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IVAN E. COYOTE
BLAZING NEW TRAILS
go beyond conservative Alberta boundaries in her first novel.
SEE STORY P. 22
We’ve got the world’s longest, east-west highway

Sudbury has the Big Nickel. Echo Bay has the Big Loonie. Sault Ste. Marie has a huge baseball, seemingly left behind by giants.

Not to be outdone, Wawa has a giant goose; Moose Jaw has Mac the Moose, ten metres high. White River has a goose; Moose Jaw has Mac the Moose, left behind by giants.

Chippewa Falls in Ontario. The highway’s half-way point is Sudbury. The first province to complete its Trans-Canada Highway was Quebec. The federal government had given the province $300 to build the highway, and the rest cost $60 million.

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Mac, the world’s largest moose, greets visitors in Moose Jaw.

Dan Francis (right) celebrates how the Trans-Canada Highway ties our country together in A Road for Canada.

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Dan Francis (right) celebrates how the Trans-Canada Highway ties our country together in A Road for Canada.

North America’s longest north-south road, Highway 97, connects Weed, California and the Yukon border.

The Long and Winding Road (Heritage $18.95) is Jim Couper’s illustrated guide to the “pleasures and treasures” of the two-thousand-mile route that passes lava beds, bison, deserts, orchards, vineyards, forests and a full-scale replica of Stonehenge at Maryhill on the Columbia River gorge.

Founder of Canada’s national cycling magazine Pedal, Couper lives within ten miles of Highway 97 in Kelowna and wrote Discovering the Okanagan in 2004.

Fueled by blackberries

A self-described Geriatric Gypsy, Barb and Dave Rees of Powell River hit the road in an old 27-ft. motor home loaded down with driftwood, books, branded blackberry sausages and sold their possessions as they went.

With advice on free camping and roadside survival tips on locating farmers’ and flea markets, RV Canada on a Dime and Dream ($19.95) recounts how they financed their way across Canada, starting with only $300 in their pockets.

“It wasn’t without many down-to-the-wire moments,” she says, “but more often it was filled with the wonderful generous people that make up our great country.” 0-9736198-8-0. Info at www.abcbookworld.com

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Founder of Canada’s national cycling magazine Pedal, Couper lives within ten miles of Highway 97 in Kelowna and wrote Discovering the Okanagan in 2004.
n front of a fire pit in the Performance House at the old village site of Qay’llnagaay or Sea Lion Town, near Skidegate on Haida Gwaii, direct and indirect contributors to Raven Travelling (D&M $65) gathered to celebrate the launch of the lavish coffee table book that coincides with a national touring exhibit of the same name that celebrates two centuries of Haida art.

The celebration commenced when the Haida version of a wild man of the woods slipped into the room, two women screamed and the creature was ceremonially drummed out of the hall. Then the emcee spoke about which bathrooms were working in the still-to-be-completed, $25 million Haida Heritage Centre. It was a seamless mix of tradition and contemporary reality—like the book itself.

For the unprecedented exhibit, now touring across Canada, gold and silver bracelets, deeply-carved feast dishes, spruce root hats, argillite pipes and silk-screen prints were gathered from museums around the world. And like the exhibit, Raven Travelling strives to place a myriad of works into social and artistic contexts. How these pieces of art play in Haida society, along with the role of the artist today, are Themes that swirl throughout the text.

Giitsxaa, a carver, whose work in silver graces the pages of Raven Travelling, and whose grand pole stands front and centre on the beach at Qay’llnagaay, explained to me how important this type of book is to young artists. "When I started out in high school," he says, "there were five books available and they were all by Marius Barbeau."

Giitsxaa, 61, says he didn’t choose to be an artist, he simply is one, but he envies the young artists of today. "I wonder what it would be like to start out with all of these books and knowledge that people were trying to suppress," he said. When he was growing up in Skidegate, there were carvers but they were less visible. The potlatch ban effectively silenced the political, social and economic system of the Haida and many young people were sent to residential schools.

Artist Jim Hart also talks of the importance of seeing these pieces of the past. His statement, quoted in Raven Travelling, comes from 2002 when several Haida treasures were repatriated to Haida Gwaii.

"Our people, when they carved these pieces, they were survivors from the old sicknesses that were going around... The careers that survived that—how they got together and worked on pieces to help record our history, and for us today to look at, to hang on to, to study, to talk about, because all that knowledge is in there. We look at [a piece], and study it, and talk to each other about it. If we’re lucky, we have relatives that recognize the pieces and also know in history, even more so, and tell us the stories behind it... It’s so important, the strength that comes through that.

The book features more words from the artists themselves including poems by Bill Reid and political leader Guujaaw and interviews with Don Yeomans, Isabel Rorick, Robert Davidson, and Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas. Yahgulanaas was on Haida Gwaii to attend clan business and naming ceremonies. He lives in Vancouver, amid concrete and glass, but when he spoke he was surrounded by cedar. "I see Raven traveling," he said. "I see him flipping out." By that, he means perennials of Raven are expanding everywhere, exporting Haida sensibilities beyond Haida Gwaii.

Yahgulanaas’ art is ink on paper and the rude and funny stories he creates are rendered in a Japanese comic book style, rich with Haida symbols and imagery. "We haven’t lost anything," he says. According to Yahgulanaas, the great masters of Haida art from two centuries ago are still here, as evidenced by Raven Travelling. "And they are still here through the names," he says.

Yahgulanaas notes the Haida, like the raven, are also travelling afar, gaining global recognition. "We are on the $20 bill," he says, referring to the image of Bill Reid’s Black Canoe, the original of which stands outside the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC. "And we have infiltrated the most militarily powerful city in the world. The Raven is about to erupt!"

Newly commissioned pieces in Raven Travelling include an impassioned essay by Haida Gwaii museum curator Nika Collison, the story of the repatriation of Haida ancestors by two key participants and advisors on the show Lucille Bell and Vince Collison, as well as a look at the evolution of Haida art by scholar Peter Macnair.

Elders, a precious resource on Haida Gwaii, provide a new telling of the Haida creation story in the Skidegate dialect using an alphabet they have been developing at a local language program. Raven Travelling is dedicated to the ancestors.

Heather Ramsay writes from Queen Charlotte City.
“It rips, and cuts, it makes a horrible racket. A chainsaw is a frightening thing. I write not to glorify its terrible power but to acknowledge its place in the most sweeping revolution that technology has wrought in the 20th century—the revolution of individual empowerment.”—DAVID LEE

DAVID LEE'S TOP TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT CHAINSAWS

1. Ed Gein, the real-life murderer (“massacrerer?”) upon whom the movie The Texas Chainsaw Massacre was based, as well as the movies Psycho and The Silence of the Lambs, never used a chainsaw as a weapon.

2. The first chain for sawing wood was patented in 1858.

3. The first commercially produced chainsaw was the Sector, invented by A.V. Westfelt in Sweden before the First World War and driven by a flexible shaft attached to an outboard motor.

4. During WW II, Vancouver became known for producing a chainsaw called the “Timberhog.” Powered by a motorcycle engine, it required two strong men to operate and could only be run while sitting level. If it was tilted, it stopped.

5. Marilyn Monroe got her start when she was photographed for a newspaper feature on “Women Doing War-work” while working on a wartime project using McCulloch chainsaw parts.

6. David Conover, the US army photographer who discovered Marilyn Monroe, moved to British Columbia soon after and settled on Wallace Island near Victoria, where he wrote the bestseller, Once Upon an Island. Wallace Island is now a marine park.

7. Vancouver became a world leader in chainsaw manufacturing during WW II and held that position through the 1950s, but no longer produces any saws.

8. IEL (for Industrial Engineering Ltd.) an employee-owned company in Burnaby, was one of the world’s leading chainsaw manufacturers in 1943-1956, producing the world’s first one-man chainsaw and direct-drive chainsaw, among other innovations.

9. In the 1950s there were hundreds of brands worldwide. Now two European companies, Husqvarna and Stihl, have a virtual monopoly. Husqvarna, which means “house mill” in Swedish, started as a water mill in the Middle Ages, though it didn’t make its first chainsaw until 1959.

10. Stihl, the other leading chainsaw manufacturer today, was also one of the first, having marketed its first model in 1926, but it had to start over after its factory was bombed in WWII and did not become prominent again until 1959.

In the 1950s, Vancouver was a leading producer of chainsaws, this poster advertises two models made by Industrial Engineering Limited in Vancouver.
A professor emeritus of Germanic Studies at UBC, Edward Mornin and his wife Lorna Mornin, a former UBC scientist, have co-written a field guide, *Saints: A Visual Guide* (Novalis $24.95), with illustrations from both 'high' and 'low' art. Included among the more than 130 popular Catholic saints are St. Brigid, who changed bathwater into beer, and St. Olaf, the patron of Norway, who vanquished heathendom as a brutal conqueror. 2-89507-739-8

As everyone knows, dog is god spelled backwards. It was only a matter of time and dogliness before Northstone expanded its popular series of titles on spirituality (wine, gardening, mazes and art) to include *The Spirituality of Pets* (Northstone $34.95), by award-winning journalist James Taylor, who holds an honorary Doctor of Divinity from United College (McGill). 1-896836-81-2

EXHAUSTED AND SICK FOR MUCH OF her stay on the coast, Emma Crosby lost two of her children to diphtheria, managed a boarding school for girls and wrote *How the Gospel Came to Fort Simpson* published by the Methodist Church in Toronto. "Emma Crosby was just as convinced as her husband that their brand of religion was superior to Aboriginal spirituality," says historian Jean Barman, "but she was also concerned on the everyday level for the Tsimshian people's well-being and, despite burying four of her eight children at Simpson, worked tirelessly in what she considered to be others' best interests."

Jean Barman's sixth and seventh titles since 2002 are *Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast* (UBC Press $85), co-authored with Jan Hare, and *Leaving Paradise: Indigenous Hawaiians in the Pacific Northwest, 1787-1898* (University of Hawaii Press $45 U.S.), co-authored with Bruce McIntyre Watson. The latter provides an exhaustive directory of individual Hawaiian-born pioneers and labourers on the West Coast from 1787 to 1898, the year the Hawaiian Islands were annexed to the United States. It is based on archival work in British Columbia, Oregon, California, and Hawaii.

Among the more noteworthy immigrants from Hawaii, previously known as the Sandwich Islands, was William Kaulehelehe, the unordained Christian missionary sent by his Hawaiian king in the 1840s to serve as “Chaplain to the Hawaiians in the Columbia.” His “Owyhee Church” was torn down about 15 years later.

Kaulehelehe was an unrealistically pious teacher who was disheartened to discover he was mostly needed to arbitrate disputes among the Kanakas, many of whom preferred to work or drink on the Sabbath. In 1862, Kaulehelehe came to Fort Victoria where he worked as a Hudson’s Bay Company clerk and translator. He was buried in Ross Bay Cemetery in 1874.

"The Hawaiians have repeatedly and daily asked me to see about their trouble of being repeatedly abused by the white people without just cause," he once wrote. 2-89507-779-4

EMMA'S EMANATIONS

As the wife of the intrepid preacher Thomas Crosby, Emma Crosby opened the Crosby Girls’ Home in 1879 in Fort Simpson to ostensibly rescue Aboriginal girls from liquor and prostitution. There is little evidence that her famous husband was much-concerned by her sacrifices—or that he expected him to be.

Emma’s *Saints & Paints* 11 BOOKWORLD WINTER 2006

SAINTS & PAINTS

A professor emeritus of Germanic Studies at UBC, Edward Mornin and his wife Lorna Mornin, a former UBC scientist, have co-written a field guide, *Saints: A Visual Guide* (Novalis $24.95), with illustrations from both ‘high’ and ‘low’ art. Included among the more than 130 popular Catholic saints are St. Brigid, who changed bathwater into beer, and St. Olaf, the patron of Norway, who vanquished heathendom as a brutal conqueror. 2-89507-739-8

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continued on page 12
“Adderson is a superb stylist, and these are classic examples of the storyteller’s art.”
— The Vancouver Sun

“engaging and enjoyable collection of stories”
— Globe and Mail

“one of the best writers to come out of this country”
— Quill & Quire

Nine razor-sharp stories from one of Canada’s most accomplished writers.

Lorraine Milton of Kelowna has worked as a chaplain consultant in the Spiritual Care Department at the Hazelden Foundation, an alcohol and chemical addiction rehabilitation centre in Minnesota. Her book, Step by Step to Grace: A Spiritual Walk Through the Bible and the Twelve Steps (Novalis $16.95), is a guide to overcoming addiction and dysfunctional behaviour by incorporating principles of the Bible and of Alcoholics Anonymous into treatment methods.

With a foreword by The Most Reverend Andrew Hutchison, Primate of Canada, Julie H.

continued from page 11

Ferguson’s Sing a New Song (Dundurn $35) tells the stories of four Canadian bishops who embraced unpopular causes. Michael Ingham, Douglas Hambidge, George Hills, and David Somerville separately fought for the rights of Blacks, Aboriginals, women, gays and lesbians. Ferguson chronicles the impact these ground-breaking bishops have had on Canadian society, while delving into their personal and spiritual lives. Hers is not the first summary of the conflicts between Bishops George Hills and Edward Cridge on Vancouver Island in the 1860s and 1870s, but it will be of special interest to B.C. history buffs.

1-55002-609-7

www.thomas-allen.com
Described in 1952 as “the length of a London bus,” basking sharks have been hunted almost to extinction in B.C. waters because they were long deemed a nuisance to the commercial fishing industry, mainly by getting entangled in nets.

Scott Wallace, a Sustainable Fisheries Analyst for the David Suzuki Foundation, and West Coast mariner Brian Gisborne have written the first history of basking sharks on the West Coast, starting from their possible sighting by a member of Robert Gray’s crew on the Columbia, off Estevan Point, in 1791, in Basking Sharks: The Slaughter of B.C.’s Gentle Giants (New Star $19).

Unlike its razor-toothed relatives, the seldom-studied basking shark has remained an enigma to most marine biologists. Long-time Tofino resident Jim Darling and an assistant managed to identify 27 individuals in Clayoquot Sound in 1992 but the basking sharks have long since disappeared from those waters, as of 1994. Basking sharks were also formerly prevalent in Queen Charlotte Sound and Barkley Sound.

As one of only four species of the world’s large, filter-feeding “elasmobranches,” the million-plus-year-old basking shark maintained its girth by feeding on plankton. Nonetheless the second largest fish in the world has long been irrationally feared and condemned, variously described by B.C. newspapers as “grotesquely huge,” “monster of the deep,” “menace,” “lurid, good-natured slob,” “sleeping giant,” “salmon killing monster,” and “curse of fishermen.”

Wallace and Gisborne have compiled an appendix listing of media reports of basking sharks from 1905 to the present, with an emphasis on British Columbia and Washington State.

As suggested by E.L. Bousfield and P.H. LeBlond in their book Cadborosaurus: Survivor from the Deep, it’s likely that many of the 181 documented sightings of the West Coast “sea monster” known as Caddy, or Cadborosaurus, between 1881 and 1991, were likely glimpses of basking sharks.

The Department of Fisheries used cutting blades on their patrol boats in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly the Comox Post, to greatly reduce the population of basking sharks. The lethal blade from the Comox Post can be seen at the Alberni Valley Museum as one of the public reminders of the placid creatures who have been vilified almost out of existence.
Garry Gottfriedson performed last year at the Shuswap Writers Festival, along with bill bissett (right).
Having appeared in more than 130 movies and television episodes, with roles in X-Files and Smallville, Jerry Wasserman has simultaneously reviewed more than 1,000 plays, mainly for CBC and The Province.

In addition, the New York-raised Wasserman, who came to Canada in 1972, has written and lectured extensively on American blues music and Canadian theatre while teaching English and theatre at UBC.

His latest literary project is the 400th anniversary edition of arguably the first North American play, a masque performed on the Bay of Fundy by members of the colony of Port Royal on November 14, 1606, to celebrate the return of Samuel de Champlain from a voyage to Cape Cod.

Spectacle of Empire: Marc Lescarbot’s Theatre of Neptune in New France (Talonbooks $21.95) includes the original French script, two modern translations and an extensive historical and critical introduction.

Born in Ohio in 1945, Jerry Wasserman is an ardent Canadian nationalist who set out to study engineering, but was soon waylaid by the arts. His education stateside, followed by his immigration north, has provided him with a unique perspective on his own secondary trade as an actor.

“Canadian theatre became professional much later,” he says, “whereas modern American theatre has much deeper historical roots, beginning in the early 20th century with people like Eugene O’Neill. Canadian theatre doesn’t seriously begin until about 1967.”

Hence Wasserman has edited a collection of plays that emanated from Vancouver’s New Play Centre and he is fascinated by the obscure play that was written and produced by New France Lescarbot’s Theatre of Neptune in New France (Talonbooks $21.95) includes the original French script, two modern translations and an extensive historical and critical introduction.

Written and produced by New France and performed on soil that became the colony of Port Royal on November 14, 1606, to celebrate the return of Samuel de Champlain from a voyage to Cape Cod.

Spectacle of Empire: Marc Lescarbot’s Theatre of Neptune in New France (Talonbooks $21.95) includes the original French script, two modern translations and an extensive historical and critical introduction.

First performed 400 years ago, Lescarbot’s paeon to empire “eulogized the work of colonization into spectacle” as a thanksgiving ritual to mark the safe return of Champlain and Sieur de Poutrincourt from a journey in search of a more temperate site for their colony.

“We tend to undervalue the accomplishments of Canadian theatre artists, and here is a play that marks, in many ways, the beginnings of Canadian theatre,” says Wasserman. “That’s if we exclude First Nations ritual performance.”

“This is the first scripted play, written and performed on soil that became Canada. In fact, you could argue it was the first North American play. It certainly provides a point of reference or origin for Canadian theatre.”

Reprinted with a version of Ben Jonson’s The Masque of Blackness (1605), a contemporary English imperial spectacle, Lescarbot’s masque was also used as a tool to rally the troops, to get them through a difficult winter.

“It’s important for us to understand that culture has always been a very important tool by which people measure the success of their lives and help themselves through difficult times,” says Wasserman.

Wasserman’s own involvement with theatre has helped him get through difficult times. When he entered university, he found he could not do physics, thus ending his dream of working in the NASA program. Around this time, he met and became enamoured with a woman involved in theatre. Having never acted before, Wasserman auditioned for, and earned a role in Leave it to Jane, a 1930s musical, and toured around Europe for two months. He later earned his doctoral degree in English.

Given his experience and connections, Wasserman could probably write more about American drama, but he’s happy focusing on theatre north of the border. “There are plenty of people to advocate for American culture, and I don’t think it needs my help,” he says.

“But I don’t think there are enough of us who support Canadian culture, and it’s much more important for me to work on the Canadian side.”

In addition to editing books about Canadian drama and teaching young Canadian acting students, Wasserman supports local theatre on his website, www.vancouverplays.com. He started the site in 2004 when his CBC reviewing gig ended, and he decided to put reviews and other theatre information onto the web.

With Sherrill Grace of UBC’s English department, Wasserman has also co-edited Theatre and AutoBiography: Writing and Performing Lives in Theory and Practice (Talonbooks $29.95). As well, his two-volume anthology Modern Canadian Plays, now in its 4th edition, has become the standard text in its subject area.

“I think part of my job is to raise consciousness that Canada has an interesting history, maybe even a ‘sexy’ history,” he says, “one worth knowing about. If you know history, it helps form your knowledge about contemporary life.”

Wasserman is currently working on a book dealing with how Canadian theatre always struggles with the seductive power of American culture. “It’s almost impossible to avoid comparing yourself to a country right beside you with a population ten times bigger,” he says. “But we are getting on with it. In the last 20 years, there is a lot less worrying about how we measure up than there used to be. I think that’s a good thing.”

All of which probably won’t interest most Canadians as much as the fact that Jerry Wasserman appears with Will Smith in I, Robot.

John Geary is a Vancouver freelance writer.
How Adolf Hungry Wolf Spent 44 years preparing his 4-volume history of the Blackfoot people.

from the Indianology academics?

BCBW: What are some of your best discoveries you’ve made over the years?

AHW: The photos of people I’ve come to know personally. Photos from the early 1900s. Even the late 1800s in a few cases. I’m talking about elders, of course. Almost always they have never seen these photos of themselves. They were usually taken after someone came to a Sun Dance camp, a pow-wow, or whatever. They took some shots, then went back wherever they came from. A handful of these elders are still living. All of them got free books with their photos and stories. Every time I call them they seem to be browsing, reading, finding more stuff they never knew, photos they never saw before, and people they remember.

BCBW: Do you see anybody doing similar work to what you’re doing? The American filmmaker Ken Burns, for instance?

AHW: I’ve never heard of Ken Burns. I don’t see my work in relation to anybody else’s. I still don’t take much part in many book-related activities, except the Frankfurt Book Fair. And this interview. I rarely read books. I never think of myself as a loner, though that’s probably what I am. I lead a couple of the most important medicine bundles for various traditional families within the Blackfoot Confederacy and I do care what those people think.

BCBW: As the proverbial white guy doing Indian stuff, do you get more flak these days from First Nations intellectuals or from the Indianology academics?

AHW: I don’t know and I don’t really care. My daughter Star says there have been enough hatchet jobs done over the years that I could do a book by just responding to them all. But that would be boring and useless. The last one was from some German professor. My eldest son and Star did get me to respond to some of the attacks in an upcoming autobiography, but that’s mostly so my grandkids will get to hear my side of the story. There were some assassination attempts back in the seventies, but I don’t have much dealings with the “Native intellectual.” I don’t know what they think of me. I don’t care much. The one with Star once, over ten years ago, was the woman’s part of the Sun Dance. And what about Adolf Hungry Wolf of Skookumchuck, B.C., with Shadow, a timberwolf.

INTERVIEW

“T never think of myself as a loner, though that’s probably what I am.”

—Adolf Hungry Wolf

“...the keepers of the Thunder Medicine Pipe bundle that Beverly and I cared for 28 years. They live in Cranbrook, near his reserve. Right now she’s busy raising baby daughter Natanka, working for her husband’s tribe and immersed in her cultural duties. Star was the Sun Dance woman once, over ten years ago, and she was recently the ‘holy grandmother’ for Sun Dance for the sixth time. She ran the woman’s part of the lengthy ritual, initiating the ‘holy woman’ for the Sun Dance.”

BCBW: And what about Okan, your eldest son?

AHW: He was just the ‘holy person’ a few weeks back, for the fifth time, for a Sun Dance on the Blood Reserve. It’s the most traditional and conservative of the four Blackfoot divisions. Okan and his ‘holy partner’ have vowed another Sun Dance for next summer, and he vowed to spend the year in-between riding his Spanish mustangs through traditional Blackfoot country, from the Red River to the Yellowstone, camping in his tipi. He normally lives in his great-grandma’s little cabin, without plumbing and electricity, on the Blood Reserve.

As we’re talking, he is crossing the Rockies with five of his horses, three of them packed, from the Blood Reserve to our guiding camp which is next to Waterton National Park. He plans to document his journey with a video camera and he might try to do a book, as well. My other three kids respect our culture. They attend family ceremonies. But so far they are not leaders like those two.

BCBW: You’ve worked all this time without funding, but you must have had some support along the way.

AHW: The book designing was done over a two-year period with Diane Jefferson and her computer. And I have had a fantastic relationship with David Friesen at Friesen Printing in Manitoba. Without him, these books could not exist. I gave him every penny I owned in cash, which was about one-fifth of the total cost. David flew me to Winnipeg, showed me the plant, put me up. He introduced me to everyone there, then said he believed enough in my project to bring it out. He knows my debt-paying from the start. Without him, these books could not exist. He believed enough in my project to bring it out. He knows my debt-paying from the start. Without him, these books could not exist. He knew of me through traditional Blackfoot country, from the Red River to the Yellowstone, camping in his tipi. He normally lives in his great-grandma’s little cabin, without plumbing and electricity, on the Blood Reserve.

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“This highway, may it serve to bring Canadians closer together, may it bring to all Canadians a renewed determination to individually do their part to make this nation greater and greater still, worthy of the destiny that the Fathers of Confederation had expected when through their act of faith they made it possible.”

Prime Minister John Diefenbaker
September 3, 1961, at the official opening of the Trans-Canada Highway

Daniel Francis
A Road for Canada
The Illustrated Story of the Trans-Canada Highway

A Road for Canada - illustrated with a wealth of contemporary and historical images - traces the history of the Trans-Canada Highway, from its origins, to its present day status as a crucial artery linking the Canadian confederation.

The book also recounts the first attempts to cross Canada by car and spins stories of the dreamers who persevered with their vision of a national road. Embark on an epic journey, traversing the longest highway on earth, drive across six time zones through prairie, wilderness and mountains, with a ferry trip at both ends. Retrace historical paths, the famous east-west trails, and bypass the colourful landscape, natural and man-made, of contemporary Canada.

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102 pages
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Waterfront is a magnificently illustrated, authoritative and lively tour of the maritime history of Greater Vancouver, exploring the relationships that has shaped the region. The growth of maritime activity unfolds in its pages, as text and images focus on the history of the waterfront. Prehistoric mariners once made their way here out of the arctic wastes. European explorers came seeking a fabled passage to the Far East. Enterprising lumbermen, heroes and scoundrels, shipping magnates, streetcars, hard-working men and women all came and left their legacy.

Their stories combine in this book to create an absorbing history of the birth of cities, ports, industries and companies.

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102 pages
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Vancouver, BC V6R 2S3
bookworld@telus.net
Letters may be edited for clarity & length.

Cedar safe

Upon reading Sheila Munro’s review (BCBW Autumn) of that new novel that imagines the life of Madame Zee, mistress to the Brother Twelve, I thought your readers might be interested to see the original safe in which the Brother Twelve (The Brother XII) kept some of the money that he and Madame Zee collected from his Aquarian community.

Here is a photo of my son (Jesse Mathewman) standing outside the safe in the basement of the Brother Twelve Main House in Cedar by the Sea, just south of Nanaimo, where we live. The old house was built on sandstone bedrock and is amazingly solid, even today. There have been remarkably few changes to the house since it was built around 1930. We acquired Brother Twelve’s former house in June of 2005.

Doug Mathewman
Cedar by the Sea, B.C.

Ireland revisited

Though I am semi-retired after 40 years with a bookshop, I always enjoy reading B.C. BookWorld. I notice in the advertisement on page 8 for Alan Twigg’s new book Thompson’s Highway (BCBW Autumn) there is a reference to William Ireland. Shouldn’t that read Willard Ireland, your province’s great provincial archivist and librarian from 1946 to 1974? And the brother of the fine actor John Ireland (the first Vancouver-born actor nominated for an Academy Award).

Just thought you would like to know there are book lovers in the east who read your ads.

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Letters may be edited for clarity & length.
Twenty-one non-mothers who are skilled writers—such as Kate Braid, Maria Coffey, Lorna Crozier, Maggie de Vries, Katherine Gordon, Hannah Main-van der Kamp and Rita Moir—have contributed to Nobody's Mother: Life Without Kids (Touchwood $19.95), edited by Lynne Van Luven (above right). It provides a forum for women without children to examine their various choices and circumstances. Roughly one in every ten Canadian women is choosing not to have babies.

Written on Gabriola Island, here is the foreword to Nobody's Mother by Shelagh Rogers:

I have just turned 50 as I write this. There are a lot of things I feel I am grasping at last: being comfortable in my own skin, beginning to feel oddly sexy at a time when Germaine Greer says women become invisible to society. I am excited about what the next act will bring. There’s some mystery to it. But one thing I know for sure: it will not bring children. I bear myself. And finally, I am happy with that. But it has taken a while.

The first flush of baby-love rose up in me like a primordial swell when I was in my late 20s. It seemed to arrive overnight. I felt I was swimming in that lake where women down through the ages were swimming in that lake I was in when I was in the next room. But it didn’t work out with him. And just as that fact was sinking in, I had days on end when I felt fatigued, nauseated, headachy, sick to my stomach, when I had pelvic pain. And then I missed a period. I went back to him and said, “Hey, I’m pregnant,” like some film-noir heroine in a last-ditch attempt to keep her man from slipping away. It didn’t change his mind about us. I felt angry and sad and decided not to continue with the pregnancy.

Prolapsed. That was the word. It described exactly how I felt, as though I had fallen or slipped out of place, like my uterus. And just as I was trying to deal with this, all of a sudden, almost every woman I knew was having a baby. I was happy for them. I had to be. They seemed focused, serene, fulfilled. As their worlds became smaller, their hearts became larger. Even if they were exhausted, they seemed to glow. And they were swimming in that lake I wanted to swim in, where women could just look at each other with a deep, shared understanding that they were all part of a chain of life.

I felt very unhappy for myself. I wanted in, and for a lot of reasons. I was out. No partner, bad physical prognosis, demanding job which I let consume me. Despite my outward mantle of success, I was sick at heart. And I didn’t deal with it very well. Believing I had nothing to offer them beyond my imagining of motherhood, I withdrew from some of my oldest child-bearing friends. I was openly jealous of my sister, a new mom with a different, more profound relationship with our mom. So I got to be a failure on a number of fronts: as a woman, sister and friend. And for years, I wallowed in it. But gradually, the wave of baby-desire receded.

Then I got together with the man I would eventually marry. He already had children: one son in his 20s, a daughter in her mid-teens and a son who was 10. I felt The Wave coming back. I wanted a child of our own.

My husband felt he already had a family, and indeed he did. I remember talking to him about the extraordinary measures I would go to, to have a child. And he would have to reverse a vasectomy. But it wasn’t going to happen. I was so frustrated and hurt to recognize this last chance eluding me that I picked up a salt cellar and hurled it into a wall. It made a perfect, cellar-like indentation—a mark of my anger that I refused to cover up.

I started to work on a relationship with my husband’s kids. It took us some time to get used to each other. I knew I wasn’t going to step into a mothering role with them. They had (and have) a perfectly lovely woman who is, in fact, their mother. At first, I thought I would be lucky if we could be sort-of friends. It was a rough couple of years, mostly because I tried too hard to do things for them and was sickeningly nice. Fortunately, I couldn’t keep it up; the more human I became, the more we started to commuínicate. I never, however, felt at all material—more fraternal than anything.

We have all warmed up to each other. I can say without reservation that I love them and I am grateful to have them in my life. But I will always wonder (and now my younger friends are having babies and raising children): have I missed out on one of the greatest experiences a woman can have? Are mothers happier? Or just a different kind of happy? Are they more fulfilled? More toped-up as humans? Maybe the answers, whatever they may be, lie ahead in these pages. —SHELAGH ROGERS
At the end of her previous book, Loose Ends, Yukon-raised storyteller, bon vivant and trickster Ivan E. Coyote recalled the terrible fire that destroyed the rented East Vancouver house in which she had lived for twelve years.

At the outset of Bow Grip, her first novel, Coyote now credits her cousin for saving the contents of her fried hard drive was worth the rescue. According to our reviewer Grant Shilling, Bow Grip (Arsenal $19.95)

"is a heartfelt, amusing page-turner—a grimy gem complete with cigarettes, loneliness, run-down motels, a lesbian love child, working class characters and a cello."

Cover Story

Bow Grip begins in Drumheller, Alberta, where Joey Cooper is a good-natured, forty-something, really used to lay and read on rainy days. I opened the case. Inside, it smelled like a attic, or an old suitcase. The wood was deep red-brown and glowing. James or Jim had shined it up nice for me. There was also a soft rag, a cement foundation of a note until I placed my hand on it. It felt warm, like a living thing. Like it could breathe on its own, if I could figure how to get it unstuck.

But Joyce and Mitch share some news; their wives ran off with each other—and as is the case with a small town—everybody knows. Mitch now spends his nights in the bar of the local hotel, lamenting to anyone who will listen about his wife running off with another woman to their "one-bedroom apartment's left in Calgary"

Coyote has a great ear for conversation and a keen understanding for those small moments that define who we are and offer glimpses of our humanity, moments often punctuated with a dry, unobtrusive sense of humour.

As Joey Cooper sees it: "Mitch Sawyer seems a good-hearted, forty-some-thing, really used to lay and read on rainy days. I opened the case. Inside, it smelled like an attic, or an old suitcase. The wood was deep red-brown and glowing. James or Jim had shined it up nice for me. There was also a soft rag, a cement foundation of a note until I placed my hand on it. It felt warm, like a living thing. Like it could breathe on its own, if I could figure how to get it unstuck.

I closed the case and walked into Allyson's office. Her desk was still there, a third-hand solid oak number I had found for her on our first anniversary. There was still a coffee cup sitting on the desk, the remains of its contents now dried and cracked into a brown mass on the corner. The cup was strange. Allyson's favourite colour. It had lime green and lemon-coloured flowers on it, like from the seventies. I think it used to belong to my parents. I think we once had the same one. Allyson had probably snapped it from Mom and Dad's pile of old sad stuff, when my mom bought the new set from the IKEA in Calgary. Ally loved old stuff. The first real fight we ever had was over the kitchen appliances, when I first bought this place. She loved the Harvard Gold fridge and stove set. My mom thought they were hideous and had to go. I didn't really care either way, they still both worked fine, but I let my mom talk me into thinking we needed a new stainless steel set, and that Ally would love it. I thought Ally would be pleasantly surprised, but instead she wouldn't even let me unload them out of the back of my truck. It hadn't even occurred to me that she would prefer Harvard Gold to stainless steel.

I ended up sifting through a serious lecture about how it was unhealthy for a grown man to love. The guy at the Sears laughed at me when I told him I had the same one. But I let my mom talk me into thinking we needed a new stainless steel set, and that Ally would love it. I thought Ally would be pleasantly surprised, but instead she wouldn't even let me unload them out of the back of my truck. It hadn't even occurred to me that she would prefer Harvard Gold to stainless steel.

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THE POTLATCH WATCHER

Judge Alfred Scow recalls an ‘illegal’ gathering at Kingcome Inlet in 1935

Secret of the Dance by Andrew Spalding
Alfred Scow with illustrations by Darlene Gait
(Orca $19.95)

Having married a Coast Salish man at age 17 and moved onto the Tsaatlip Reserve, Sylvia Olsen learned how to make Cowichan “Indian” sweaters and operated a Cowichan sweater shop on the reserve for 16 years. Upon her return to university, she completed her Master’s thesis on Coast Salish knitters and participated in the National Film Board documentary, The Story of the Coast Salish Knitters.

Olsen’s picture book Yetsa’s Sweater introduces the sensual art of making the sweaters to younger readers.

Yetsa, who helps prepare wood for her grandmother, is a depiction of Olsen’s own grand-daughter, a sixth-generation knitter. Already proficient at making Coast Salish blankets, indigenous women on Vancouver Island were first encouraged to make woollen sweaters by 19th century Scottish settlers.

Yetsa learns to make Cowichan sweaters.

FINELY KNIT FAMILY

WORD PLAY

Words by Mark Ellis with illustrations by Ruth Campbell
(Goldfinch $17.95)

Vancouver painter Ruth Campbell, a graduate of the Emily Carr College of Art & Design has illustrated Mark Ellis’ Words, the story of a reading-challenged child who is helped by a compassionate teacher-librarian. After the child says she can’t control the way words dance around, he helps her learn how to read and also write her own stories. “Imagining the illustrations for this story,” says Campbell, “I realized the characters needed to have fun. In addition, the child needed to feel like a real girl, so she became a bit like me. She has lots of freckles and pets, just as I had when growing up.”

HER NAME IS MUD

Matt Girl by Alben Acheson (Orca $17.95)

Ivon Acheson’s Mud Girl is the story of Abi Jones, a lonely teenager who lives with her father in a strange house by the Fraser River, bereft of cool clothes or a mother. The odd house earns her the name “Mud Girl.” Things look up during the summer before her last year of high school when Abi gains a Big Sister, lands a job cleaning houses and meets Jude, a cute guy who has a two-year-old son.

Between 1920 and 1933, the Volstead Act in the United States strictly prohibited the production, sale and consumption of alcohol in the U.S. Penny Chamberlain’s Chasing the Moon is a juvenile read about rum running between Victoria and Seattle, includes the most notorious B.C.-based rum runner, Ray Omstead, who was correctly smuggled two hundred cases of liquor into Seattle daily during the early 1920s until he was caught and convicted.

Chasing the Moon by Penny Chamberlain
(Sono Nos $9.95)

In Becky Citra’s Jeremy and the Enchanted Theater (Orca, 2004), illustrated by Jessica Milne, the protagonist traveled to Mount Olympus with an orange cat named Aristotle to save Mr. Magnus’ theater, but Zeus agreed to help only if three riddles could be solved. In the follow-up, Jeremy in the Underworld, also illustrated by Milne,Jeremy must travel to the underworld in order to solve one of the riddles.

Jeremy in the Underworld by Becky Citra
(Orca $6.95)

Abby’s Birds illustration by Sima Elizabeth Shefrin
Abby’s Birds by Ellen Schwartz (Tundra $17.95)

Having already had a bestseller for Michael Katz’s Tradewind Books with Mr. Belinsky’s Bagels, published in 1997, Ellen Schwartz has concocted another charming cross-cultural story for Katz, this time about a girl named Abbi who moves into a neighbourhood and befriends an elderly Japanese woman, Mrs. Naka, who teaches her the gentle art of making origami birds.

Exit Point by Laura Langston
(Orca $9.95)

Fascinated with the concept of “life after death,” Laura Langston has written a novel for reluctant readers. Exit Point, from the perspective of a teenager who is killed by his own drunken driving, guided in the afterlife by Reade, the spirit of his grandmother, the remorseful Logan realizes he was meant to save the life of his younger sister Amy, but his fate took a wrong turn, literally and figuratively.

Exit Point by Laura Langston
(Orca $9.95)

25 BOOKWORLD WINTER 2006
When "gentleman bandit" Bill Miner held up CPR No. 97 near Kamloops on May 8, 1906, his gang of three netted only $15 for their efforts—because the train was an empty wrong train. After a five-day manhunt, Bill Miner and his two colleagues were captured near Douglas Lake and brought to Kamloops in handcuffs.

As Lynne Stonier-Newman describes in The Lawman: Adventures of a Frontier Diplomat, a creative non-fiction history of Provincial Police Superintendent Fred Hussey, the ensuing trial revealed B.C.'s most famous crook—who spent most of his adult life in prisons—had left some crucial evidence at the scene of the crime.

Having robbed the wrong train, Miner managed to leave a leather belt on the tracks near a parcel of dynamite. Hussey cagily asked the alleged culprits to "identify who owned what from a pile of their revolvers, belts and other effects." When Miner picked up the belt that had been lying on the tracks at the robbery site, Hussey knew he had his man.

Hussey had risen through the ranks, patrolling on horseback, stage coach, train, paddle-wheeler and sleigh. "He was a stage coach, train, paddle-royal members of short-lived provinces to anticipate problems before they happened. In Hussey's day, laying charges meant you weren't doing your job.

With some prodding from Hussey, a modern police act was passed in 1904, and its contents were distilled in practical, leather-bound handbooks that were to be carried by Provincials at all times. "As the superintendent, Hussey liked orders to have simple, explicit wording. He wanted the 1904 Police Act to be an instruction manual, in-...-it was a cardinal requirement. Leather-bound handbooks that were distilled in practical, explicit wording were to be carried by Provincials at all times. "As the superintendent, Hussey liked orders to have simple, explicit wording. He wanted the 1904 Police Act to be an instruction manual, in-...-it was a cardinal requirement. Leather-bound handbooks that were distilled in practical, explicit wording were to be carried by Provincials at all times. "As the superintendent, Hussey liked orders to have simple, explicit wording. He wanted the 1904 Police Act to be an instruction manual, in-...-it was a cardinal requirement. 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It happens all the time:
somebody reads one novel
from a large publishing house
and confidently pronounces
it’s the best Canadian novel
of the year, a surefire Giller
contender—because they
of the year, a surefire Giller
contender—because they

The absurdity of such
unresearched statements
never seems to phase editors,
or the public, who presume

At BC BookWorld we have
seen more than 70 new works
of fiction published by British
Columbians this year. We
have managed to write about
all 33 of them.

Unlike that upbeat single Mom
pot-grower in that new TV se-
ries, or the post-cultivating Brit-
ish Properties matron in Doug-
las Coupland’s new comic
novel, Grant Buday’s 58-year-old bankrupt and
paranoid former building contractor and
wannabe orchardist-turned-reluctant-pot-
grower in his third novel Rootbound only goes
from bad to worse.

As if it isn’t hard enough these days with
Hydro checking everyone’s electricity con-
sumption, poor of’ Willie LeMat, a down-on-his-
luck Willie Loman for the entrepreneurial new
millennium, gets his first crop filched and he has no
economic alternative but to grow another one and re-
main ever-fearful it, too, will be poached.

His daughter is pregnant by a Hurnese monk, his unir-
ried landlord is a conman and his girlfriend paints only self-
portraits; meanwhile purblind losers like LeMat, trying to
scrape by, are surrounded by real estate speculators making
bundles from an Olympics in 2010 that has already gone
way over budget. All this would be funny if only it wasn’t
all-too-possible.
Frank LaRue: Holding court

A former schoolboy fencing champion who became a fight choreographer for actors, C.C. Humphreys lived in London for 12 years and came to live on the West Coast in 2006. Absolute Honour is his “rip-roaring” historical novel about a swashbuckling British soldier, Jack Absolute, who leaps from battlefields to bedrooms. Along the way he becomes a spy at the Jacobite Court in Rome and ends up fighting the Spanish at Valencia de Alcantra. During his 25 years as an actor, Humphreys played Hamlet and the character of Jack Absolute in Sheridan’s The Rivals. His first novel, The French Executioner, was shortlisted for the British CWA Ian Fleming Steel Dagger best thriller award.

Windflower by Nick Bantock and Edoardo Ponti (Chronicle $29.95)

After a combined run of more than 100 weeks on the New York Times bestseller lists, the six “Griffin & Sabine” novels by artist and writer Nick Bantock were revived by Bantock for a romantic drama at the Arts Club Theatre, premiering last October. Simultaneously he has released Windflower, a fanciful, faux Italian tale of a strikingly beautiful caravan dancer, Ana, who flees an unwanted wedding. The action occurs in a timeless, fairy-tale zone with place names such as Capolan and Serona. Minus Bantock’s trademark array of assembled images, but illustrated with a variegated colour frieze at the bottom of each page, the text has been co-credited to Sophia Loren’s son, Edoardo Ponti, who is writing a screenplay adaptation.
I'm 1941 and Sandy Grey, a university student and air cadet, wants to enlist. When he delivers this news to his parents on Vancouver Island, his father becomes enraged and the essence of Pete Cooper is to destroy: He's a negative force, it's nothing personal; the hatred that possesses him is transcendental.

Almost all the inmates appear normal and the forces keeping them in are abhorrent. Many are more like prisoners of war than patients. A German, a communist, a Japanese and Russians all long for some word of their families. One young prisoner seems to have been detained merely due to his sexuality. Evil wardens and misunderstood inmates. It sounds a little like One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest or Shawshank Redemption. But Bowering's storyline also includes sea serpents, submarines, improbable sea rescues, implausibly escapes and Grey's savour, Georgina, an older woman whose life has also been savaged by her family. Georgina's son's book, The Starhouse of Thought and Expression, focuses Grey in his writing and in his thinking.

What It Takes To Be Human also relates the tale of Alan Macaulay, a former inmate. Macaulay's unique circumstances and his story within a story. He's imprisoned for forty years before, who was hanged and buried at the asylum when it was classified as a prison. Macaulay is another innocent who was destroyed by a man much like Cooper. Grey is driven to exonerate Macaulay and to exercise his ghost by writing the executed man's story, thereby providing a story within a story. With over a dozen books of poetry, Bowering knows the power of words, and as an award-winning novelist—in 1998 she received the Ethel Wilson fiction prize for Visible Worlds—she knows how to construct plot and character. It's the mark of a master that when reading this novel, you're unlikely to find it cumbersome or unwieldy unless you try to recapitulate it for others.

Sandy Grey is the perfect Everyman. You want the story to end well but you just don't see how it can ever happen; whenever hope arises, it seems Cooper is there to glower and destroy. Everyman. You want the story to try to recapture it for others. Only disaster can re-unite them.

Kevin Patterson lives on Salt Spring Island and works at the Nanaimo General Hospital as a specialist in internal medicine. "From a writer's point of view, medicine and health care is the best imaginable day job," he says. "You're surrounded by pathos and get these glimpses into people's lives during crisis points." His previous fiction collection, The Visitors Have All Returned, was shortlisted for the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize in 2003 and the first City of Victoria Butler Book Prize in 2004.

Kevin Patterson's Consumption
Fiction

WINDLEY’S ILLUMINATIONS

Home Schooling by Carol Windley (Cormorant Books $22.95)

It isn’t often I discover a writer whose writing is so good I find myself having to go back and read a sentence over again for the sheer pleasure of the language.

Happily, Nanaimo’s Carol Windley, whose latest offering, Home Schooling, which was short-listed for the Giller Prize, is such a writer.

When I opened her book to the first page and came across the sentence, “There were white faces like those of like-stars fallen to earth and bog-orchids, also called can-kerworts, and ferns were white fawn lilies, blameless to look at, leaves limp as flannel, yet caustic and burning to the touch,” I just had to go back and read it again.

Set in the Pacific Northwest and Vancouver Island, Windley’s stories capture the wild beauty of the coastal landscape, whether its the lush vegetation of the coastal landscape, or the pale sea.”

“The ferry’s wake unspooled like a length of silk on the pale sea.”

In this story, as in several others, families are unsatisfactory places whose members are unable to thrive within them, sharing a common space, but living parallel, almost unrelated lives.

The Joy of Life is a story about marriage and motherhood clashing with a woman’s artistic ambitions. Desi is a painter who attends an artists’ retreat in Wales in the 1950s. Soon she begins having an affair with a poet, while leaving her more-conventional friend, Alex, who wants nothing more than the domestic life Desiree eschews (as well as wanting Desiree’s husband).

Alex is left to look after Desiree’s young daughter, who has become addicted to heroine. She does this in the prose that is nuanced, precise, graceful and intelligent.

The characters in Windley’s stories often find themselves dealing with the aftermath of some kind of terrible loss or tragedy. In What Saffi Knows, a young girl is aware of the awful truth about what has happened to a boy who has mysteriously disappeared from a nearby field. But while the search parties keep looking for him, Saffi finds herself unable to say anything about the imprisoned bird boy she has seen in her neighbour’s basement.

For Saffi, telling would make it real, would lend it power, but if you don’t tell maybe it’s just a dream, maybe it isn’t real. Here Windley is exploring the kind of magical thinking all of us are capable of when certain truths seem unbearable.

When I read these stories, I was reminded of those lines from Emily Dickinson about how sometimes the only way to tell the truth is to “tell it slant.”

Windley is constantly reminding us that people’s stories change, memory is unreliable, identity is multifaceted and elusive, with each person “made up of innumerable past selves and these selves were hidden and unreachable.”

I think that in recognizing the shifting, unreliable nature of experience and “telling it slant” Windley is getting to some larger truths.

With this collection she has achieved the mastery of form that allows her to move her stories outward in concentric circles, to jump from the perspective of one character to another, to leap around in time and place, and throw in references to painting and poetry without missing a beat. She dazzles us with all these prototechnics while quietly honing in on, with deadly accuracy, some particular truth about family or loss, or art or love.

Her previous titles are the award-winning story collection Visible Light and the novel Breathing Underwater.

Sheila Munro writes from Powell River.

All the Rage

Rage Therapy by Dan Kalla (Tor $27.95)

As a follow-up to Pandemic and Resilience, Dan Kalla’s Rage Therapy is a psychological whodunit about the brutal murder of a Seattle psychiatrist who specializes in anger management. A young widowed psychiatrist named Dr. Joe Ashman investigates the fatal beating of his mentor, Stanley Kolberg, as well as the suicide of a young patient, Angela Connor, an elderly patient. Then a second psychiatrist is murdered.

Including a subplot that detours into the sub-culture of S&M, Rage Therapy explores doctor/patient sexual abuse from the twin points of view of the patient and a psychiatrist who is appalled by his patient’s behaviour. “Pooled studies from the past twenty-five years,” says Kalla, “suggest that four percent of all therapists report having engaged in sexual contact with their patients during the course of therapy... The rates of depression, anger, sexual dysfunction and suicide are considerably higher in such patients compared to those who did not have sexual contact with their therapist.”

Kalla is an emergency ward physician who graduated from UBC.

Dan Kalla
Earle Birney’s famous poem about a mountain climbing fascination, “David,” had been published twenty years before I first heard it. I can still recall the voice of Mr. Burt, my Grade 12 English teacher, reading it aloud and ritualistically. While starting out as a traditional formalist, heavy on Anglo-Saxon rhythms, Birney, an avid outdoorsman and hiker, continually experimented with form, shape and voice.

The work of Birney’s friend and fellow poet Al Purdy (also collected by Sam Solecki) is the nearest in comparison. Both were unmistakably Canadian though that’s hard to define how and why. Both were also peripatetic travelers, restless even. Poems by Birney flowed from and into Mexico, Thailand, Istanbul and Peru. Then he’s been in Australia or London or writing in a tavern by the Hellespont.

Birney never wrote the same poem twice. In “The Speech of a Salish Chief,” taken from The Damnation of Vancouver, Birney wrote of Indian baskets and the destruction of First Nations culture: “Red roots and yellow words entwined themselves. Within our women’s hands, coiled in those baskets starting. With the grey woman’s pattern, or the wings. Of dragonflies, you keep in your great cities now. Within glass boxes. Now they are art, white man’s taboo. But once they held sweet water…”

Birney’s last great love was a much younger woman named Wailan Low who cared for him later when he was ill and disabled. The sequence of love poems written to and for her, many of them on her birthdays, are so intimate it feels like a blundering intrusion to read them. No doubt their spring/summer relationship caused a stir but to read these poems now is to sense them as a memorial of surprise and gratitude. How genuine his love for her was, one hesitates to use the word “sweet” because it’s been so over-used and ruined by cynics.

The love poems are unaffected and unpretentious, short and deceptively slight: “the magic flows in the wind that bends the unsheltered face in the life of the wrinkling lake.”

With wry allusions to their love poems, a blundering intrusion perhaps, Earle Birney, who died eleven years ago while in his nineties, has been fading in notoriety.

Thousands of talented writers are coming out of Creative Writing programs these days, not to mention many more who are skilled poetry readers and book buyers, yet how many know it was Birney, along with UBC professor Roy Daniels, who started the first Writing Workshop in Canada, forty years ago, at UBC? As it matured into the country’s first Creative Writing Department, Birney was its first head.

Since then his influence on writers in this province, and in this country, cannot be over-stated. Every day Hannah Main-van der Kemp writes poetry and prose in the ocean.

BRINGING BACK EARLE, RESURRECTING DAVID

Eclectic, ornery, sometimes vitriolic, both old-fashioned and inventive, Earle Birney’s poems, now collected anew, span his writing life from 1926 to 1987.

Editor Sam Solecki has collected an amazing variety of work. While starting out as a traditional formalist, heavy on Anglo-Saxon rhythms, Birney, an avid outdoorsman and hiker, continually experimented with form, shape and voice. The work of Birney’s friend and fellow poet Al Purdy (also collected by Sam Solecki) is the nearest in comparison. Both were unmistakably Canadian though that’s hard to define how and why. Both were also peripatetic travelers, restless even. Poems by Birney flowed from and into Mexico, Thailand, Istanbul and Peru. Then he’s been in Australia or London or writing in a tavern by the Hellespont.

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Earle Birney selected bibliography:

David and other poems (Pyrmont, 1942)
The Strait Of Anial: Selected Poems (Pyrmont, 1948)
Trial of A City, and Other Verse (Pyrmont, 1952)
Twentieth Century Canadian Poetry (Pyrmont, 1959; Ed by Birney)
Down the Long Table (M&S, 1955, rev. 1975)
The Kootenay Highlander (Four Square, 1960)
Ice, Cod, Bell or Stone (M&S, 1962)
Near False Creek Mouth (M&S, 1964)
Selected Poems, 1940-1966 (M&S, 1965)
The Poems of Earle Birney (New Canadian Library, M&S, 1969)
Rag and Bone Shop (M&S, 1971)
The Bear on the Delhi Road (Chatto & Windus, 1973)
The Collected Poems of Earle Birney (M&S, 1975)
The Rugging And The Moving Times (Black Moss, 1976)
The Damnation of Vancouver (M&S, 1977)
Ghost in The Wheels: Selected Poems (M&S, 1977)
Fall By Fury & Other Makings (M&S, 1978)
Copernican Fix (ECW, 1985)
Last Makings (M&S, 1991)
One Muddy Hand (Harbour, 2006). Edited by Sam Solecki

MALCOLM LOWERY AND EARLE BIRNEY, 1947

In 1937, Wailan Low (left) was 46 years younger than Earle Birney. She is now a judge in Victoria and the executor of his literary estate.
Angie Abdou
by the Elk
Valley River,
near Fernie.

She didn’t get nominated for the Giller Prize and she didn’t get invited to the fancy-pants festivals (the ones where publishers are often required to cough up dough in return for having their authors selected), but Angie Abdou of Fernie has made an extraordinary literary debut with her collection of stories, Anything Boys Can Do ($18.95 This-tledown).

The atypical title story describes a woman watching her young nephew compete in a brutal championship wrestling match, almost losing his eye. More frequently, Abdou describes young women exploring beyond traditional limitations, including monogamy. A father introduces his daughter to a golfing buddy. “This is my daughter. She’s a Buddhist. This week.”

Overall, there’s an alluring combination of tomboy-ish bravado and sophisticated humour. “Why is it that nobody in GAP World ever gets a cold sore?” But there’s more to Abdou than brisk asides and clever dialogue. In Bruised Apples, a childless and uninspired academic leaves home to work in a friend’s orchard and to collect her thoughts, only to conclude her marriage is worth saving.
Clam Gardens
Aboriginal Mariculture on Canada’s West Coast
by Judith Williams
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Duthie Books
Blackberry Books
Salt Spring Books
Crown Publications
Abrasax Books
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G.J. “Bus” Griffiths, author of the illustrated novel Now You’re Logging (Harbour 1978), died in Courtenay on September 25, 2006 after a lengthy illness. Born in Moose Jaw and raised in Vancouver, he went to live in Fanny Bay in 1944 from Port Coquitlam where he had been logging on Burke Mountain.
Griffiths worked for decades in the logging industry, primarily as a feller. After an editor at BC Lumberman magazine encouraged him to submit comic strips about logging, his wife Margaret encouraged him to continue drawing, usually working first in pencil, then in India ink. Often referred to as a West Coast classic, Now You’re Logging is his comic strip-styled novel about two young men, Al Richards and Red Harris, who learn truck-logging in the 1930s from a tough camp boss.
Griffiths also illustrated a children’s book, Patrick and the Backhoe, and Bush Poem by Peter Trower, who used to read Griffiths’ comic strips when he was growing up on the Sunshine Coast.

For Margin of Terror: A Reporter’s Twenty-Year Odyssey Covering the Tragedies of the Air India Bombing (Key Porter $24.95), Province reporter Salim Jiwa partnered with Donald J. Hauka to update Jiwa’s 1985 book about the two Air India bombings with new information on the 20-year Air India investigation and the 19-month trial that resulted in a verdict of not guilty for the accused in 2005.
In late April, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced a new public probe into the Air India bombings.

Prior to renovations that will turn the former Kogawa family residence in the Marpole neighborhood of Vancouver into a writers’ retreat, an Open House was held on September 17 to celebrate the purchase and preservation of Joy Kogawa House at 1450 West 64th by Iona Campagnolo, who used to visit Kogawa at the house with her husband David Williams. Kogawa House, which had been logging on Burke Mountain.
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Griffiths also illustrated a children’s book, Patrick and the Backhoe, and Bush Poem by Peter Trower, who used to read Griffiths’ comic strips when he was growing up on the Sunshine Coast.
tion purchased the property aided by donations from 550 individuals. Best known for her novel about the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II, Okaun, Joy Kagawa was in attendance for the celebration. Info: www.conservancy.bc.ca

L is for Leier

SFU historian Mark Leier has examined the life and ideas of "anarchism's first major thinker" in the biography Bakunin: The Creative Passion (St. Martin's Press $25.95 U.S.) "After 3/11," Leier says, "Mikhail Bakunin was explicitly singled out as the original theorist of terrorist violence by all kinds of pundits and analysts. It was pretty clear that they didn't understand anarchism or Bakunin, and so the book became a project to set the record straight." —0-881-90104-9

M is for Moriyyama

Born in Vancouver and interned during World War II, Toronto-based architect Raymond Moriyyama of the firm Moriyyama & Teshima Architects designed the National Museum of Saudi Arabia, Ottawa's City Hall, the Ontario Science Centre and the new Canadian War Museum. With a foreword by Adrienne Clarkson, his account of conceiving and building the museum is the basis for In Search of a Soul (D & M $45).

N is for Nancy

After decades in a windowless downtown warehouse where she became the province's leading distributor of independent titles, Nancy Wise of Kelowna has relocated to fancy new digs. The new address for her Sandhill Distributing is Unit #4-3308 Appaloosa, Millcreek Park, Kelowna, BC V1V 2G9

O is for Olmian

Co-edited by psychology professor Dr. Sharna Olmian, with a foreword by the Dalai Lama, folk singer Raffi's: Child Honoring: How To Turn This World Around (Praeger $29.95 U.S.) is a multi-faceted overview with a chapter entitled Honoring Children in Dishonourable Times. It notes that Sweden and Norway ban television marketing to children under the age of 12, the province of Quebec bans marketing to children under age 13 and Greece prohibits ads for toys on television between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.

P is for Porter

Pamela Porter of Sidney has won the $20,000 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award for The Crazy Man (Groundwood), her free verse junior novel about a Saskatchewan family in 1965. After Emaline is injured in an accident with a tractor driven by her father, he leaves Emaline and her mother to fend for themselves. To the disapproval of neighbours, Emaline's mother hires Angus, a friendly, red-haired giant from the local mental hospital, who helps Emaline overcome her despair.

Q is for Quail

Penticton Band member Denise Lecoy, provincial coordinator for the BC Ministry of Health Service's Aboriginal Tobacco Strategy "Honouring our Health," has supplied the text for Looking After Me (Thetys $12.95), the story of a baby quail who learns the importance of laughing, crying, anger, hurt, happiness, standing up for oneself, fear, trust and love.

R is for Rowe

When he retired to New Denver in 1990, Stan Rowe, son of a United Church minister, promptly got himself arrested in anti-logging protests in New Denver's watershed. A conscientious objector during WW II, Rowe had continued on next page

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WHO’S WHO

Stan Rowe
Wildlife biologist Tom Shardlow’s research on wild salmon has taken him down many isolated rivers and to remote bush camps near the Yukon where his affinity for the wilderness has also spawned a fascination with David Thompson. Creating bedtime stories for his two daughters inspired Shardlow’s first children’s book, The Story of David Thompson (Napoleon $18.95), and a condensed biography, David Thompson: A Trail by Stars (XYZ $17.95), that incorporates some of Thompson’s own writing. Bicentennial events and books will celebrate Thompson’s arrival in B.C. in 1807.

ANN MORGENTALER

In her fifth year, Ruth Howard has published Crabley Crab (Trafford $9.99), a very pleasing children’s book, illustrated by Helen Domingue Hunter; about a shore crab that gets trapped in a red sand bucket belonging to two children digging on the beach. Taken home for show “n’ tell, the crabby crab is then replaced in the ocean. Ruth Howard worked in fisheries research and continued her appreciation of marine life from a cottage at Hopkins Landing.

Available at bookstores & online at Amazon, Chapters, Trafford—$27.99
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