's four talented authors have produced. Contact information can be found on the contributor's page.