Editor's introduction

The 2009 edition of *Past Imperfect* reflects the rich diversity of historical topics currently being studied by graduate students in Canada's History departments. This edition carries a total of twelve essays and seven book reviews written by MA and PhD candidates. I hope this makes it possible for the Journal to appeal to a wider audience in different fields of study.

I organized the essays under five sections in order to enhance accessibility. The first section begins with Lauren Wheeler's exploration of the environmental history of Banff in the 1920s. Lauren analyses how Banff residents inaugurated a highly successful carnival which made use of visual images to promote winter recreation. Nelly Laudicina examines power relations between the Métis community and the Council of Assiniboia in the Red River colony between 1820 and 1870. Using archival material, she points out that the colony's power relations were shaped by the Council's efforts to control the Métis and exclude them from administrative functions, and by regulating their participation in local trade. Nelly shows that the Métis were not passive onlookers but that they actively sought to redress these injustices by constantly petitioning the Council until both the Council and the colony at large were "strongly democratized." Rylan Kafara explores the impact of the American civil rights movement on Seattle's black community. He observes that before the 1960s, Seattle's black community created a sense of identity around jazz and

rhythm and blues music but that the civil rights movement radically accentuated this sense of identity by bringing strong political messages.

The second section begins with Eva Bodnar's analysis of street naming in Budapest, Hungary, over a period of three hundred years, from the end of Turkish rule to the present. Her analysis reveals different and complex patterns of meaning attached to street names, ranging from the clelebration of foreign occupation to the expression of nationalism and independence, with name changes showing political predilections of successive regimes over a lengthy period.

Cameron Whitehead probes controversies around the fall of the former Yugoslavia. Taking a careful look at the sources used to understand the conflict, Cameron argues for a serious use of political memoirs written by Western diplomats to both dispute and compliment extant academic literature on the subject. His analysis of memoirs complicates our understanding of the relationship between popular myths about the region and policy formulation during the Yugoslav breakup.

Mariya Melentyeva examines how Russian websites have depicted the controversial murder of Polish officers by the Soviet NKVD in the 1940s. Mariya examines not only the viewpoints of academics and journalists, but also those of ordinary Russians commenting upon the political state of affairs in their country. The use of websites as valuable sources in itself shows us the utility of new types of sources available to the historian.

Sara Siona Régnier-McKellar opens the third section of the Journal with an analysis of the speeches made by England's monarchs in defence of patriarchy. Lindsay Sidders Hodgins examines how the Mexica of Tenochtitlan built and maintained a large empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. She argues that the final collapse of the empire following invasion by Spanish conquerors suggests a weak political system of seemingly loose and incoherently amalgamated city-states. However, beneath this veneer of political fragmentation was a much more durable ideological system of coercion, manipulation and cooperation between social classes, particularly between the ruling elite and commoners, ensuring the empire's relative stability and prosperity. Dwayne Meisner examines the vexed topic of the Roman calendar by giving a good argument for the changes to the calendar that occurred under Caesar.

In the fourth section, Allen Pietrobon focuses on NATO's defense policies and strategies during the 1970s. He examines how these policies and strategies changed because of the 1971 Mansfield Amendment, which sought to reduce American troops in Europe. While the US was concerned about the high cost of keeping troops in Europe, the proposal to withdraw troops would have increased European vulnerability to a Soviet attack. European nations were forced to take more responsibility for their own defense. Trevor Rockwell focuses on the depiction of science and technology in the American propaganda campaign during the Cold War. Focusing on the US Information Agency and its radio program the Voice of America, Trevor argues that propaganda, or psychological warfare, played a central war in the Cold War

than in usually acknowledged, particularly in the area of science and technology. Mathieu Robitaille offers a comparative examination of the discourse of change in post-revolutionary France and England. He contends that the stigma associated with the French Revolution and the fear of revolutionary violence had a greater influence on notions of change in both countries and the actions of governments than the content or substance of change itself.

This editorial introduction is deficient even in its attempt to sum up the subject matter of the essays in the Journal. I therefore invite readers to proceed and discover for themselves what this edition's authors have written. Authors agreed to be contacted in case readers wish to comment or make suggestions. Please see the contributors' page.