On August 6, 2002, police met with Maggie de Vries and gave her the news that a sample of her adopted sister Sarah’s DNA (from a tooth) was found by police on the Port Coquitlam property of Robert Pickton, the accused serial killer of Vancouver prostitutes. After hope was replaced by grim certainty, de Vries kept searching for answers as to how and why her sister had disappeared, leading to her heart-rending memoir, Missing Sarah (Penguin).

It has received the first George Ryga Award.

This award was presented at a gala reunion concert of UHF (Shari Ulrich, Bill Henderson and Roy Forbes) in the Vernon Performing Arts Centre on July 24, hosted by CBC’s Paul Grant.

The shortlist also included Burning Vision (Talonbooks) by Marie Clements; Field Day (New Star Books) by Matt Hern and The Oriental Question (UBC Press) by Patricia E. Roy.
Simon Gunanoot, a prosperous Gitksan trapline merchant, was charged with the cold-blooded murder of two men near Hazelton in 1906. With family members in tow, he fled into the wilderness and eluded capture for thirteen years.

Several expeditions pursued the fugitives, but Gunanoot's superior wilderness skills along the Skeena, Nass and Stikine Rivers soon made him a Kiksiax folk hero. The Gitksan helped him elude capture and provided food. Gunanoot sometimes followed his own posse, but he never harmed them.

He surrendered to Mounted Police in Hazelton on June 24, 1919 after Van-ouver lawyer Stuart Henderson took an interest in his plight. With Henderson at his side in a Vancouver courtroom, Gunanoot was acquitted in 1920.

Henderson formed an unusual business relationship with Gunanoot, traipsing around the Kispiox as a prospector, hoping to strike it rich with Gunanoot's guidance. Henderson died in Victoria in 1945 at age 81.

Born around 1874 in Gitlaanx, Simon Gunanoot died of heart failure in October of 1933 while tending his trapline near Stewart. He was buried in the wilderness.

David Ricardo Williams' sobering investigation into Gunanoot's romantic reputation as a wrongly accused murderer, to our knowledge, offers the most comprehensive portrait of the Gitksan trapper and merchant. He concludes that Simon Peter Gunanoot killed another horse with an axe in 1906, and possibly killed MacIntosh as the result of a drunken altercation, or some insult or slight connected with it. "Simon would have considered the cuts inflicted by MacIntosh to his face almost a mortal insult," Williams claims. "In any event, Simon's hostility combined with too much liquor led to a fatal outcome. He may have killed Leclair as the result of his taunts, but more likely he shot him in a drunken frenzy."

Gunanoot's shooting spree on the day of the alleged murders is chillingly recalled from eyewitness accounts.

The folk hero shot three horses, killed another horse with an axe and threatened to kill his own children.

According to Williams, Gunanoot possibly killed MacIntosh as the result of MacIntosh's supposed or real trifling with his wife, or as the result of their drunken altercation, or some insult or slight connected with it. "Simon would have considered the cuts inflicted by MacIntosh to his face almost a mortal insult," Williams claims. "In any event, Simon's hostility combined with too much liquor led to a fatal outcome. He may have killed Leclair as the result of his taunts, but more likely he shot him in a drunken frenzy."

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Black & White & Red All Over

At King Cole (with towel) broke the colour barrier in Vancouver when he stayed at the Hotel Georgia in 1958.

Ageless deejay Red Robinson (with Little Richard at right) broke the sound colour bar on air when he purchased black 45s, from beneath the counter, and spun them at CJOR.

With significant contributions from impresario Hugh Pickett, concert photographer Dee Lippingwell and others, Red Robinson and journalist Greg Potter have gathered a trove of never-seen photos, and recycled some of the city's best show-biz anecdotes, for Backstage Vancouver: A Century of Entertainment Legends (Harbour, $39.95).

"Jack Cullen passed away and a group of my colleagues worked to save his collection of audio and photographic materials," says Robinson, who still plays Oldies music on CISL.

"The same for Monty McFarlane... I have saved all my interviews and photographs. It is my dream to start a B.C. Entertainment Museum."

Clark Gable was so nice and he always came by himself, no girlfriends. He just came to fish for steelhead and pike in the Coquitlam River.

—Clara Jacobs, hotelier

Clark Gable lees off in Vancouver.
Born in Vancouver in 1939, Wayson Choy always believed he was the son of a cook on a Canadian Pacific ship. When he attended Strathcona Elementary School, he wanted to grow up and be a cowboy. Safe within the ‘bubble’ of his marginality, he accompanied his mother to her evenings of mahjong and watched Chinese opera. Later he became the first Chinese Canadian to enroll in a creative writing course (taught by Earle Birney). At UBC he began writing a short story that would turn into his first novel more than 30 years later.

As an inter-generational chronicle of the Chens, an immigrant family struggling during the Depression, *The Jade Peony* (D&M) won the City of Vancouver Book Award and the Trillium Award in the mid 1990s. [It has been re-issued in a revised edition.]

After a radio interview about the book, Wayson Choy received an unexpected phone call from a woman who had been his babysitter. At age 56, he learned he had been adopted. This revelation led him to write *Paper Shadows* (Penguin) a memoir set during the 1940s.

Now Wayson Choy has returned to the saga of the Chen family with *All That Matters* (Doubleday), a prequel told through the eyes of eldest son, Kiam-Kim, who arrives by ship at Gold Mountain with his father and grandmother, Poh-Poh, in 1926.

An hour-long documentary about Wayson Choy’s recent trip to China, *Searching for Confucius*, will premiere on VisionTV, March 29, 2005. He was prompted to examine his Chinese roots more deeply when he fell ill while completing *All That Matters* (Doubleday $35.95).

With 50,000 copies in print, his first novel *The Jade Peony* (D&M $19.95) has been re-issued.
Canadian history. Berton won three Governor General's
decades Berton wrote about one book per year, mainly about
increased the viability of Canadian publishing. For three
organized religion in
punishment, Berton was a liberal in the 1950s who supported
My Country
ran until 1973. Since then he appeared as host and writer on
Toronto Star
panelist on
leaving in 1962 to commence
public affairs flagship program,
Maclean's
1951, at the age of 31 he was named managing editor of
Vancouver and joined
centre in Vernon. He returned to
some time at the military training
College in Kingston, also spending
served in the army (1942-1945),
editor on any Canadian daily. He
Berton was the youngest city
became city editor at age 21.

expanding student newspaper days on
The Ubyssey (1939-1941). Instead of
concentrating on his school work, Berton doubled as a student
stringer for the News-Herald, a
Vancouver daily. He went to work
full-time for the News-Herald and
became city editor at age 21. Berton was the youngest city
editor on any Canadian daily. He
served in the army (1942-1945),

rising from private to captain/instructor at the Royal Military
College in Kingston, also spending
some time at the military training
centre in Vernon. He returned to
Vancouver and joined The
Vancouver Sun in 1946. There he
came a crony of reporter Jack
Webster. Berton and his wife
would partially raise another
Vancouver-based broadcaster, Vicki Gabereau, whose father
worked for the press in Vancouver as a photographer. In 1946, Berton’s series of articles about a
so-called ‘Headless Valley’ in the South Nahanni River region
captured the public’s imagination and prompted a job offer from
Maclean’s. Berton moved to Toronto in 1947, and by
1951, at the age of 31 he was named managing editor of
Maclean’s. In 1957 he became a key member of the CBC’s
public affairs flagship program, Close-Up, and a permanent
panelist on Front-Page Challenge for 39 years. He joined The
Toron Star as associate editor and columnist in 1958,

leaving in 1962 to commence The Pierre Berton Show, which
ran until 1973. Since then he appeared as host and writer on
My Country, The Great Debate, Heritage Theatre and The
Secret of My Success. An outspoken critic of capital
punishment, Berton was a liberal in the 1950s who supported
birth control and abortion, and criticized conventionalized,
organized religion in The Comfortable Pew. He also greatly
increased the viability of Canadian publishing. For three
decades Berton wrote about one book per year, mainly about
Canadian history. Berton won three Governor General’s

Awards for: The Mysterious North (1956), Klondike (1958),
and The Last Spike (1972) which told the story of the
background and construction of Canada’s first
transcontinental railway. Berton also wrote extensively and
significantly about Canada’s military history and the Arctic. He
was honoured with numerous honorary degrees and he
served as the Chancellor of Yukon College. He made a

By the time he retired he had published 34 books since the
1950s, 16 of them fictional. The most popular was
Prisoners of the North (2004) about the lives of Klondieke Joe
Boyle, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Lady Jane Franklin, John Hornby
and Robert Service.

He died on November 30, 2004.
Encore for Morris

Having already garnered five Dora Mavor Moore Awards in 2003, including Outstanding New Play and Outstanding Direction of a Play, Morris Panych’s Girl in the Goldfish Bowl (Talonbooks $15.95) was accorded the Governor General’s Award for drama in November. It has been described as a poignant comedy about childhood, innocence and fish.

Panych, an actor who studied creative writing at UBC, emerged as the most creative and prolific playwright in B.C. in the 1980s and 1990s. As a director and playwright, he has kept pushing the proverbial envelope, directing more than 30 productions, and as an actor he has made numerous appearances for television and films. Panych’s many other original productions, usually with stage design by his partner Ken McDonald, have included Last Call, Contagious, Cheap Sentiment, Real Talking People Show, 2 Be Wut U R, The Case of Living, Life Science, 7 Stories and Vigil. Panych’s latest absurdist play The Disheswashers premiered at the Arts Club in Vancouver in February.

Marcus Youssef and Camyar Chai, two of the playwrights/actors behind the acclaimed theatre production The Adventures of Ali & Ali and the aXes of Evil, brought their characters to life on CBC Newsworld in December as part of a series exploring key topics in Canada’s cross-border relations with the U.S. Their characters Dr. Mohandes Panir AliZiaGhandiNehruKhomeiniJinnah (Camyar Chai) and interviewer Ali Ababwa (Marcus Youssef) were drawn from political satire soon to be published as The Adventures of Ali & Ali and the aXes of Evil (Talonbooks $16.95).

Marie Clements has received the 2004 Canada-Japan Literary Award for Burning Vision (Talonbooks $16.95), her drama about Déné miners who were told they were transporting a substance to cure cancer while working at Great Bear Lake in the 1940s. Instead they were helping to extract uranium ore used to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Born in 1962, Marie Clements founded Urban Pink, a Vancouver-based First Nations production company for Aboriginal works of theatre, music, film and video. Her surrealistic play The Unnatural and Accidental Women (Talonbooks $12.95) is another politicized reconstruction of the past, this time pertaining to a 30-year-old murder case involving female victims of violence in Vancouver’s Skid Row. Despite their common associations with a low-lifer named Gilbert Paul Jordan, a coroner listed their deaths as “unnatural and accidental.”

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Save-on-Foods
We get the history of the region ("T.E. Lawrence was marketed as the embodiment of the new benign brand of British imperialism") mixed with literary flourishes that are reminiscent of the late Hunter S. Thompson. No matter what your political stripe, it is hard not to like any book that describes the weasel-brained CNN anchor Aaron Brown as the thinking man’s Forrest Gump. “The term ‘empire’ is avoided like the plague by all concerned with implementing Pax Americana,” Roberts writes. “They hide behind jargon and academic-speak or terms like ‘liberty’ and ‘freedom’ to such a point of obfuscation that one is forced to wonder what it is about world domination that embarrasses them so acutely. Answer: the cost, probably. Just the amount of the increase in the defence budget from 1993 to 2003 is far more than the total amount spent annually on defence by China, the next-biggest spender.”

As the arrival of Peak Oil encourages American elites to adopt increasingly draconian measures to maintain their dominance—from Guantánamo Bay to US-backed paramilitary violence to CIA-sponsored warlords and coups—Michael C. Ruppert has outlined the synchronicity of guns, drugs, oil, natural gas and money in Crossing the Rubicon (New Society $29.95). Ruppert reveals the extent to which American military spending and foreign lending are used to subsidize the dominance of corporate elites.

Paul William Roberts interviewed Saddam Hussein back in the days when the dictator still considered himself to be a U.S. ally. Since then Roberts has closely monitored the invasion of Iraq and his frustrations have grown into outrage. “Never in history was a war so well documented yet so poorly covered by the media,” he claims. Having been in the home of an Iraqi friend during a deadly U.S. air strike, Roberts unleashes a counter-attack of uninhibited, unembedded rhetoric in A War Against Truth: An Intimate Account of the Invasion of Iraq (Raincoast $39.95).

As a result of his own work, Roberts has become a prominent critic of the Bush administration and its policies in the Middle East. He is particularly critical of the war in Iraq, which he sees as driven by economic interests rather than ideology.

The writing and publishing program at Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre offers courses in creative writing, publishing, and editing. The program is designed for aspiring writers, publishers, and editors, with a focus on providing practical skills and knowledge in the field.

The program offers courses such as:
- Advanced Grammar: Unraveling the Knots
- Creative Writing: Slicing the Bread
- Editing and Publishing: Rewriting the Rules
- Writing and Publishing: The Art of the Deal
- The Writer’s Studio: At SFU
- The Writer’s Studio: Breaking the Mold
- The Writer’s Studio: Exploring the Unknown

The program is open to anyone interested in creative writing, publishing, and editing, and there are no prerequisites required. The program is delivered over a 10-week period, with classes held both in-person and online.

For more information, contact the program office or visit their website.
**Animal balm**

**Bob Collins** writes from a cluttered desk on the family farm in the Alberni Valley. He knows people. He knows animals. He knows people are animals. He loves them anyway.

After two collections of stories, Collins’ first novel called *Summer of Wonder: The Misguided Romance of Hap Fitzpatrick* (Stone Pillow Press, $18.95) won’t give *Alice Munro* a run for her next Gillet, but its unabashedly wishful charm will penetrate the veneer of hardened sophisticates with all the subtlety of Vicks VapoRub. Hap loves Marilyn Baird and for one luminous summer we watch the eight-year-old boy “wallowing blissfully in the glorious confusion of childhood.”

Nanaimo emergency ward doc **Kevin Patterson** has won the first City of Victoria Butler Book Prize for *Country of Cold* (Vintage, 2003), a collection that traces the lives of classmates raised, like Patterson, in small-town Manitoba. Many of the stories arise from Patterson’s medical training.

Having recently relocated to Edmonton, **Shani Mootoo** has followed her award-winning *Ceres Blooms at Night* with a novel set in contemporary Vancouver and a fictional Caribbean island during WW II. In *He Drowns She In the Sea* (M&S $24.99), Harry St. George recalls his Caribbean boyhood and his unrequited love for Rose, the daughter of a wealthy man, and then Rose shows up in Vancouver where Harry lives.

**TV rights for Susan Juby’s** gritty fiction series that includes *Alice, I Think* (HarperCollins) and *Miss Smithers* (HarperCollins) has been optioned by Slanted Wheel Productions in association with CTV Vancouver, the starting point for the runaway comedy hit *Corner Gas*. Veteran screenwriter **Susi Nielsen-Fernlund** is writing the adaptation, having just published her own second children’s book, *Armour Moves In* (Orca, 2004). Juby’s latest young adult release in her series is *Alice MacLeod, Realist at Last* (HarperTrophy $15.99).

Born in Vancouver, editor **Linda L. Richards** and photographer **David Middleton** started their on-line literary publication *January Magazine* in 1997, having been partners since 1993. Her first suspense novel *Mad Money* (MIRA Books $7.99) is the first in a series of novels featuring stockbroker Madeline Carter. While the first two books in the series take place mainly in Los Angeles, the third book, *Calculated Loss*, will be set in Vancouver.

For setting his novels in his hometown neighbourhoods of Wheeling Island, South Wheeling and Woodsdale, Vancouver novelist and UBC creative writing teacher **Keith Maillard** was inducted into the Wheeling, West Virginia, Hall of Fame on November 28, 2004. In January, Maillard also went to Seattle and received the Creative Arts Prize from the Polish American Historical Association for his recent novel, *The Clarinet Polka*.

**Warren Dean Fulton** is acquiring film rights to three stories in **Michael Hetherington’s** *The Late Night Caller* (Thistledown) including “Standing in a Pool of Water” which was featured via a front cover photograph in *BC Bookworld*, summer 2004. Hetherington will write the screenplay.

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**Basic jazz & Little Burgundy blues**

**Mairuth Hodge Sarsfield**’s jazz-flavoured novel about life in Montreal’s Afro district of Little Burgundy in the 1940s, *No Crystal Stair* (Women’s Press $19.95), has been selected as one of the five titles for CBC’s national Canada Reads competition.

*No Crystal Stair* has drawn comparisons with Gabrielle Roy’s *The Tin Flute* which evokes the French-Canadian milieu of Montreal’s St-Henri district during the same period.

In *No Crystal Stair*, Marion Willow, a proud young widow, must work at two jobs to ensure that her three girls develop lifestyles not hindered by class and colour.

The bitter-sweet experience of Marion’s elegant American expatriate neighbour, Torrie Delacourt, could help the girls survive Canada’s subtle racism, but the women’s rivalry for the love of Edmund Thompson, a handsome railway porter, puts them against another.

Mairuth Hodge Sarsfield worked as a journalist and researcher before she became an on-camera host for CBC, CTV and TVOntario. Her novel recalls the heyday of Rockhead’s Paradise, a nightclub that attracted the uptown crowd to hear jazz greats such as Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller and a young Oscar Peterson.

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**Civil Writes**

The ascendency of Alice Walker from sharecropper’s daughter to literary star is traced by **Evelyn C. White** in *Alice Walker: A Life* (W.W. Norton / Penguin $44).

*Ms Magazine* founder **Gloria Steinem** plus *Color Purple* co-stars **Quincy Jones** and **Oprah Winfrey** make appearances, but this is not a tell-all biography for the paperback newsstands. *White* defends Walker against all her critics in her celebration of the struggle of the first black woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for fiction, for *The Color Purple*, made into a movie by **Stephen Spielberg**. Sexual politics, racial friction and misplaced violence have percolated through Alice Walker’s work and life, ever since her fiction and poetry emerged from the civil rights movement of the 1960s, and White does an admirable job tracing the foundations of Walker’s fiction. For a female black to hold firm to her resolve to place art above the dictates of political correctness or family has taken courage. The egoism of the artist, who must pursue her calling at all costs, is a theme that will doubtless be examined more deeply in future biographies.

Although Evelyn White is an unmitigated supporter of her subject, her work will serve as the basis for Alice Walker scholarship for many years to come.

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**SaltSpring Islander** **Evelyn C. White** has written a biography of Alice Walker (above).

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23 BOOKWORLD SPRING 2005
The snow plastered itself over my face, until only my eyes were uncovered. The more I tried to rub my face clean, the more the snow stuck to it. My human seemed to find this hilarious. She would obscure the front of her head with a device called a camera and transfix me with its great black piercing eye. There would be a click, and her face would appear again, grinning unsympathetically.

—LONESOME

Written from the point of view of Lonesome, the first dog to accompany her into the wilderness. Chris Czajkowski’s Lonesome: Memoirs of a Wilderness Dog (Heritage $18.95) is an attempt to observe the world through her long-suffering canine companion who she named after Lonesome Lake.

“I got my human when she was already fully grown, which was a relief,” Lonesome narrates, with occasional cynicism and disdain.

“I’m not a dog to seek adventure and would have been far happier in an ordinary, suburban garden with kids to play with and nice, safe walks in the park.”

Mostly humorous, Memoir of a Wilderness Dog ends on a touching note as Lonesome, too old to withstand the rigours of her spartan life with her human Chris, is billeted with a kind friend at Schoolhouse Creek who must ultimately take the infirm animal into the bushes, carrying with him his rifle.

The memoir entirely from a dog’s point of view spent several months atop the BC Bestseller List.

Before she settled in the remote reaches of the Coast Range, 480 kilometres north of Vancouver, at Lonesome Lake in Tweedsmuir Park, east of Bella Coola, English-born Chris Czajkowski lived and worked in Uganda, New Zealand, the South Pacific and South America, spending a decade backpacking around the world.


Alexandra Morton has become famous for researching chimps in Africa, Alexandra Morton of Simon Sound has become known as ‘the whale lady’ for getting to know whales on an individual basis.

Now living with an underwater whale detection system in her home, Morton has raised her two children on a boathouse at Echo Bay since the early 1980s. As the director of Raincoast Research, she is the subject of a documentary film, Alexandra’s Echo, released in 2003, and National Geographic featured her work in a television special that aired in 1991.

Her latest book Beyond the Whales: The Photographs and Passions of Alexandra Morton (Heritage $29.95), with a foreword by Robert Bateman, celebrates and examines life in the Broughton Archipelago. It concludes with a surprising message in which Morton foresees tourism as an antidote to fish farms.

“I invite everyone to come here,” Morton says, “especially in kayaks and sailboats. Fall in love and breathe life into this area. Come to the Broughton as never before; help to strengthen tourism and tourism operators, put the Broughton on the map as the place to see.

“Maybe you will carry life into these waters as the salmon should be doing.”


As a homesteader in self-built cabins at Lonesome Lake, she soon became a regular contributor to CBC’s Morningside program with Peter Gzowski in the 1980s.

Lonesome Lake was first made famous by Ralph Edwards whose conservation work with trumpeter swans was the subject for several books.

Czajkowski’s wilderness experiences have been well-documented in Cabin at Singing River (Camden House, 1991), Diary of a Wilderness Dweller (Orca, 1996) and Nuk Tesl: Life of a Wilderness Dweller (Orca, 1999), plus her first title To Stalk the Oomingmak: An Artist Arctic Journal (Aquarelle Press, 1989).

An accomplished botanist, artist and photographer, she is also the author of Snowshoes and Spotted Dick: Letters from a Wilderness Dweller (Harbour, 2003) in which she describes building her fourth cabin with hand tools, two chainsaws, an Alaskan Mill and some helpful friends.

In letters to a friend in Europe, Czajkowski details how she breaks trails by snowshoe with her two pack dogs, encounters grizzly bears, builds a custom stone oven and learns how to use it to bake bread—and to make spotted dick, a traditional English steamed pudding.

Czajkowski operates the Nuk Tesl Alpine Experience, an ecotourism wilderness adventure business that she manages via her website and her Nimpo Lake mailing address.

She lives about a day-and-a-half’s walk (at human speed) from the nearest road and neighbour, at an altitude of 5,000 feet, about 40 miles away from her first cabin that was destroyed by fire in July of 2004 during the Lonesome Lake Fire.

Her food and building supplies must be flown in and Czajkowski must hike more than 30 kilometres to the nearest road to lead guiding trips, attend craft fairs and occasionally undertake promotions for her books.

She married filmmaker Robin Morton in 1980, but her husband tragically drowned while filming whales in 1986, one day before National Geographic was scheduled to record their work.

Morton took a job as a seasick deckhand on a fishboat run by oldtimer Billy Proctor, a lifelong resident of the Broughton Archipelago with whom she later co-wrote Heart of the Raincoast: A Life Story (Harbour & Schubart, 1999).

Morton’s account of one year in the life of a young whale, Swit: A Whale’s Story (Orca, 1991) received the Sheila Egoff Prize for Children’s Literature in 1992. It was followed by a second educational book about whales, In the Company of Whales (Orca, 1991) and Listening to Whales, What the Orcas Have Taught Us (Ballantine Books/Random House, 2002).

Having also studied fish farming in the 1990s, Morton became a co-author of A Stain Upon the Sea (Harbour, 2004), a critical book about salmon farming in British Columbia.

Beyond the Whales celebrates the fragile splendour of the Broughton Archipelago, from kelp beds and ochilichen, to plumose anemones and caulk boots, to boom chains and float houses. And it radiates hope.

“Some time ago I was given the opportunity to meet Jane Goodall,” she writes. “I was spellbound by my childhood idol. She radiated grace, and the wisdom of the Earth. When a lull in the conversation opened, I stepped forward and asked, ‘Jane, do you think there is hope?’ Her answer came back crystal clear, ‘Yes.’”


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“Maybe you will carry life into these waters as the salmon should be doing.”

Keeping up with the Zeta-Joneses

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Somehow it helps to know that: Life expectancy in Zimbabwe has dropped to 31 years [United Nations, 2003], there are more African American males in prison than enrolled in colleges or universities [New York Times, 2002] and in Swaziland, where life expectancy has fallen by 25 years with the spread of HIV, teenage girls in the countryside sell sex for $5, the same price for hiring two oxen for a day of ploughing [Guardian Weekly, 2003].

Meanwhile US Vice-President Dick Cheney conducted $24 million in business with Saddam Hussein when Cheney was CEO of oil field supply for Halliburton [Chicago Tribune, 2002] and prior to their $1.5 million wedding Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones signed a pre-nuptial agreement she receives $2.8 million for every year of their marriage [USA Today, 2002].

David Lester: barrage of statistics in The Gruesome Acts of Capitalism (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing $10.95) is balanced by original cartoons and a foreword by Roderick Haig-Brown. And no, he’s not on the web.

SPousal USE:

Catherine Zeta-Jones is paid on a yearly basis to act as Michael Douglas’ wife.

Having watched Campbell River expand from a village of 3,000 to a city of 28,000, Van Gorman Egan writes with an underlying nostalgia that flashes like a trout beneath the surface. An Islander since 1954, Van Gorman Egan writes so carefully, so lovingly, so devoutly, about one-man fishing on the North Island, decades before the Island Highway was built, that it’s easy to understand why local Lucus Rapits offered to illustrate his next book, whatever it was. With encouragement from Mark Hume, the historian of the Tyee Club has turned his hand to revising four exquisite stories for Rivers of Return, in a trilogy that includes Rivers on My Mind and Rivers of Salt. Mainly sold to collectors of angling books, Van Gorman Egan’s limited editions are the least bit cumbersome in terms of technical language. “He chose a Skyskomish Sunrise on a No. 2 hook, cast it at the edge of the rough water and saw the current take it swiftly away, giving it no chance to go deep.” Deluxe hardbacks are $75; regular hardbacks are $60; softbacks are $30. Contact the author at 2340 Campbell River Road, Campbell River, B.C. V9W 4N7. His reverence is a match for the better-known works of Roderick Haig-Brown. And no, he’s not on the web. —Martin Twigg

Exporting a dream

After Diana Lynn Thompson had a dream of finding strangely shaped pieces of shell on a beach, she gathered thousands of shell pieces, cut and engraved them, and sent them in 140 envelopes to friends, artists and strangers with a request to place them on favourite beaches around the world. The shells travelled around the globe, but mostly settled on beaches in British Columbia,” she writes in Salspring Island: Equilibrium Studio $25). The installation artist’s exhibit also called Salspring: Acts of intervention and intervention opened at the Campbell River and District Public Art Gallery in 2004 and it opens at the Nanaimo Art Gallery in September. Former publisher Caitlyn Kellet of Salspring has supplied the foreword. 0-9734986-0-9

J. Gordon Mumford worked in the hinterlands of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda developing and installing a VHF radio repeater system from 1949 to 1958, often making his own paths and roads. The experiences are recorded in his third book, White Man’s Drum: Tales of the East African Bundu (New Westminster: Zebra Publishing $24.95), 0-9732927-0-3

God Rewired: A Contemporary Understanding of History’s Antidote to Stress by Birgit Schneider (Professional Image Design) 0-8732927-1-2

Traveling the Sun by Sandra Harper (Heathcote) 0-9736882-1-1

The Lost Kittens of Toledo by Anne Swannell (Hawthorne) 0-9734986-0-9

Mountain Troops: A Prospecting Expedition From the Diary of a 16-Year-Old Girl, 1935 by Daisy Collison (Self-published) 0-9733818-0-9

Before the Road Came by Florida Ann Tean (Trafford) 0-9733818-0-9

The Judas Kiss by Peter Rickards (Trafford) 1-41202468-4

One Less Victim by Dan Propp (Self-published) 0-9731934-1-1

The Judee Kiss by Peter Rickards (Trafford) 1-41202468-4

3 Stories by Dan Propp

J. Gordon Mumford

Louise Susy Framst of the Tahitian First Nations lives in Cecil Lake where she has released her fifth children’s book.

Feathers (Louise Framst Books $14.95), about the importance of feathers in Aboriginal cultures, with art by Wendy Framst.

The seer Nostradamus complained to Henry II about ever-changing calendars, but he is still revered by some for the accuracy of some of his predictions. Wence Horak claims to have decoded hidden messages intended solely for this generation in his book What He Really Said and Why (Kokemwa: Earth Way Society $14.95), 0-9736036-2-4

Having survived solitary imprisonment in Russia, Ammy Sconces bought historic Glamorgan Farm in North Saanich and now she recalls her restoration efforts since 2000 in Home: Tales of a Heritage Farm (Sidney: Hodgegger Press $19.95). 0-9735955-1-1

Louise Susy Framst

Louise Susy Framst
I t’s November of 1870, two years after a great fire destroyed most of the town, and Barkerville has rebuilt itself. Although many miners have left for the winter, the place is thriving with shops, restaurants and a busy Christmas social season of sleigh rides, dancing and caroling with the Glee Club.

Ted MacIntosh, now seventeen and working in his father’s carpentry shop, has ignored the prevailing racist attitudes towards the Chinese, referred to as “Celestials,” and befriended a young Chinese boy. Then a Chinese man named Ah Mow is stabbed to death on the steps of his Barkerville restaurant.

A violent white man named Henri Tremblay is charged with the murder. It looks like a simple case until witnesses are threatened and beaten to make them change their stories between the inquest and the trial.

In Ann Walsh’s third volume in her Barkerville Mystery series, By the Skin of His Teeth (Beach Holme $9.95), idealistic and headstrong Ted MacIntosh, who first appeared in Moses, Me and Murder and then again in The Doctor’s Apprentice, knows he will endanger himself and his Chinese friends if he insists on telling the truth.

When the all-white jury finds the accused not guilty, the judge, affronted by the verdict, publicly comments on the defendant’s narrow escape from justice.

Walsh, whose books have all received the Children’s Book Centre Our Choice Award, couldn’t find evidence to support her theory that witnesses must have been threatened and beaten to make them change their stories, but her latest story is otherwise based on actual events.

Getting an MB, eh

The character of Rachel, who popped up in Wow Canada! and Only in Canada!, and her cohort, Nelson writer Vivien Bowers, have joined flag-waving hands again for That’s Very Canadian! (Maple Tree $19.95), presented as “An Exceptionally Interesting Report About All Things Canadian.” We learn that MB, for instance, once stood for Made Beaver, meaning one good-quality, adult beaver pelt and that a Hudson’s Bay blanket, woven with four black bars, was worth 4MB. No mention, though, of HBC Reward Points.

A self-admitted basic “B” student in high school biology, but keen on the field trips, Victoria Miles chronicles the last word in field trips with Wild Science (Raincoast $24.95), celebrating the work of ten world-renowned biologists who study grey wolves, sea otters, manatees and other creatures in their natural environments.

Dedicated to teacher-librarians everywhere, Ms. Bee’s Magical Bookcase (Chestnut $10.95) is the latest picture book from Margriet Ruurs, who, although temporarily re-located in Oregon, still calls rural Armstrong home. Ms. Bee, with sassy striped socks, hair anchored in a haphazard bun and satchels of books, leads a secret weekend life with seven dwarfs, three kittens without mittens and a woman who lives in a shoe. Come Monday, Ms. Bee, who in the hands of illustrator Andrew Gooderham bears a resemblance to a certain Armstrong community librarian, returns to school with an ever-changing repertoire of stories.
Growing up in Creston, Tanya Lloyd Kyi knew someone who punched a hockey player. Years later her second novel, My Time as Caz Hazard (Orca $9.95), follows the troubles of Caz who is suspended for punching out her cheating hockey player boyfriend. Caz’s parents are splitting up and she’s being sent to a new “supportive” school where she’s diagnosed as dyslexic. As a “sped”—special education student—she endures petty Ms. Samuel’s morning classes with Psycho Boy, shoplifting Amanda, non-verbal Rob and Dodie Doorknob. Bored with reviewing “dge” sounds, Caz pens a note, “Time to jump off a ledge.” Dodie’s suicide soon afterwards sends Caz reeling.

Louise Donnelly writes from Vernon.

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CO-BREATHING WITH TREES

Whether you are a tree-lover or a traveler, New explores trees—such as the dragon tree in Tenerife and acacias in Rajasthan—in what can be described as a poetic atlas for arborists. Whether about pioneers or newcomers, Sikhs or Mennonites, tugboats or berry-farms, the diverse location. New frequently returns to his own garden in Kits, finds the world of trees conversing there and departs again. For only by going away, “for only by going away, gambling your life / into the bailing underwood, / can you or I / chilled and welcomer, once / against return.”

The poet titles each poem solely with the latitude and longitude of the trees’ location. New explores trees such as the dragon tree in Tenerife and acacias in Rajasthan—in what can be described as a poetic atlas for arborists. Whether about pioneers or newcomers, Sikhs or Mennonites, tugboats or berry-farms, the diverse location. New frequently returns to his own garden in Kits, finds the world of trees conversing there and departs again. For only by going away, “for only by going away, gambling your life / into the bailing underwood, / can you or I / chilled and welcomer, once / against return.”

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If you were an historian, which picture of beautiful downtown Donald, BC would you choose?

Next in the museum’s catalogue, there’s a very different image of beautiful, downtown Donald—its police station. Rarely, if ever, published before, this second photo must have been taken on the same day as the first, likely by the same photographer, because the same man appears in both photos, but who wants to learn that law ‘n order was always just around the corner in our pioneer towns? As a result the exterior saloon image—showing two women who could have been the saloonkeeper’s wife and sister—has been used three times to influence the public’s imagination of the past.

Roy and Herd Thompson abhor this tendency to choose entertainment over content, to pander. They say historians who opt for aesthetics in their selection of photos are doing “the equivalent of choosing to cite a written document simply because it was written with elegant penmanship on fine vellum!”

Roy and Herd Thompson are opting for higher ground. There are no photos of sports heroes, not even Terry Fox, Bannister or Miracle Miler or Olympic gymnast. They concentrate on what social historians call “high politics,” seemingly taking some office, and they refuse to deploy trickery. In their introduction they quote Beryl Hine who said, “Photographs may not lie, but liars may photograph.”

The truth ain’t pretty, and it mustn’t be gussied up. But, like the turtle that is slow and steady, it can sometimes prevail in the long run.

Northern composer

She knew, and she learned from, Bartók and Schoenberg, yet in the end she went her own Canadian way—that’s the line on Jean Coulthard, a professional composer who made UBC one of her many ‘musical homes’ throughout her seven-decade career.

As a friend of Coulthard for 30 years, UBC-based William Bruneau has co-authored a biographical and musical appreciation, Jean Coulthard: A Life in Music (Ronsdale $22.95), with composer David Gordon Duke, who studied with Coulthard.

Jean Coulthard with her only daughter Jane, 1943.
most British Columbians have long since forgotten about the bombing of the Cheekye-Dunsmuir Hydro sub-station in 1982 and the prosecution of the Squamish Five. But not Alan Antliff.

A UVic art history professor by day and an “anarchivist” by night, Antliff has compiled a diverse anthology for and about a thin stratum of folks who already know about the Squamish Five, Open Road, Oka, Bulldozer, Who’s Emma, Spartacus Books and the Wimmin’s Fire Brigade (and their successful Red Hot Video firebombings).

Described as “the first comprehensive overview of anarchist theory and practice in Canada from 1976 to the present,” Only A Beginning: An Anarchist Anthology (Arsenal Pulp $29.95), provides minimal context for its potpourri of excerpts from counter-cultural movements, gatherings and publications, illustrated by pre-computer art and grainy B&W photos.

A brief article by Alexander Daughtry pays tribute to Spartacus Books, the Hastings Street bookstore that was destroyed by a fire on April 25, 2004. Opened in the spring of 1973 as an offshoot of the SFU bookstore, the non-profit store was named for the slave who led a revolt against the Roman Empire. Without a hierarchical management structure, it persevered as a focal point for Viet Nam War evaders, Indigenous resistance and anti-WTO protests.

The majority of Canadians—the 30 million who don’t know the international anarchist insignia of an A inside a circle was invented by Italian anarchists in the 1960s—will find Antliff’s scrapbook approach problematic, even bewildering, but on the plus side he has been widely inclusive, incorporating streetchner zines such as minus tides, bisexualty, anarcha-feminism, prostitution and animal liberation.

From Jamie Anderson, Author of “Outlaw Pilot, True Adventures of Jimmy “Midnight” Anderson” and “Outlaw Pilot - Vol. II”

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Douglas Curran first met members of the Chewa people of Malawi—the second-to-last country on earth to receive television—while working on a film in Zimbabwe in 1992.

The Chewa he met were migrant workers employed on plantations and in mines. Over several years he gradually became integrated into the Chewa community in Malawi and became the first photographer to document their rituals associated with a belief system known as Nyau. Nyau (meaning mask) is also the term for a semi-secret mask association of men. The Chewa rituals and their stunning masks are part of a complex set of beliefs that Curran was encouraged by the Chewa to record.

“Nyau rituals are part of a complex set of beliefs that Curran was encouraged by the Chewa to record. "The Chewa believe Chauta (God) descended to earth with man, woman and all of the animals," Curran writes. "All lived in harmony until the day man accidently created fire by rubbing two sticks together. With the grasslands and the forest aflame, all the animals (with the exception of the dog, the goat and the pig) ran away in fear and anger. From that time forward, there has not been harmony in the world." Curran’s pictorial record served as the basis for an astonishing exhibit that opened at Presentation House Gallery in North Vancouver in January, curated by Bill Jeffries. An accompanying book-length catalogue was published as Douglas Curran: The Elephant Has Four Hearts: Nyau Masks and Ritual (Presentation House $20).
Forget the double lutz and the triple toe loop. Soccer is the most popular sport for more than 350,000 Canadian girls and women.

Co-written with journalist Bob Mackin, former pro goalie Shel Brodsgaard’s second book, Goals and Dreams: A Celebration of Canadian Women’s Soccer (Nightwood $14.95) highlights the Edmonton Under-19 Women’s World Championships and the Women’s World Cup, in which Canada beat Argentina, Japan and China.

In a fiberglass by himself

Even when there’s no hockey on the tube, it’s inescapable in print. Mike Leonetti recalls it wasn’t until a 1959 game at Madison Square Garden, after Montreal Canadien goalie Jacques Plante was hit smack in the face with a puck, that goalies began to wear masks in the NHL. Also called Jake the Snake, Plante refused to return to the ice against the New York Rangers unless he could wear the fiberglass mask he’d been using in practice. Plante’s immortal place in the histories of both hockey and common sense is recalled in Leonetti’s The Goalie Mask (Raincoast $21.95). This is a kids’ book in which New Westminster illustrator Shayne Letain, whose clients include the Vancouver Canucks, represents the ground-breaking game in the nostalgic tones of black-and-white television.

On his first day of summer hockey school, six-year-old Dan Blackburn clutched the boards and pulled himself around the rink. By the end of the second day, although he could skate, he decided to be goalie so he wouldn’t have to skate so much. A mere twelve years later, during the 2001-2 season, he joined the New York Rangers, becoming one of the youngest goaltenders in the NHL.

The first-ever biography of one of Canada’s most beloved composers offers an intimate picture of her personal life, her close ties to major 20th-century composers, and an analysis of her music.

In language that is both lyrical and postmodern in its challenge to everyday reality, Steven Laird’s first book of poetry expresses the longing to talk to something divine in the universe.

The first translation in a single volume of Rilke’s three mature works, with a critical introduction and an extensive commentary on each of the poems by Graham Good.

A charming novel about an eleven-year-old girl with a wonderful dream who finds herself working in a Toronto sweatshop after fleeing with her grand mother from the Russian purges of the 1920s.

Bill New’s wonderfully zany poems, illustrated in full colour by Vivian Bevis, portray children putting on a dream helmet and travelling to worlds where anything is possible.
Gary Geddes: Ready, set, Gary

of Huishen, a Chinese monk named Huishen reached the west coast of North America about 1,000 years before Columbus.

To trace the probable pathways of Huishen, Gary Geddes took his wanderlust to the Himalayas, to the Taklamakan Desert in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China and Central America (where Huishen is most likely to have landed, according to Chinese arch-

ed for a memoir of misadventures, humour and heartbreak entitled The Kingdom of Ten Thousand Things (HarperCollins $34.95).

Geddes’ travelogue is as much about the strangeness and dangers of his journey and his exploration of how Christian missionaries affected the region in The Last Heathens: Encounters with Ghosts and Ancestors in Melanesia (D&M $24.95).

The memoir has won the $25,000 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction that was presented at the Windsor Arms Hotel in Toronto.
The greatest botanical explorer of the 20th century, Richard Evans Schultes, took a semester’s leave of absence from Harvard in 1941, disappeared into the Amazon region of Colombia and didn’t return for another 12 years.

While living amongst 24 indigenous tribes, he took hundreds of photos while collecting 30,000 botanical specimens en route to becoming the world authority on toxic, medicinal and hallucinogenic plants from South America.

Esteemed for finding 300 species new to science, and 2,000 new medicinal plants, Schultes died in 2001 at age 86, celebrated as a botanist. Ethnographer, adventurer and Schultes-biographer Wade Davis has since culled the stunning photo collection of his hero to produce The Lost Amazon: The Photographic Journey of Richard Evans Schultes (Douglas & McIntyre $45).

Each image has ethnographic and historical context. For Schultes’ photo of a mother and her son tapping a rubber tree, Wade Davis provides a summary of turn-of-the-century cruelty that only bears comparison to the nightmarish white barbarism that occurred in King Leopold’s Congo during the rubber boom in Africa. During the height of the rubber terror, some forty years before Schultes arrived in the Amazon, the atrocities committed against Indians defied imagination. Women were treated particularly cruelly. Rafael Calderon, a twenty-two-year-old bandit who tethered Indians for target practice and once gave a Witoto child fifty lashes for stealing a loaf of bread, lived by the motto, “Kill the fathers first, enjoy the virgins afterward.” When a woman refused to sleep with one of his men, the trader Armando Norman wrapped her in a kerosene-soaked Peruvian flag and lit it on fire. When the station-master at Atenas discovered that a young Indian girl he had raped had venereal disease, he tied her to the ground and flogged her while a burning firebrand was inserted into her vagina.

A priest who had lived in the Putumayo during those dark days told Schultes that the best that could be said of a white man in that era was that he did not kill Indians out of boredom.”

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"I WISH THE ROOTS OF HAPPINESS AND SADNESS WERE FULLY
understood," wrote Lara Gilbert in St. Paul's
psychiatric wing in 1993, "it's frustrating not
knowing why I have no faith in this world
while most other people do.

"My personal belief is that they are de-
lected into ignoring the plain truth: this
planet is in a mess and there is so much
more misery than joy. The only way a per-
son can live day by day contentedly is by
'overlooking' the pain around them."

The year before, on her 20th birthday, Lara Gilbert
wrote, "Daddy who did what he knew was wrong, would
hurt, would frighten and confuse me, did it anyway be-
cause he couldn't control his feelings, impulses, sex, sex,
sex. Dad who kissed me on the lips today as he said Good-
bye and Happy 20th, who then moved his lips down to
my neck and shoulder and left a red blotchy mark there."

Having participated in a therapy program at the Van-
couver Incest and Sexual Abuse Clinic, Lara Gilbert ex-
perimented at being "a damn fine junkie whore" on the
Downtown Eastside while excelling at her studies (Hon-
vours Biochemistry) at UBC.

In 1994, she wrote, "I want to put my hand into the fiery
pink of the sunsets. It's so beautiful. But then, everything's
fine, everything's tolerable, because I have Ativan. My psy-
chiatrist gave me six tablets for the week to help deal with the
cravings for heroin, desipramine, any drug at all."

Lara Gilbert took her life on October 7, 1995. A stu-
dent of pharmacology, she overdosed after several previ-
ous attempts at suicide. Nine years later her mother,
Carole Itter, has published eight years of journal ex-
cerpts as I Might Be Nothing: Journal Writing (Traffic
$26.50). There is an afterword and an introduction by
Itter in which she states, "I did not suspect any abuse, and
had I known, I would have moved mountains to stop it."

Lara Gilbert grew up in Vancouver's Downtown
Eastside. Precociously literate, she was a gifted writer and
academic who endured "dreaded" poetry readings by
her estranged father and her parents' peers.

She developed her own imaginary friends and lan-
guage in a world she called Kawaikee. At 15 she wrote,
"From the outside, my life seems perfect. But the deeper
you go, the scarier and lonelier it gets."

The father of this brilliant but dramatically depres-
sive narrator gradually emerges from the shadows of Lara
Gilbert's memory as a threatening figure, and there are
additional allegations of sexual exploitation by the girl's
paternal grandfather.

Lara Gilbert received psychiatric diagnoses including
unipolar depression, dissociative disorder, post traumatic
stress disorder and possible borderline personality disor-
der. The extent to which Lara Gilbert's confessions are
true or false must be gauged by each individual reader.

As well, the degree to which 3,200 pages of journal
writing has been abridged and edited by Itter and oth-
ers cannot be apparent. Itter has included the contents
of one letter addressed to her in 1992, marked Never
Sent, in which Lara Gilbert was going to alert her mother
to incest. (Within the journal Lara Gilbert also claims a
male nurse at Vancouver General Hospital's Psychiatric
Assessment Unit once sexually assaulted her.)

Just as Anne Frank's diary has been criticized by
some for alleged revision by her father, it's impossible to
retrospectively verify every detail of a deceased person's
journal or letters. However I Might Be Nothing exists as
a chilling piece of posthumous literature, an educational
work more than an accusatory one.

This is a tragic tale to which too many women will be
able to relate. We know the ending. The journey entails
trying to fathom the beginning.

"Fear is more real than the world around us," Lara
Gilbert wrote at age 18. Both naive and sophisticated,
her wrenching journal evokes her confusion and her tor-
menced struggles with Sylvia Plath-like poignancy.
It has the potential to outlast most of the writing done by
her father—and possibly this constitutes a form of revenge.

For mental health professionals, I Might Be Nothing;
Journal Writing will rank with Mark Vonnegut's Eden
Express: A Memoir of Insanity and Jans Lars
Jensen's Nervous System as one of the most illuminat-
ing glimpses into mental anguish from B.C.
It came on as a lesbian long before I came out as a writer.

JOAN RUIE

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