

**City Stories:  
Publishing Alternative Dialogues from Vancouver's Past**

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## Abstract

This project report presents a case study of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, authored by Eve Lazarus and published by Arsenal Pulp Press, to provide an example of an independent book publisher that leverages unconventional venues for book launch events for non-fiction titles chronicling alternative regional histories. The report begins with an introduction to Arsenal Pulp Press's history and mandate, and then moves into an overview of Lazarus's publishing history and network connections as a member of the Belshaw Gang.

From there, the editorial and production components of *Blood, Sweat and Fear* will be discussed, with attention toward the challenges Lazarus faced when researching and writing her book. Finally, this report will outline the primary details of the book launch and marketing efforts, closing with an explanation of the pivotal role Arsenal Pulp Press plays in helping to preserve and reproduce lesser-known narratives about Vancouver in a tangible form.

**Keywords:** publishing; regional publishing; local non-fiction; book launch; independent book publisher; Arsenal Pulp Press

## Dedication

I dedicate this report to my husband and best friend, Alex. Thank you for seeing me through these past twenty months and for going out of your way to make writing this report a less solitary experience. If the sun refused to shine, I would still be loving you. When mountains crumble to the sea, there will still be you and me.

Eternal love and gratitude to my parents Sig and Jeff for all your years of encouragement and support. Thank you also to my grandparents Edith and Ernie for always believing I could reach the stars if I worked hard enough.

Finally, thank you Kayla for always lending me an ear whenever I needed a break from writing. I couldn't ask for a better sister, and it means so much to toast my successes with you.

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# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

True crime author and history enthusiast Eve Lazarus stirs up excitement of Vancouver's murky past, connecting many younger readers eager to explore untold stories of the city with the lesser-known narratives found between the pages of her books such as *Blood, Sweat, and Fear: The Story of Inspector Vance, Vancouver's First Forensic Investigator*. Tapping into this desire to discover the seedy criminal cases of Vancouver's formative years, Lazarus plays an important role in expanding Arsenal Pulp Press's catalogue of titles which explore underground urban stories while leveraging unconventional marketing approaches.

Arsenal Pulp Press is an independent book publisher in Vancouver, Canada specializing in cookbooks, literary fiction, LGBT titles, graphic novels, and alternative local non-fiction. Founded in 1971 by a collective of university students and associates under the name Pulp Press Book Publishers, the venture was born out of the disenchantment its members felt over what they perceived to be the academic literary pretensions of Canadian literature at the time.<sup>1</sup> Pulp Press Books was run as a co-operative, and its arsenal included both a printing press and typesetting operation as a means of subsidizing its publishing activities: broadsheets, pamphlets, and books.<sup>2</sup> Pulp Press Book's publications comprised fiction, poetry, and drama, with a particular focus on the "gritty urban literature typical of the Vancouver literary scene at the time."<sup>3</sup>

By 1982, Pulp Press Book Publishers was renamed and rebranded as Arsenal Pulp Press, with the company's focus evolving to include literary non-fiction in the areas of cultural, gender, and multicultural studies.<sup>4</sup> It was during this period of the press's history that books unearthing alternative narratives and unconventional local history became a core component of its publishing program. Books such as Celia Haig-Brown's

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<sup>1</sup> Arsenal Pulp Press, "A Brief History," *Arsenal Pulp Press*, accessed November 26, 2017, [http://www.arsenalpulp.com/titleimages/PDFs/Arsenal\\_Brief\\_History.pdf](http://www.arsenalpulp.com/titleimages/PDFs/Arsenal_Brief_History.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

*Resistance and Renewal* and Bridget Moran's *Stoney Creek Woman* are two titles published during this period, with both titles centering on Indigenous voices and the Indigenous experience.<sup>5</sup>

During the 1990s, Arsenal further evolved its publishing program, refining its catalogue of alternative local history to "reflect its increasing interest in urban literature and cultural studies."<sup>6</sup> Titles during this era include *The Imaginary Indian* by Daniel Francis, in which Francis "deconstructs the Indian image in Canadian popular culture," and *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (also by Francis), in which the author "takes on the icons of Canada's past ... and reveals them in an entirely new light."<sup>7</sup>

Arsenal's recent list of titles revealing unconventional local history include *The Last Gang in Town* and *Liquor, Lust, and the Law* by Aaron Chapman, as well as *Cold Case Vancouver* and *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* by Eve Lazarus, with the latter title serving as the case study for this report. Lazarus's book, which chronicles many high-profile murder cases investigated by forensic detective John Vance, was both researched and launched at the Vancouver Police Museum—the original site of Vance's forensics and analytical laboratory. This dual relationship between the museum and the author and the museum and the book's subject matter demonstrates the logic behind the decision to launch the book at the museum, in that it enabled the book's contents to be effectively brought into their respective physical space.

This report will detail how Arsenal forged its relationship with Lazarus and will describe her author platform and local network, including the so-called Belshaw Gang. Moreover, this report will discuss how *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* was pitched to Arsenal and the work involved in Lazarus's research. Finally, I will outline the launch event for the book at the Vancouver Police Museum, and will close with a critical look toward how titles such as Lazarus's play a pivotal role in unearthing alternative dialogues and helping to establish Vancouver as a city with a rich, if understated, history.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 2.

# Eve Lazarus: Publishing History and Platform, the Belshaw Gang, and Arsenal Pulp Press

## 2.1. Publishing History and Platform

Eve Lazarus is a writer and author, blogger, Vancouver historian, public speaker, and board member of the Vancouver Historical Society. Wide-ranging and spanning over a decade, Lazarus’s work as a writer began twelve years prior to the publication of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*. At this time, she worked as a reporter for *Marketing Magazine* and as a columnist for the *Vancouver Sun*, and as she explains, “much of [her] work was in business journalism...with the occasional lifestyle piece in various magazines.”<sup>8</sup>

Lazarus’s career as an author began at Anvil Press, spanning several non-fiction titles titles—*At Home with History* (2007), *Sensational Victory: Bright Lights, Red Lights, Murders, Ghosts, & Gardens* (2012), and *Sensational Vancouver* (2014)—as well as multiple pieces in anthologies, including *Vancouver Confidential* (2014, edited by John Belshaw) and *Vancouver Vanishes: Narratives of Demolition and Revival* (2015, compiled by Caroline Adderson). The former anthology played a pivotal role in connecting Lazarus with John Belshaw and Aaron Chapman, another successful author publishing through Arsenal whose works unearth the underground histories of popular Vancouver entertainment venues as well as a former East Vancouver street gang.<sup>9</sup> Belshaw and Chapman will be discussed further later in this report.

Early inspiration for Lazarus consisted of the heritage homes found in Vancouver and the lesser-known, underground histories these homes possess.<sup>10</sup> Research conducted by author and walking-tour guide James Johnstone, described by Lazarus as a “house historian,” proved to be an especially strong source of creative intrigue for her, spurring the content found in her first book: the driving force behind the content is “the

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<sup>8</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid,

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

whole idea that a house has a genealogy or a history, and that you can tell a story through that.”<sup>11</sup>

This intrigue manifested as the first of Lazarus’s titles— *At Home with History*—which was acquired after she submitted an early version as an unsolicited proposal. “Brian Kauffman from Anvil Press called me up saying they were going through the slush pile and found [my] submission, and that he really liked it,”<sup>12</sup> Lazarus explains. She then fleshed it out into a “collection of real-life stories that bring to life the glamorous and not-so-glamorous social histories of selected heritage homes in Greater Vancouver.”<sup>13</sup> This debut proved to be an immense success, exceeding her own expectations. As she relates, “I was shocked at how well it did, it got on the BC Bestsellers List...I didn’t know how unusual it was for a first book.”<sup>14</sup> *At Home with History* was a finalist for the 2008 City of Vancouver Book Award.

Two subsequent books— *Sensational Victory: Bright Lights, Red Lights, Murders, Ghosts, & Gardens* and *Sensational Vancouver* (winner of the City of Vancouver’s Heritage Award of Recognition in 2015)—were also published by Anvil Press, as well as two anthologies with entries penned by Lazarus, *Vancouver Confidential* and *Vancouver Vanishes: Narratives of Demolition and Revival*. Edited by John Belshaw, *Vancouver Confidential* was the project which cemented Lazarus as a member of the Belshaw Gang (and will be discussed in greater detail later in this report), whereas *Vancouver Vanishes* saw Lazarus return to the subject of the city’s heritage homes and the immense number of histories being lost with their destruction.<sup>15</sup>

Spearheaded by novelist Caroline Addison, *Vancouver Vanishes* “is a collection of essays and photographs that together form a lament for, and celebration of, the

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Anvil Press, “At Home with History,” *Anvil Press*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.anvilpress.com/Books/at-home-with-history-the-untold-secrets-of-greater-vancouver-heritage-homes>

<sup>14</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid,

vanishing character homes and apartments in the city.”<sup>16</sup> The project began as a popular Facebook page, which has garnered over 13,450 “likes” since Addison created it in 2013. When discussing the impetus behind the project, Addison mirrors the language used by Lazarus when describing how houses possess their own genealogies, which one can see on the “Vancouver Vanishes” page on Facebook:

When these old homes come down, a whole history goes with them—the materials that were used to build them, the gardens, the successive owners and their secrets. These old houses are repositories of narrative. The story of our city is diminished every time one disappears.<sup>17</sup>

### **2.1.1. Eve Lazarus and Arsenal Pulp Press**

With four titles now under her belt, Lazarus had established a name for herself among Vancouver’s community of recognizable local history enthusiasts, expanding her pool of opportunities in the city’s publishing scene.

Arsenal Pulp Press forged its relationship with Lazarus as a combined result of her publishing success at Anvil Press and her desire to work with Susan Safyan, Arsenal’s senior editor.<sup>18</sup> Safyan first met Lazarus at the East Van Publishers Christmas Party, an annual joint celebration of the independent publishers located in East Vancouver—Arsenal Pulp Press, Talonbooks, Anvil Press, and Greystone Books. This exchange led to Lazarus forming her relationship with Arsenal. Because of her history publishing with Anvil Press, which had spanned many years by this point, Arsenal was respectful of this relationship, and Lazarus herself approached Arsenal with her proposal in 2015 for what would become her next book.<sup>19</sup>

At this time, Lazarus was in the early stages of researching and writing what would become her first book published by Arsenal—*Cold Case Vancouver: The City’s Most Baffling Unsolved Murders* (2016)—which “takes a look at the city’s disreputable

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<sup>16</sup> Anvil Press, “Vancouver Vanishes: Narratives of Demolition and Revival,” Anvil Press, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.anvilpress.com/Books/vancouver-vanishes-narratives-of-demolition-and-revival>.

<sup>17</sup> Vancouver Vanishes’ Facebook page, accessed November 26, 2017, [https://www.facebook.com/pg/VancouverVanishes/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/VancouverVanishes/about/?ref=page_internal)

<sup>18</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Susan Safyan, email message to author, November 15, 2017.

side by revisiting some of its infamous cold murder cases from 1944 to 1996.”<sup>20</sup> Lazarus notes the unconventional means through which the manuscript for *Cold Case Vancouver* was pitched, perhaps an early indication of the alternative nature of her approach to local history and true crime: “Normally you go through a formal pitching process...but I talked to Susan, who then went and talked to Brian, and he said that he would be interested in it.”<sup>21</sup>

Outside of her publishing history with Anvil Press and Arsenal Pulp Press, Lazarus regularly posts to her blog *Every Place Has a Story*, which “serves as an extension of [her] books and [is] a way to connect with readers and continue the conversation.”<sup>22</sup> In line with the contents of her books, *Every Place Has a Story* unearths the unconventional history of Vancouver and the surrounding area, chronicling heritage homes and historical buildings, the deaths of influential, yet lesser-known figures in Vancouver’s early history, as well as spectacular events and criminal cases dating as far back as the early twentieth century. Lazarus has posted several blog entries centred on forensic inspector John Vance, the cases he was involved in investigating, and her work conducting research at the Vancouver Police Museum for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*. Moreover, Lazarus utilizes her website as a means through which to promote her books; all of her books can be found on her website, complete with the awards and reviews they’ve garnered, links to their corresponding social media pages, links to purchase her books, and the book trailer for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*.

As the name suggests, *Every Place Has a Story* serves as a powerful platform for Lazarus, with her writing representing both the micro and the macro of Vancouver’s history. At the micro level, her posts on heritage homes and other historical buildings detail the lives of their original inhabitants, including the illicit activities and scandalous meetings that occurred between their four walls. At the macro level, posts surrounding Inspector John Vance’s cases, historical tidbits of the Pacific National Exhibition, and Vancouver’s long-standing notoriety for protests and riots—earning it a reputation as a

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<sup>20</sup> Arsenal Pulp Press, “Cold Case Vancouver: The City’s Most Baffling Unsolved Murders,” *Arsenal Pulp Press*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.arsenalpulp.com/bookinfo.php?index=435>.

<sup>21</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Eve Lazarus, “Every place has a story,” *Eve Lazarus: Making Words Matter*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://evelazarus.com/blog/>.

“city on edge”—operate as a stronghold in the argument that Vancouver is a city with a history, despite its relative youth.

Finally, Lazarus serves as the Vice President of the Vancouver Historical Society (VHS), which works to promote “interest in Vancouver’s history through the holding of monthly meetings with speakers, presenting annual awards for achievements relating to local history and research and hosting field trips to destinations of local historical importance.”<sup>23</sup> Further, the VHS is “pro-active in promoting Vancouver heritage and history by publishing books on its own and supporting financially the publication of other works,”<sup>24</sup> making the society a significant player not only in spreading education about Vancouver’s past and fostering a tight-knit community of local history enthusiasts, but also ensuring that the city’s history may be captured and reproduced in a tangible form. Lazarus is scheduled to deliver a talk on *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* at the Museum of Vancouver in March 2018, a speaking engagement arranged by the VHS.

### **2.1.2. The Belshaw Gang**

As previously discussed, Eve Lazarus was a contributor to the anthology *Vancouver Confidential*, which was edited by John Belshaw. Belshaw is an academic, historian, writer, and blogger. Like Lazarus, he carved out a successful publishing relationship with Anvil Press, which includes (in addition to *Vancouver Confidential*): *Private Grief, Public Mourning: The Rise of the Roadside Shrine in British Columbia* (2009, co-authored with Diane Purvey) and *Vancouver Noir: 1930-1960* (2011, co-authored by Diane Purvey). He has also published *Becoming British Columbia: A Population History* (2009) with UBC Press.

*Vancouver Confidential* comprises fourteen chapters and is “a collaboration of artists and writers who plumb the shadows of civic memory looking for the stories that don’t fit into mainstream narratives.”<sup>25</sup> Stepping away from the celebrity and the well-known, the anthology “focus[es] on the stories of the common people rather than

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<sup>23</sup> Vancouver Historical Society, “History of the Vancouver Historical Society,” *Vancouver Historical Society*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.vancouver-historical-society.ca/history.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Anvil Press, “Vancouver Confidential,” *Anvil Press*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.anvilpress.com/Books/vancouver-confidential>.

community leaders and headliners” as a means of spotlighting “the lives of Vancouverites that have for so long been ignored.”<sup>26</sup> Lazarus’s contribution centres on the Lennie Commission into police corruption in 1928, and Belshaw’s section is a tribute to the work of James Crookall and other early Vancouver street photographers.

The Belshaw Gang comprises the contributors to *Vancouver Confidential*, which was the catalyst that brought them together. These individuals (in addition to Lazarus, Chapman, and Belshaw) include Tom Carter, Jesse Donaldson, James Johnstone, Lani Russwurm, Diane Purvey, Catherine Rose, Rosanne Sia, Jason Vanderhill, and Terry Watada. This list is not exhaustive, as there is no formal membership for the group, nor are there formal meetings held by its members. Rather, the Belshaw Gang more so encompasses “an idea than an actual body of people,”<sup>27</sup> as Lazarus explains, serving as a creative support network.

While they possess different academic and professional backgrounds, as well as differing individual pursuits, the members of the Belshaw Gang have solidified a supportive network of local history experts passionate about preserving Vancouver’s collective memory. The group is united by a desire to unearth lesser-known and alternative histories of the city, with the goal of revealing the histories of the people, events, buildings, and neighbourhoods that define Vancouver.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of each members’ drive to see their own work succeed, every individual of the Belshaw Gang has carved out his or her own niche with respects to writing about local history, and they all help each other in their individual projects and events. “Because we’re all in Belshaw, it’s sort of assumed that we’re in competition for readers,” Lazarus says. “But the more people that buy Aaron Chapman’s book will buy my book...his fans will come along to my events, and my fans will go to his. What comes around goes around.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Eve Lazarus, e-mail message to author, December 18, 2017.

<sup>28</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

Another benefit that results from this camaraderie is the cooperation and assistance members extend toward one another; if one finds him or herself experiencing a gap in their research, the knowledge and network connections of other Belshaw members can be sought out as a resource.

### **2.1.3. Eve Lazarus, Aaron Chapman, and Arsenal Pulp Press**

Aaron Chapman, whose *Vancouver Confidential* contribution discusses the fears Vancouverites experienced during WWII, also publishes through Arsenal Pulp Press. His books primarily chronicle the seedy, underground histories of Vancouver's entertainment industry and include *Liquor, Lust, and the Law: The Story of Vancouver's Legendary Penthouse Nightclub* (first ed. 2013, second ed. 2017) and *Live at the Commodore: The Story of Vancouver's Historic Commodore Ballroom* (2014). His third book, *The Last Gang in Town: The Epic Story of the Vancouver Police vs. the Clark Park Gang* (2016) chronicles former East Vancouver street gangs to provide a "compelling portrait of early-1970s Vancouver...that puts the spotlight on the after-dark underbelly of the city's not-so-distant criminal past."<sup>30</sup>

Lazarus and Chapman have experienced great success publishing through Arsenal Pulp Press, with their titles enjoying long-spanning positions on both Arsenal's bestseller list as well as the BC Bestsellers List. Five months after being published in May 2017, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* remained in the seventh position of the company's bestsellers (Oct 17), and appeared on the BC Bestsellers List for eight non-consecutive weeks upon release, peaking at number seven for the week of June 24, 2017.<sup>31</sup> Chapman's *Last Gang in Town*, which was released in November 2016, remained on the BC Bestsellers List for twenty-two consecutive weeks before being knocked off the list for the week of April 16, 2017. His book then briefly re-entered the BC Bestsellers List the week of April 23, 2017, ranking number twelve.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Arsenal Pulp Press, "The Last Gang in Town," *Arsenal Pulp Press*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.arsenalpulp.com/bookinfo.php?index=450>.

<sup>31</sup> Natalie Hawryshkewich, "BC Bestsellers | June 24, 2017," *Read Local BC*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.readlocalbc.ca/2017/06/27/bc-bestsellers-june-24-2017/>.

<sup>32</sup> BC Bestseller List, "BC Bestsellers | April 23, 2017," *Read Local BC*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.readlocalbc.ca/2017/04/24/bc-bestsellers-april-23-2017/>.

At the time of this report's publication, which is based on Arsenal's May 2017 sales data, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* has sold 2,300 copies, *The Last Gang in Town* has sold 4,400 copies, and the first edition of Chapman's title *Liquor, Lust, and the Law* has sold 5,000 copies. *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* is still in its first print run, which totaled 3,585 copies. Now in its second print run, which totaled 2,091 copies, *The Last Gang in Town* had an initial print run of 3,460 copies, and *Liquor, Lust, and the Law*'s first print run consisted of 3,612 copies.<sup>33</sup>

Because of their books' strong local popularity, Lazarus and Chapman serve as strong backlist authors for Arsenal Pulp Press, resulting in positive monetary and social effects. The first of these effects is financial and relates to Arsenal's mandate. Providing a platform to individuals from marginalized and underrepresented voices in Canadian publishing, such as writers from the LGBT community and writers of colour, Arsenal has built a strong catalogue of titles pertaining to cultural and gender studies. With Lazarus's and Chapman's books performing so strongly, Arsenal is able to leverage the revenue from their backlist when taking on manuscripts that fulfill their mandate, enabling them to continue expanding their catalogue of LGBT authors and writers of colour.

The second of these effects is the impact on sales made by the author during book launch events. When Lazarus launched *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* at the Vancouver Police Museum on June 8, 2017, she was able to sell her previous books as well. "I had copies of my other books there that night," Lazarus notes, "so another plus was being able to sell multiples of my books as well. They've [the Vancouver Police Museum] got loads of true crime [books], and people don't know about this...so they're buying Aaron's book, and they're buying my books...They [the Vancouver Police Museum] did well, and I did great."<sup>34</sup> I will speak about the book launch for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* in greater detail later in this report, including the event's venue, event proceedings, attendance, and the media's response.

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<sup>33</sup> Susan Safyan, e-mail message to author, December 19, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

## Chapter 3.

# **Blood, Sweat, and Fear: Synopsis, Pitching, Delivery, Research, and Editorial**

### **3.1. Synopsis and Specifications**

Lazarus’s book chronicles notorious cases resolved by Vance through his forensics techniques and the blowback his investigatory prowess caused—he experienced “seven attempts on his life, and for a time, he and his family were under constant police guard from criminals afraid to go up against him in court.”<sup>35</sup> *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* centres on John F.C.B. Vance, Vancouver’s first forensic investigator. Earning him the international reputation of “the Sherlock Holmes of Canada,” Vance’s work in toxicology, firearms examination, serology, and autopsy made him a pivotal witness in court, with his testimonies playing a fundamental role in criminals being found guilty. His ground-breaking scientific knowledge proved to be years ahead of his time; Vancouver was one of very few police forces in the early twentieth century to draw on the expertise of a scientist in their criminal investigations.

Priced at \$21.95 CAD/USD and totalling 218 pages, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* contains fifty-four black and white photographs, thirty scanned images of newspaper clippings, letters, and maps (all complete with captions) as well an introduction, an epilogue, a bibliography, acknowledgments, and an index. The book is in trade paperback format, perfect bound, with the trim size 6 x 9 inches. The majority of the visuals were provided by Vance’s family.

### **3.2. Pitching and Delivery**

Like Lazarus’s previous Arsenal title *Cold Case Vancouver*, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* was informally pitched to the publisher; once again, Lazarus delivered a verbal proposal of her book’s contents and the direction she envisioned she would take when writing it. As Brian Lam, Publisher at Arsenal Pulp Press, recounts, “Robert [Ballantyne]

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<sup>35</sup> Arsenal Pulp Press, “Blood, Sweat, and Fear,” *Arsenal Pulp Press*, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://www.arsenalpulp.com/bookinfo.php?index=460>.

[Arsenal Pulp Press’s Associate Publisher] and I met with Eve and as I recall, we gave her the go-ahead on the spot. Her proposal was quite detailed, with an outline and proposed chapter subjects.”<sup>36</sup> The acceptance of Lazarus’s proposal directly aligns with the company’s policy regarding acquisitions, which sees, among other details, only Brian and Robert possessing authority to accept pitches from authors. Safyan discusses Arsenal’s policy further, noting who can offer input on submissions and who can present offers: “I [Safyan] can read and evaluate manuscript submissions and make recommendations for acquisition—as can anyone else here (Cynara Geissler, Oliver McPartlin)—but the offer of a contract can only come from the publisher.”<sup>37</sup>

Shortly after her proposal was accepted, Lazarus was informed by Arsenal that they “would like to have it (the book) come out in the spring of 2017, so they would need to have it in by the end of [2016].”<sup>38</sup> The reasoning behind this timeline was due to books being published by Aaron Chapman. Chapman’s book *The Last Gang in Town* was released in November 2016, and his subsequent title, the second edition of his book *Liquor Lust and the Law*, was slated for a fall 2017 release. With Lazarus’s book released in the spring 2017 season, Arsenal would be able to optimize the revenue made on all three titles, because no two books would be in direct competition for readership in the same season.

On January 30, 2017, Lazarus delivered her completed manuscript for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, which she had labelled “Draft 2”. Safyan notes that this manuscript was “fairly polished but still needed a couple substantive suggestions and some copyediting.”<sup>39</sup> I will discuss the editorial work performed by Safyan in a later section of this report.

*Blood, Sweat, and Fear* contains a great many visual components—photographs, newspaper clippings, maps, and sketches—and the delivery of these items was a substantial process. Provided primarily by members of John Vance’s family, with others sourced by Lazarus at the Vancouver Police Museum, the images required scanning in order for Oliver McPartlin, Arsenal’s Production Manager, to be able to lay out in

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<sup>36</sup> Susan Safyan, e-mail message to author, November 15, 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>39</sup> Susan Safyan, e-mail message to author, November 15, 2017.

InDesign. This process was undertaken by Lazarus, as she possessed a lot of experience and insight as an author, and involved meticulous planning and deliberation, which is detailed by Safyan below:

She sent in a very organized chapter by chapter list of suggested images with credits...[and] she did all the scanning and then delivered the images just a short while after the text was submitted, in Google Drive, for Oliver to download. During copyediting, she submitted captions, which I edited and formatted to the Arsenal Pulp Press caption style.<sup>40</sup>

Prior to uploading the scanned images to Google Drive, Lazarus had surveyed prospective visual content for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* and wrote to Safyan in February 2017 with of a rough line-up of art available for the book. This letter demonstrates the extreme care Lazarus exercised when planning which visuals to include in her book, and her desire to present a varied, wide-ranging aesthetic:

I've tried to pick out the best original stuff, and make it a cross section of family photos, police photos of the crime scenes, photos of Vance at work, photos of the bombs and threatening letters, newspaper clippings, pages from Vance's own diary, letters sent to him on official letterhead, and some current photos of buildings that still exist.<sup>41</sup>

At this early stage of image preparation, Lazarus had compiled roughly eighty items, and had additional options in mind if alternative images were required. With such an expansive inventory of images available to them, Lazarus and Arsenal Pulp Press were able to coordinate an immersive, rich, and diverse aesthetic experience for readers, providing them the opportunity to observe the historical buildings, artefacts, letters, news stories, personal entries, and Vance's workplace, among other people, objects, and settings. With Lazarus's intimate knowledge of Vance's casework, his scientific contributions, and the early history of the Vancouver Police Department, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* successfully reproduced these images in an enriching tangible fashion akin to the experience one has when exploring a museum exhibition.

Aaron Chapman also played a key role in coordinating photographs for his book *Liquor, Lust, and the Law*. In the summer of 2017, he hand-delivered a box of photographs to the Arsenal Pulp Press office with a sticky note attached to the back of

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<sup>40</sup> Susan Safyan, e-mail message to author, November 15, 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

each detailing the photo's contents. These photographs were primarily sourced from the Filippone family (the founding family of Vancouver's Penthouse Night Club).

### 3.3. Research

Eve Lazarus's research was primarily divided between the archives housed within the Vancouver Police Museum and her correspondence with surviving members of John Vance's family, converging as a result of a case with which Vance was involved.

Lazarus's first example of Vance being brought in to do early forensic work was in 1914, when "he was asked to come to a home in the West End where there was a missing person's case, and there was a stain on the carpet."<sup>42</sup> At this time, Vance was working as the City Analyst, testing the water supply and food to ensure it was safe for public consumption. In this case, the police wanted to know if the stain was blood. Lazarus's research showed that, after helping to solve this 1914 case, "Vance [became] a really familiar face at crime scenes, and he began testifying in court. So he [was] still the City Analyst, but more and more he [was] working police investigations."<sup>43</sup>

Vance also figured in Lazarus's book *Cold Case Vancouver*, in which he "turned up at a crime scene in 1944, the murder of a twenty-four year old war worker from North Vancouver, and [Vance] was brought in to do the forensics."<sup>44</sup> When she first learned of this investigative component of the case, Lazarus recounts the amazement she felt and the findings her research further yielded:

I thought, 'how fascinating that we had forensics back in the '40s.' So I went to the Police Museum and I found out that we actually had them decades before that, and [Vance] was the guy. He'd actually founded the building where the Police Museum is now in 1932, and in that year he was made an honorary inspector and given full police powers, which was unprecedented back then.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Eve Lazarus, interview with Sheryl MacKay, *CBC North by Northwest*, August 27, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

With an introduction to Vance's work and forensic investigation's early history in Vancouver under her belt, Lazarus desired to continue exploring Vance's casework and the inner workings of the Vancouver Police Department during that period. It was this curiosity, combined with her drive to uncover additional knowledge of Vance's groundbreaking scientific techniques, which led Lazarus to Vance's family:

After my first trip to the Police Museum, I was able to track down his daughter who's still alive, she's ninety-eight years old. And through her daughter (Vance's granddaughter), she told me this story...of helping her grandfather Vance pack up his house, and she remembers packing up all these boxes of documents and crime scene photos and notebooks...<sup>46</sup>

Elated, Lazarus inquired if Vance's granddaughter could check with the rest of her family regarding the contents described above for the purpose of assisting with the research she had been conducting about Vance. Upon searching for any potentially remaining boxes, Lazarus recounts how "several boxes turned up in a grandson's house's basement at Gabriola Island"<sup>47</sup>—a Gulf Island in the Strait of Georgia a few hours from Vancouver.

With these boxes unearthed, a connection was forged between Lazarus and the Vance family through a specific case she had become acquainted with in the past. This case, involving Jennie Conroy who was murdered in 1944 and whose case was "the first scene where [Lazarus] had first heard about Vance," once again came to light when Lazarus and Vance's granddaughter examined the contents found in the boxes—"forensic samples, hair ...gravel from the crime scene, photos from the crime scene, newspaper clippings, [and] documents..."<sup>48</sup> Lazarus wrote about Conroy's murder case in her book *Cold Case Vancouver*, bringing her research of Vance full circle with the above discovery.

Now connected with the Vance family and with access to a multitude of new primary source material, Lazarus continued her research efforts at the Vancouver Police Museum, which she would draw on when writing *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*. The Vancouver Police Museum is best known for its exhibitions, such as those on Vancouver gangs and the city's most notorious criminal cases, as well as its educational

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

programming on kidnapping investigations, break and enters, and the law enforcement challenges officers face in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighbourhood (to name a few). The museum also hosts monthly "Movies in the Morgue" events, which are open to the public. Lesser known is the museum's history as the site of the Vancouver Police Department's coroner services and forensic analyst laboratory—the same laboratory where Vance worked during the early twentieth century. With Vance's laboratory equipment preserved and much of his case documentation on location, the Vancouver Police Museum proved to be an invaluable source of material for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, enabling Lazarus to physically acquaint herself with Vance's life and work in the very environment in which he performed his forensic investigations.

Because Vance's investigative know-how and methodology were so innovative, his techniques and laboratory set-up could not be fully understood without conducting primary research at the Vancouver Police Museum. As Lazarus explains, "you've got to remember, this is half a century before we'd even thought about DNA, this [Vance's science] was so leading edge."<sup>49</sup> The forensic analysis laboratory found inside the Vancouver Police Museum served as the primary research source when delving into Vance's working life—how he set up his workspace, the equipment he utilized, the neighbourhood in which his work was located, and the documentation involved in his case work—none of which would have been possible for Lazarus without the Vancouver Police Museum's meticulous efforts to preserve it and liaise with her during her research process.

### **3.4. Editorial**

After Eve Lazarus submitted her proposal for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* verbally in 2016, a timeline was established which saw Lazarus submitting her manuscript in January the following year. Lazarus's experience as an author and her professional delivery of her manuscript saw the editorial process take shape in a relatively easy fashion, with Safyan's efforts primarily centred on constructing the strongest possible

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<sup>49</sup> Eve Lazarus, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear: the story of Inspector Vance, Vancouver's first forensic investigator*, video, 1:41, May 9, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgrVaRIAJQ4>.

balance between the narration of Inspector John Vance's life and scientific contributions, and the specific cases chronicled in the book.

In her correspondence with Lazarus, Safyan encouraged the further development of Vance in the later chapters, suggesting that Lazarus should consider “bringing him into the limelight a bit more and putting the crimes and criminals themselves more into the background.”<sup>50</sup> Safyan's reasoning behind this suggestion was rooted in her desire to have Vance's story arc be consistently propelled forward so as to avoid breakages in his narrative.

One challenge in striking this balance lay in Lazarus's initial framework; she did not see her book as a biography of Vance, but rather, as “an excuse to tell some great true crime stories using Vance as the string that tied them together.”<sup>51</sup> A second challenge centred on the information Lazarus possessed at that point concerning Vance's involvement in the cases in these later chapters: a substantial amount of information exists about Vance in the 1930s, but by the 1940s—the period which these chapters cover—he fades out of sight. A significant means through which this editorial issue was resolved was Lazarus's usage of two expert readers. The first of these readers, Michael Kluckner, is a well-known Vancouver historian, author, and artist, and the second expert reader, Douglas M. Lucas, holds the title of DSc (Hon) and is a retired director of The Centre of Forensic Sciences. Drawing on their feedback, Lazarus re-worked the later chapters of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* so that Vance was more “out in front as the moral compass that guides the book.”<sup>52</sup> She also followed upon Safyan's suggestions to add more content surrounding the development of forensics and probe further into Vance's legacy.

Showcasing Vance's legacy also proved challenging, because as Lazarus recounted to Safyan, “no one alive remembers him. He was just passed over by history. Doug Lucas, who knows everything about forensics, only knew him as a footnote, when he interviewed Vance's predecessor, who is long dead.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Susan Safyan, e-mail message to author, November 15, 2017.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

The challenges Lazarus experienced to bring Inspector Vance more front and centre showcase the merits of using expert readers during the editorial process. If an author's manuscript focuses on subject matter in the distant past, the knowledge possessed by expert readers such as Douglas M. Lucas and Michael Kluckner can be leveraged to fill any editorial gaps present in the author's research. This ability is especially beneficial when the editor of the manuscript is not him or herself intimately versed in the subject matter in question, enabling an authoritative outsider perspective to be added to the editorial efforts made during the developmental editing stage.

## Chapter 4.

# Book Launch: The Event, Attendance, Marketing, and the Media's Response

### 4.1. The Event: Its Physical Space, the Tour, and Author Q&A

The book launch event for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* took place on June 8, 2017 at the Vancouver Police Museum, with free admission. As stated above, the museum consists not only of John Vance's preserved forensic analysis laboratory and the City of Vancouver's original coroner's services, but also houses a comprehensive archives containing original case documentation, maps, photographs, and sketches, among other primary source material. It is independently run by the Vancouver Historical Society, with its foundations rooted in the "celebration of the Vancouver Police Department's centennial anniversary in 1986."<sup>54</sup>

Visitors to the museum are invited to "walk through [the] museum halls and learn about some of Vancouver's most exciting crime cases and unsolved murder mysteries," with the promise of finding "authentic photos, archives or artefacts straight from the source."<sup>55</sup> Additionally, guests have access to the city's former morgue and autopsy room. This seemingly infinite inventory of original images and physical objects proved greatly enticing and offered an exciting opportunity for Eve Lazarus and Arsenal Pulp Press to bring the content of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* into its physical space.

The book launch commenced with a tour of the original City Analyst Laboratory where Vance conducted his work—ordinarily closed to the public—awarding attendees the exclusive opportunity to witness first-hand his old office and the equipment he utilized in his work space when performing his investigative techniques. This portion of the book launch was divided into ten groups of eight people, each touring the City Analyst Laboratory at regular intervals. Attendees signed up for these tour spots prior to

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<sup>54</sup> Vancouver Police Museum, "About the Vancouver Police Museum," *Vancouver Police Museum*, accessed November 26, 2017, <https://vancouverpolicemuseum.ca/about-us/>.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

the event, with the Vancouver Police Museum handling the registration via the page created for the event on their website.

After the tour of the laboratory, attendees reconvened to listen to Lazarus speak about *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* and ask her questions, have their book signed, and mingle. Beer and wine was available for purchase, with Jesse Donaldson, a local history writer and Lazarus's son, playing the role of bartender. After the author Q&A period was wrapped up, the Vancouver Police Museum opened up the remaining museum exhibits for guests to explore on their own, as well as the morgue and the autopsy suite.

The book launch for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* was unconventional in two ways, both of which offer ideas for other independent publishers and authors when considering venue options for their own launches. The first unconventional element was the guided tour portion of the launch. Most book launches consist of readings by the author, Q&A sessions, and book signings, but the launch of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* also offered attendees an immersive and exploratory experience, showcasing a creative approach that can be adapted. Such experiences resulted in many unusual moments during Lazarus's launch, including drinking wine in the morgue, observing original pieces of forensic equipment dating back to the early twentieth century, and having the opportunity to meet surviving members of Vance's family who were also in attendance.

The second way that the event was unconventional is the choice of venue itself. By holding her book launch at the Vancouver Police Museum, Lazarus was able to leverage the expertise of staff members, the museum's special rooms and exhibits, and Vance's preserved workspace as a way of making the contents of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* come to life for attendees—ultimately transporting them to the time period in which Vance lived and worked. As Kristin Hardie, the curator at the Vancouver Police Museum, describes in the book's trailer, “the 1930s were a really difficult time for the Vancouver Police Department. It was the Depression, [and] there were mass public disturbances.”<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the pool of scientific knowledge was much smaller than it is today, and analytical forensic techniques were still in their infancy. “Our police department was the only police department in Canada that had a forensic science service, and Vance was

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<sup>56</sup> Eve Lazarus, *Blood, Sweat, and Fear: the story of Inspector Vance, Vancouver's first forensic investigator*, video, 1:41, May 9, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgrVaRIAJQ4>.

basically it,"<sup>57</sup> Lazarus explains, further demonstrating the role that the Vancouver Police Museum played in making the setting of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* tangible for attendees.

Being the only police department in Canada at that time to possess a forensic service, one would have to specifically go to the Vancouver Police Museum to witness in-person the workspace and equipment used in early forensics, as no other place (in Vancouver or elsewhere in the country) could offer this unique glimpse.

## 4.2. Attendance of the Book Launch

The book launch for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* drew 200 attendees, with a large number comprised of members of Vance's family.

This count was exceptional for Eve Lazarus, signifying not only the immense interest her book stirred up among regular guests of the Vancouver Police Museum and the successful marketing efforts undertaken prior (which I will elaborate on in the following section), but also the incredibly special event created for the Vance family to reunite and share in the memory of their grandfather, uncle, father, etc. Now multiple generations since Vance's retirement and death, the family has since widely dispersed across North America, which did not stop some family members travelling from as far away as Florida for the event. Having members of the Vance family present not only brought *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* full circle (connecting with his family played an invaluable role in Lazarus's research and image selection), but also successfully drove sales of the book, with Vance's family buying seventy-five copies that night.

In terms of the venue's size, the launch for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* was between the average and high range for total number of guests, with an unofficial count of upwards of 75 people in attendance. By comparison, Arsenal Pulp Press's largest launch event was for the first edition for *Liquor, Lust, and the Lqw* at the Penthouse Nightclub, which saw over 200 people in attendance and 130 books sold. Aaron Chapman's other launches for *Live at the Commodore* and *The Last Gang in Town* (detailed in Chapter 5 of this report) were also of significant size, with 100 attendees for

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

each. With these numbers taken into account, Chapman's and Lazarus's launches all exceed Arsenal Pulp Press's average count of 30-50 people per book launch.<sup>58</sup>

The *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* book launch also brought out attendees from younger age groups, particularly females in their twenties.<sup>59</sup> Many of these younger readers exhibited excitement and awe upon meeting Lazarus, and explained to her how they are huge fans of true crime and how elated they were to meet her. Their exhilaration proves that there is a sincere and legitimate interest for books chronicling unconventional histories, including true crime stories, among the female millennial demographic.<sup>60</sup> Lazarus's experience mirrors research findings presented in the 2010 journal article "Captured by True Crime: Why Are Women Drawn to Tales of Rape, Murder, and Serial Killers?" from *Social Psychological and Personality Science*; female readers are significantly bigger consumers of true crime than male readers, and data collected from Amazon showcases that "70 percent of the site's true crime book reviews [are] by women."

### 4.3. Marketing

Eve Lazarus largely drove the marketing decisions for her book; because Lazarus is so highly connected locally, with such close ties with the Vancouver Police Museum, many doors presented themselves through her, and Eve handled a lot of this coordination herself.

Marketing efforts for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* consisted of online promotion via the Arsenal Pulp Press and Vancouver Police Museum websites, social media postings, as well as email invitations for the book launch. Additionally, Arsenal sent advance review copies of the book both in print and in digital format to reviewers, newspapers, media outlets, and other targeted recipients, including independent bookstores and librarians. The Vancouver Police Museum created a poster for the event that was displayed prominently inside the museum for a month prior to the launch.

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<sup>58</sup> Cynara Geissler, e-mail message to author, January 17, 2018.

<sup>59</sup> Eve Lazarus in discussion with the author, September 2017.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid,

### **4.3.1. Website Promotion**

Promotional efforts for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* were undertaken by Arsenal Pulp Press and the Vancouver Police Museum on their websites. In the case of Arsenal Pulp Press, these efforts consisted of pre-launch promotion of Eve Lazarus's appearance on Global Morning News on May 22, 2017 along with details of her book launch event.

The Vancouver Police Museum promoted Lazarus's launch event on their website, with the page dedicated to her event also serving as the channel through which attendees signed up for spots on the guided tour of Vance's laboratory. All ten sections of the tour were full prior to the date of the book launch, which were capped to eight people per tour slot.

### **4.3.2. Social Media**

In a similar vein as website promotion, both Arsenal Pulp Press and the Vancouver Police Museum undertook marketing efforts for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* on their respective social media platforms.

The content shared/re-shared on Arsenal's Facebook and Twitter feeds were, for the most part, overlapping, comprising information about the book launch event, reviews, media coverage, additional events with Eve Lazarus, as well as Lazarus posing with a copy of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*.

The following table contains a timeline of the posts made on Arsenal's Facebook and Twitter feeds pre-publication and post-publication:

**Table 1: Timeline of the Facebook and Twitter activity performed by Arsenal Pulp Press for promoting *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*.**

	Facebook	Twitter
<b>Pre-publication</b> Note: The photo of Lazarus was also shared on Arsenal's Instagram account	April 28, 2017: Photograph of Eve Lazarus posing with copy of <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> with announcement of book launch event	April 28, 2017: Photograph of Eve Lazarus posing with copy of <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> with announcement of book launch event
<b>Post-publication</b>	May 16, 2017: Share of Vancouver Police Museum event page for launch event	May 16, 2017: Share of Vancouver Police Museum event page for launch event
	May 23, 2017: Link to page of Eve Lazarus's appearance on Global Vancouver	May 23, 2017: Link to page of Eve Lazarus's appearance on Global Vancouver
	June 7, 2017: Shared Vancouver Police Museum's reminder of launch event	June 7, 2017: Shared Vancouver Police Museum's reminder of launch event
	June 8, 2017: Link to review of <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> and <i>The Georgia Straight</i> and reminder of launch event	June 8, 2017: Link to review of <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> and <i>The Georgia Straight</i> and reminder of launch event
		June 24, 2017: Re-shared Aaron Chapman's tweet of <i>Times Colonist's</i> review of <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> and <i>The Last Gang in Town</i>
	June 25, 2017: Link to <i>Times Colonist's</i> review of <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> and <i>The Last Gang in Town</i>	
		July 10, 2017: Re-shared Eve Lazarus's tweet of <i>Vancouver is Awesome's</i> link to BC Bestsellers
	August 9, 2017: Post about Eve Lazarus's book signing in Surrey	August 9, 2017: Post about Eve Lazarus's book signing in Surrey
		August 18, 2017: Re-shared Eve Lazarus's tweet about her event in Langley
		August 27, 2017: Re-shared CBC's North by Northwest tweet about <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i>
	August 29, 2017: Link to <i>BC Living</i> article "Great Summer Reads by BC Authors" listing <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i>	August 29, 2017: Link to <i>BC Living</i> article "Great Summer Reads by BC Authors" listing <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i>

	Facebook	Twitter
	August 30, 2017: Link to Eve Lazarus's appearance on CBC North by Northwest	
		September 6, 2017: Re-shared Eve Lazarus's post about talk on Word Vancouver, with link to <i>Blood, Sweat, and Fear</i> book trailer

In addition to the above postings, the Vancouver Police Museum undertook promotional activities for the book launch on their social media feeds (over 2,886 likes on Facebook, and 4,445 followers on Twitter, compared to Arsenal's 2,772 Facebook likes and 10.2K Twitter followers). On both the day of the event and the day prior, they shared reminders to their followers, as well as an announcement for the event on May 24, 2017 with a link to the book trailer to build excitement and inform followers of the book's content. The Vancouver Police Museum also undertook additional Facebook-specific actions to promote Lazarus's event and acquaint their followers with John Vance's work. These included posting bite-sized factoids about Vance and the history of the City Analyst Laboratory and coroner's services, uploading photographs of original artefacts used by Vance and asking followers to guess their purpose, and changing their page's cover photo to the cover of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* on the day of the book launch.

By adopting this approach to promoting the launch event of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, the Vancouver Police Museum was able to offer their more than 2,780 followers with an opportunity to digitally engage with the book's subject matter and the experience they would be awarded with when attending the event; by seeing photos of artefacts on social media, followers had a glimpse of the kind of physical items they could see at the launch, and the cover photo began instilling familiarity of Eve's book among followers (i.e., if they saw the book in-person, they could more easily remember/recognize it).

These posts performed well, garnering shares by their followers that would in turn led to increased awareness of the book launch when these shares appeared on other individuals' feeds.

### 4.3.3. Email Invitations

An email invitation was created for the book launch of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*, which was delivered to 292 recipients. The mailing list for this invitation consisted of Vancouver media and Arsenal Pulp Press's Vancouver event list, which includes members of the general public, librarians, booksellers, and friends of the press.<sup>61</sup>

The invitation contained a copy of the event poster used by the Vancouver Police Museum, the event's details (date, time, location), a brief description of both the event's proceedings and John Vance, three black-and-white photographs found in the book to entice recipients to attend, and a biography of Eve Lazarus along with her author photograph. Details regarding the invitation's social/digital performance are as follows:

- The invitation contained a link to the event's Facebook page, whereby recipients of the invitation could RSVP.
- The invitation was sent June 1, 2017 at 4:15pm.
- The invitation garnered a 34% open rate (96 opens) based on a 97% delivery rate (eight email addresses bounced).<sup>62</sup>

The Vancouver Police Museum also sent an email invitation to their own list of media contacts and subscribers, which strongly accounted for the guided tours filling up so quickly prior to the event.<sup>63</sup>

### 4.3.4. Advance Review Copies

Advance review copies of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* were sent to a carefully curated list of reviewers, publications, and media outlets by Cynara Geissler, the Marketing Director at Arsenal Pulp Press. In total, fifty copies were delivered via mail, with additional advance review copies made available digitally. These fifty mailed copies were galleys that Geissler sent to a curated list of recipients, and does not include additional galleys mailed by other Arsenal staff while she was out of the office for

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<sup>61</sup> Cynara Geissler, e-mail message to author, November 24, 2017.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

business. When finished copies of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* were printed, Geissler mailed upwards of thirty copies upon request to freelancers as part of ongoing promotion.<sup>64</sup>

Key recipients of advance review copies included Vancouver print (*The Georgia Straight, Times Colonist, Metro Vancouver, North Shore News*) online (*Spacing Vancouver, BC Living*), and broadcast media outlets (*Global Vancouver: Global News Morning, CBC North by Northwest, News1130*), including those that specifically cover crime fiction (such as *Vice*) and write about history (such as *Canada's History*).<sup>65</sup> These review copies played an instrumental role in securing attention for Eve Lazarus's book in the media, aiding efforts to capture the interest of local true crime and history enthusiasts who would in turn purchase a copy of the book and attend the launch event.

#### **4.3.5. Book Trailer**

The book trailer for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* was adapted from a short documentary about Inspector John Vance titled *Secret Vancouver: Canada's Sherlock Holmes* in which Eve Lazarus appeared. The documentary is part of Telus's STORYHIVE series, which has "has funded productions, supported filmmakers with mentorship and support from the National Screen Institute and brought hundreds of films to life online and around the world."<sup>66</sup> It was aired and made available online in January of 2017, with Vance's story capturing the interest of the public and creating excitement prior to Lazarus's launch later that June.

Spotlight Productions, the company who professionally shot and edited the documentary, granted Lazarus permission to use an excerpt for the book trailer for free, with Arsenal spending no money toward its acquisition. Because the trailer was shared locally by places such as the Vancouver Police Museum, it helped to promote the visibility of *Secret Vancouver: Canada's Sherlock Holmes* at the same time, and in this

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> STORYHIVE, "Opening doors for creators since 2013," *STORYHIVE*, accessed November 26, 2017, <https://www.storyhive.com/index/about>.

way, served as a co-promotional opportunity for both Lazarus and the creators of the documentary.<sup>67</sup>

#### **4.4. Media Reception to *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* and Eve Lazarus's Book Launch Event**

The media reception to *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* and the book launch at the Vancouver Police Museum proved extremely successful, with Eve Lazarus garnering positive reviews for her book and being awarded multiple appearances on top-tier local media. This reception was important because it enabled local history enthusiasts and lovers of true crime who were previously unaware of Eve and her work to get excited about Vance's story and, in turn, want to purchase the book.

Below are the following publications that reviewed *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*:

- *The Georgia Straight* (reviewed by George Fetherling, published on June 7, 2017)
- *Spacing Vancouver* (reviewed by Kevin Plummer, published on June 6, 2017)
- *Publishers Weekly* (reviewed September 25, 2017)
- *Times Colonist* (reviewed by Dave Obee, published on June 18, 2017)
- *Literary Review of Canada* (reviewed by Naben Ruthnum, July/August 2017 issue)
- *BC Living* (reviewed by Milana Bucan, published on August 16, 2017 in her article "11 Great Summer Reads by B.C. Authors")
- *The Ormsby Review* (reviewed by Bonnie Reilly Schmidt, published on November 8, 2017)

The following are media appearances made by Lazarus, as well as feature stories written about her and John Vance's work as a forensic investigator:

- Global Vancouver: Global News Morning (appeared on May 23, 2017)
- CBC North by Northwest with Sheryl MacKay (aired August 27, 2017)
- Metro Vancouver (feature written by Jen St. Denis, published on June 4, 2017)

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<sup>67</sup> Cynara Geissler, e-mail message to author, January 17, 2018.

- North Shore News (feature written by Ben Brightson, published on June 2, 2017)
- The Georgia Straight (feature written by Holly McKenzie-Sutter, published on June 8, 2017)
- News1130 (interviewed by John Ackermann, June 11, 2017)

*Blood, Sweat, and Fear* was also featured in the *Vancouver Sun*'s BC Bestseller list during the weeks of July 1, 2017 and July 29, 2017.

Lazarus's appearances on *CBC North by Northwest*, *Global News Morning*, and *News1130* were important, not only because they served as a powerful marketing tool for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*—her segment on *Global News Morning* featured a snippet from the book trailer and promoted her book launch—but also because they provided Lazarus with the opportunity to enhance public awareness of her author profile and her expertise of Vancouver's true crime history. When speaking on *Global News Morning*, Lazarus recounted scandalous details of Vance and the Vancouver Police Department during the 1930s, including the numerous murder attempts on his life, the corruption that ran rampant among the police force during the period, and Vance's underground relationship with the janitor who had access to offices of police force members and who acted as an informant of sorts.

Her appearance on *CBC North by Northwest* allowed Lazarus to strongly showcase her knowledge of Vancouver's historic neighbourhood of Japantown, to chronicle for listeners the evolution of Vance's career from City Analyst to Forensic Investigator in relation to other police forces across North America, and to elaborate on the methods adopted by those trying to kill him—sending a bomb inside a package to his workplace, planting a bomb underneath his car at home, and throwing acid in his face. Additionally, *CBC North by Northwest* host Sheryl MacKay shared the *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* book trailer on the show's Twitter feed during the broadcast, helping to extend awareness of Lazarus's book to their over 2,740 followers. By doing so, two simultaneous marketing activities were taking place, allowing followers of the *CBC Northwest by Northwest* Twitter handle who were not tuned into the show to learn about Lazarus's book while scrolling through their Twitter feeds.

Because Lazarus possesses a significant network of professional connects—with the Vancouver Police Museum, the Vancouver Historical Society, and various other history and heritage-based organizations in and around Vancouver—she was invited to do many talks locally, such as the Vancouver Lookout at Harbour Centre, which resulted in word of *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* being further circulated to their members and sales of her book being boosted.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Cynara Geissler, e-mail message to author, November 24, 2017.

## Chapter 5.

### Further Examples of Unconventional Book Launch Events

In addition to Eve Lazarus's event for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear* at the Vancouver Police Museum, Arsenal Pulp Press has executed other book launches at unconventional venues in the past. These examples demonstrate the wide-ranging possibilities that are created by leveraging local spaces to help an author evoke a multi-dimensional, physical experience of their book's setting.

In November of 2016, Aaron Chapman launched his book *The Last Gang in Town* at the Biltmore Cabaret. His book chronicles the former members of the Clark Park Gang, a late 1960s/early 1970s East Side street gang in Vancouver, and unearths notorious encounters they experienced with police. The Biltmore Cabaret was a primary meeting place for Clark Park members, providing Chapman with a unique opportunity to bring attendees of the event into the very space where Clark Park Gang members drank beer, exchanged stories of their run-ins with law enforcement, and planned future disturbances. Attendees were awarded the further intimate and memorable occasion of being in the same room as former members of the gang (Brad Bennett, Rick Stewart, Gary Blackburn, Mack Ryan, Danny "Mouse" Williamson, and Wayne Angelucci) who presented Chapman (who donned a Mack Jacket for the event, à la 1970s East Side street gang style) with a framed photograph of the group posing together.<sup>69</sup> Drinking beer while listening to stories of former gang members' "glory days" created an experience for attendees which paralleled those the members undertook in the 1970s, bridging the past and the present.

The end result of this launch for *The Last in Town* mirrors the exclusivity factor of the launch for *Blood, Sweat, and Fear*; if one wanted an opportunity to see Clark Park Gang members in the place where they originally hung out, one would have to specifically attend the book launch.

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<sup>69</sup> John Ackermann, "The Last Gang In Town' book launch 2016 11 02," video, 26:56, November 4, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek02QUovH6Q>.

Another event held at a nontraditional venue was the launch for Aaron Chapman's book *Liquor, Lust, and the Law*, which was hosted at Vancouver's Penthouse Night Club in November of 2012. The event successfully blended the history of the nightclub (which was founded by the Filippone family in the 1940s) and the proud hospitality of its current owner Danny Filippone with the entertainment stylings of bygone eras, bringing guests back in time for a truly special evening. Adding to the unique intimacy of the launch was the make-up of the guestlist: the event was invitation only, with only a "who's who" of the city's entertainment scene in attendance. This exclusivity further brought guests back to earlier eras, in which "regular big names like Frank Sinatra, Frankie Laine and Louis Armstrong hung out," making one feel a sense of glamorous prestige. A highlight from the book launch involved Filippone's wife recreating the look of a young Hollywood starlet, "[dressing] from head to toe in authentic pink Vegas showgirl style sequins and feathers."<sup>70</sup> This kind of classic, glitz-filled ambience at Chapman's book launch was made possible because of the choice of venue, enabling attendees to experience an authentic and passionate celebration of The Penthouse Night Club and the city's early underground entertainment history.

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<sup>70</sup> Catherine "Cat" Barr. "Vancouver's Penthouse Nightclub Book Launch of *Liquor, Lust and The Law*," *The Province*, published November 25, 2012, accessed November 26, 2017, <http://theprovince.com/entertainment/vancouver-penthouse-nightclub-book-launch-of-liquor-lust-and-the-law>.

## Chapter 6.

### Conclusion

A relatively young city, Vancouver's history remains a subject not often discussed by locals or the media, with influential and game-changing figures like Inspector John Vance far removed from conversation when the city's past is discussed. Despite earning the reputation of "the Sherlock Holmes of Canada" for his casework, pioneering unprecedented forensic methodologies, and surviving multiple attempts to end his life, Vance and other ground-breaking Vancouverites are little known by members of the city's population today. In her research, Eve Lazarus discovered articles written about Vance in *The Province* newspaper and the *Ottawa Journal*, yet his investigative triumphs and contributions to forensic science have virtually faded from Vancouver's collective memory.

Arsenal Pulp Press's publishing program effectively helps to unearth these figures, enabling residents of British Columbia to connect with this lesser-known history revealed by individuals like Lazarus, who are deeply passionate about preserving and reproducing unconventional narratives about Vancouver. The company's local history titles—*Blood, Sweat and Fear*, *Cold Case Vancouver*, *The Last Gang in Town*, and *Liquor, Lust, and the Law*—play a pivotal role in ensuring the city's past is able to exist in a tangible form, thus making the stories contained between their pages accessible to the broader community.

At the same time, a second community informally dubbed the "Belshaw Gang"—comprised of local history enthusiasts, writers, and those with roots in Vancouver's entertainment industry—work in a collaborative effort to research, raise awareness of, and promote alternative perspectives of the city's past, spotlighting unconventional and unusual police cases, former residents of Vancouver's heritage homes, and timelines of the city's famous performance venues. With multiple members of the Belshaw Gang publishing their work through Arsenal, an even greater community of Vancouver history enthusiasts is able to be fostered; Arsenal provides a physical product to readers interested in exploring Vancouver's seemingly forgotten history, and its authors leverage their expertise and their local network connections to market their books while sharing

their knowledge of key figures of Vancouver's early history—such as John Vance—with the broader population.

As Lazarus's blog's name *Every place has a story* denotes, Vancouver very much possesses an array of stories, with notable individuals, sites, and events woven into the fabric of its formative years. The success of her books, and those by Aaron Chapman, demonstrate the yearning felt by residents of British Columbia to live this history in book form, and the excitement they experience when interacting with Lazarus in her book's true physical setting.

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