



Private Grief, Public Mourning: The Rise of the Roadside Shrine in British Columbia

John Belshaw, Diane Purvey

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Literary Nonfiction. Canadian History. BC Books for Everybody selection. PRIVATE GRIEF, PUBLIC MOURNING is a historical investigation of mourning sites and practices within the context of the province of British Columbia. The authors are concerned, primarily, with the rise of the roadside death memorial in the late twentieth century. They argue that RDMs are not a marginal, quirky phenomenon but part of a longer and complex story about the meaning of both death and grieving, one more thread in a long tapestry of public exhibitions of grief that serve to announce to the watching world who we are.

"PRIVATE GRIEF, PUBLIC MOURNING is an important contribution to the study of vernacular and popular culture in British Columbia. It provides an insightful, sensitive, yet rigorous treatment of a delicate topic. Historians, geographers, and anthropologists of British Columbia will want to have this book on their shelves, and its images, accessible prose, and familiar topic also make it of interest to a broader, non-academic audience."—*BC Studies*

"A catalogue of the form and evolution of grieving rituals and associated public memorials in BC's history, with a particular emphasis on the common, diverse and often whimsical roadside memorial."—*Vancouver Review*

"With vivid images of a variety of different shrines and monuments built across BC, this book helps to delve into the human emotion of grief and why taking it into a public space can provide such comfort to one mourning individual and such discomfort to others."—*Broken Pencil*

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