

# BC

## BOOKWORLD

VOL. 32 • NO. 3 • Autumn 2018

### FRANK ZAPPA

A complete  
guide to his  
more than  
100 recorded  
works.

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A darkly comedic  
memoir by  
**Lindsay Wong**

# NOT CRAZY RICH ASIANS

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**FICTION:**  
W.D. Valgardson's  
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**ILLUSTRATION:**  
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picture books.

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**POLITICS:**  
Christy Clark's  
downfall is a  
political thriller.

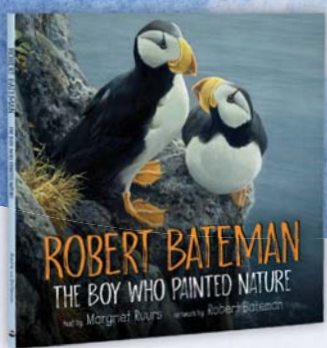
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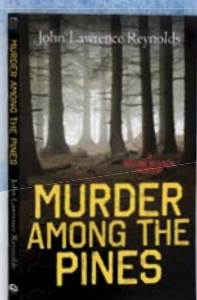
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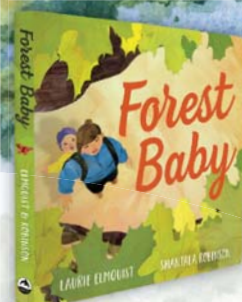
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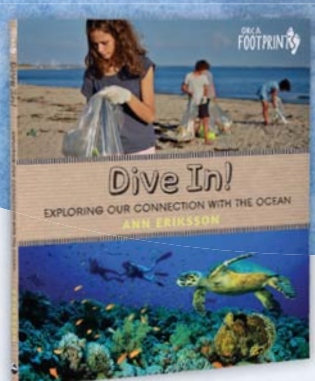
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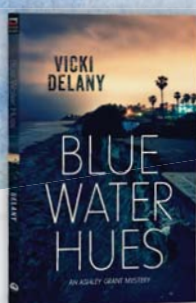
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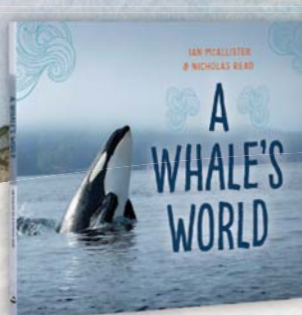
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translated by **Rhonda Mullins**  
**Around Her**  
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**Collin Varner**

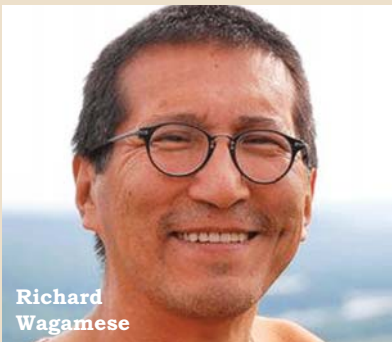
**The Flora and Fauna of Coastal British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest**  
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**Sarah Cox**

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**Jen Currin**

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(Anvil Press \$20)



**Richard Wagamese**

**Indian Horse** (D&M \$21.95)

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**Dancing in Gumboots: Adventure, Love & Resilience: Women of the Comox Valley**  
(Caitlin Press \$24.95)

**Joshua Whitehead**

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(Arsenal Pulp \$17.95)

**Monique Gray Smith**

**Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation**  
(Orca Books \$29.95)



**Angela Crocker**

**Declutter Your Data: Take Charge of Your Data and Organize Your Digital Life**  
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**Shelley Adams**

**Whitewater Cooks: More Beautiful Food**  
(Sandhill Book Marketing \$34.95)

**Daniel Marshall**

**Claiming the Land: British Columbia and the Making of a New El Dorado**  
(Ronsdale Press \$24.95)

**Charles Ulrich**

**The Big Note: A Guide to the Recordings of Frank Zappa**  
(New Star \$45)

**Roy Henry Vickers & Robert Budd**

**One Eagle Soaring**  
(Harbour \$9.95)

\* The current topselling titles from major BC publishing companies, in no particular order.

# PEOPLE



LAURA SAWCHUK PHOTO

**“It’s poetry’s uncanniness that attracts me.”**  
**LORNA CROZIER**

“I come, after all, from a family of very ordinary, hard-working Saskatchewan people.”

ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLIC EVENTS FOR **Christina de Castell** (*above left*), new chief librarian of the Vancouver Public Library, was to unveil a plaque of B.C. marble to be added to the VPL’s Woodcock Walk of Fame for **Lorna Crozier** (*right*), a beloved poet and writing instructor who is this year’s recipient of the 25th George Woodcock Lifetime Achievement Award.

For more than four decades Crozier has made herself widely known across the country as a poet and played a significant role in the mentoring of younger writers. In 1991, she and her life partner, **Patrick Lane**, moved to Victoria so she could teach at the University of Victoria’s Department of Writing.

In her Woodcock acceptance speech, Crozier said: “It doesn’t seem that many years ago that I was the youngest poet on the stage at literary festivals, now I am the oldest. Seventy seems a good time to look back and evaluate how I’ve spent, some might say how I’ve wasted, my life. I can honestly claim that since my mid-twenties, a day hasn’t gone by when I haven’t been in the company of poetry. It helps that my husband of 40 years is also a poet, many say Canada’s finest, but I can’t blame him for my obsession. I was on this esoteric path before we met, and in fact, it was poetry that introduced us. But I have to wonder, with some amusement, why I chose an art form that most people find arcane, possibly elitist.

“I come, after all, from a family of very ordinary, hard-working Saskatchewan people. My mother cleaned houses and sold tickets at the swimming pool. My father drove a back-hoe and was laid off during the winter when the ground froze. When that happened, my parents worried about pay-

ing the rent. Our house had only three books, a bible, one volume of a set of *The Book of Knowledge* and a **Zane Gray** novel the mice had chewed. That library expanded after I’d left home and started getting published.

“The pride of place in my parents’ living room was a two-tiered, maple coffee table. On the bottom shelf my mother accumulated Patrick’s and my books that we dutifully sent to her. On the top of the same table, crouched a big plastic lobster my father had brought back from a visit to my brother who was a helicopter search and rescue pilot in PEI. Neither of my parents would eat the crustaceans when they were on the island, but my father couldn’t get over the fact that Maritimers, including his son and grandkids, devoured them with gusto. The lobster stretched out in its place of honour above our books until my father died and my mom got rid of it. Our books stayed...

“Why have I spent five decades wrestling with this demanding, dangerous angel? At seventy, still smitten, I have to say that it’s also poetry’s uncanniness that attracts me. It knows things before I do—the breakdown of my first marriage for instance was forecast in my early poems...

“My poems are smarter than I am, more inventive, badder, more daring, wittier, less needy. Not many poets can live up to the integrity you find in their work.”

**Lorna Crozier** will be appearing at the Whistler Writers Festival in October. Crozier has written and edited twenty-five books while receiving a Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Literary Excellence; a Hubert Evans Non-Fiction Prize for **Small Beneath the Sky: A Prairie Memoir** (2010) and the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize for **What the Living Won’t Let Go** (2000); plus two Pat Lowther Awards for best collection of poetry by a Canadian woman; a Governor General’s Award for **Inventing the Hawk** (1992) and a Canadian Authors Association Award. Administered by Pacific Book-World News Society, the \$5,000 Woodcock Award is co-supported by Yosef Wosk, The Writers Trust of Canada, The City of Vancouver and VPL. For more info: [abcbookworld.com](http://abcbookworld.com)

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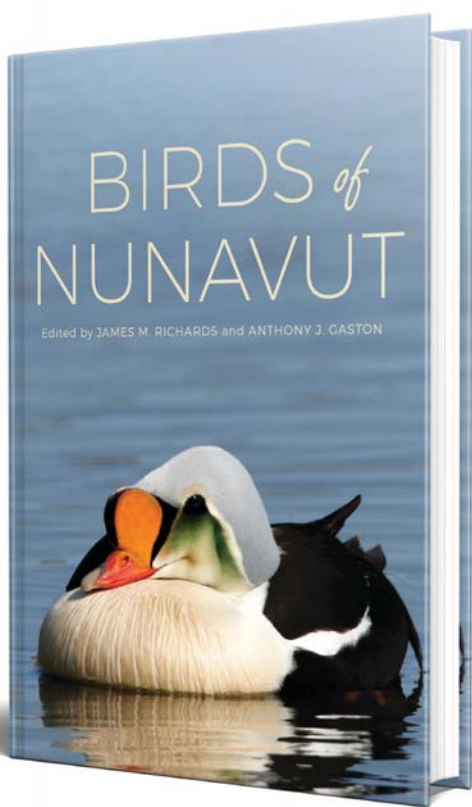
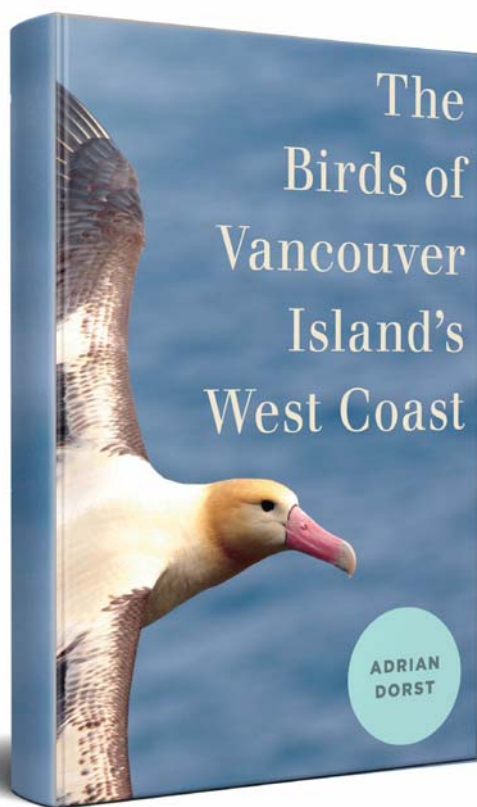
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 This regional guide to the 360 species of birds recorded on the wild west coast of Vancouver Island will inform, delight, and surprise amateur and professional birders alike.

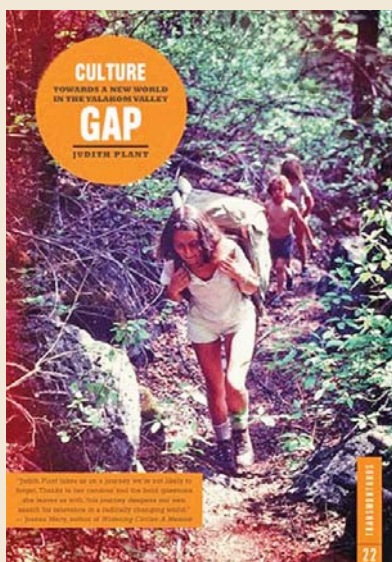
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## MEMOIR • MONEY • BIOGRAPHY

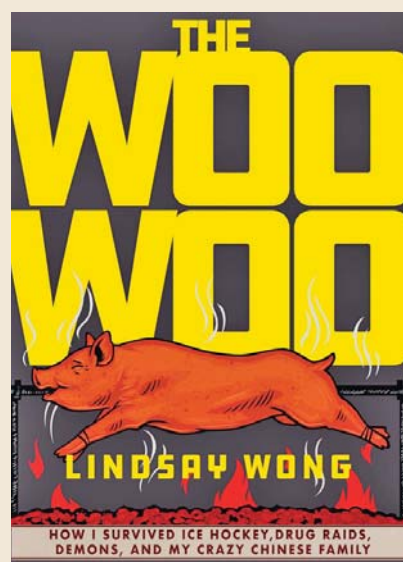


**Culture Gap: Towards a New World in the Yalakom Valley**  
 by Judith Plant (New Star \$19)

*Culture Gap* is Judith Plant's memoir of life on a commune in a remote valley deep in B.C.'s Coast Mountains. Set in the early 1980s Plant shares her adventure as a young mother struggling to reconcile her social ideals of personal and environmental responsibility, while loving and caring for those closest to her. Rural communal living was a lifestyle emblematic of its time, and *Culture Gap* heroically lets us enter that world.

**The Woo-Woo: How I Survived Ice Hockey, Drug Raids, Demons and My Crazy Chinese Family**  
 by Lindsay Wong (Arsenal \$19.95)

In contrast to the movie *Crazy Rich Asians*, Lindsay Wong's darkly comedic memoir of a young woman coming of age in a dysfunctional Asian family could have just been called *Crazy Asians*. It is being heralded as a powerful tour de force on mental illness in the family and refrigerators that are out to assassinate you. Novelist Kevin Chong has predicted Wong is "the future of Asian Canadian writing."

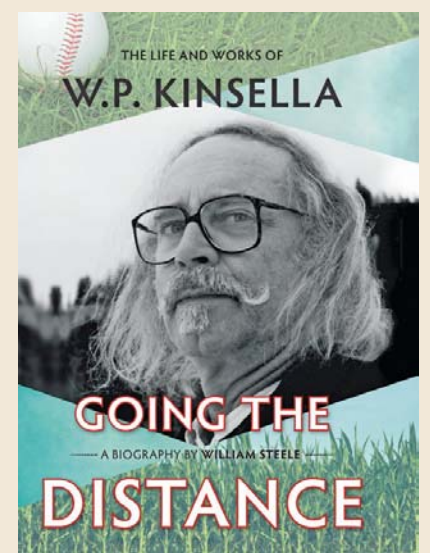


**The Clean Money Revolution: Reinventing Power, Purpose, and Capitalism**  
 by Joel Solomon with Tye Bridge (NSP \$19.99)

By 2050, \$50 trillion will have changed hands in North America. It will be the biggest money-making opportunity in history. "Business as usual," founded on exploitation and environmental ruin, is over. Climate catastrophe, reactionary politics, and widening inequity have put the world on edge. A must-read for investors, wealth advisors, aspiring entrepreneurs, and all who want their values and money to work together to transform the future.

**Going the Distance: The Life and Works of W.P. Kinsella**  
 by William Steele (D&M \$34.95)

This biography explores the life and often controversial work of W.P. Kinsella, the author who wrote "If you build it, he will come." Kinsella hit the big time in 1989, when his novel *Shoeless Joe* was turned into the international blockbuster film *Field of Dreams*. Kinsella's personal diaries are used to document his health problems, accusations of appropriation, failed marriages and a tumultuous romantic relationship with writer Evelyn Lau.



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 Alan Twigg*

Nakkita Trimble tattoos Sage Nowak (Tahitan Nation Wolf Clan) using a method involving sewing. Having taken over 30 hours so far, the tattoo is also a ceremonial process. Each stitch is an opening to the spirit world reconnecting with ancestors.



## TATTOO renewal

**B**EFORE THE ARRIVAL OF EUROPEANS to what is now British Columbia, First Nations tattooed their bodies with clan crests and symbols of identity. Missionaries discouraged this practice and in some areas, carved metal bracelets were used to cover the tattoos. Eventually, bracelets were carved with clan crests and took the place of crest tattoos. In the past few years, a revival of cultural tattooing has been underway as described in **Body Language: Reawakening Cultural Tattooing of the Northwest** (Bill Reid \$28.57), which accompanies the exhibition of the same title at the Bill Reid Gallery, on until January 13, 2019. “The revival of Indigenous tattooing is a process of re-indigenization,” writes co-curator **Dion Kaszas**, a self-described Hungarian, Métis and Nlaka’pamux cultural tattoo practitioner, scholar, and visual artist. 978-0-9812341-7-5

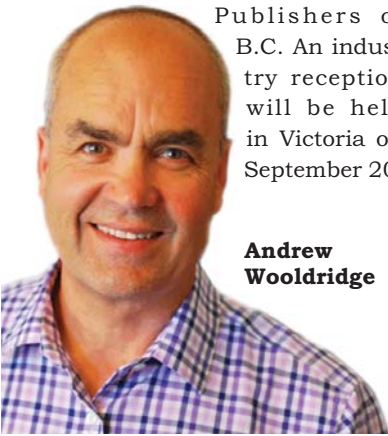
## Wooldridge, Younging honoured

VICTORIA’S ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS will receive the 2018 Jim Douglas Publisher of the Year Award.

Orca and its publisher, **Andrew Wooldridge**, are recognized for their accomplishments as one of Canada’s leading children’s publishers, specializing in imaginative, engaging, and culturally significant books for young readers.

The Gray Campbell Distinguished Service Award for significant contributions to the book publishing industry will go to professor, publisher and author **Gregory Younging**. Based in Penticton, Younging is a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation in northern Manitoba who is recognized for his advocacy for Indigenous editorial agency in Canadian publishing. He has also been publisher of Theytus Books, one of the first two Indigenous-owned publishing houses in Canada.

These awards are presented annually by the Association of Book Publishers of B.C. An industry reception will be held in Victoria on September 20.



**Andrew Wooldridge**



**Basil-Stuart Stubbs Award winners Marianne Ignace and Ronald E. Ignace (centre, back row) with family members at reception. Attendees also included family of Basil Stuart-Stubbs as well as past prize recipients Arthur Ray and Jean Barman.**

## Basil Stuart-Stubbs Prize

**T**HE SIXTH ANNUAL BASIL STUART-Stubbs Prize for Outstanding Scholarly Book on British Columbia was presented at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre to Dr. **Marianne Ignace** and Chief **Ronald E. Ignace**, authors of *Secwepemc People, Land and Laws*—an exploration of Secwepemc history told through Indigenous knowledge and oral traditions.

Their book has been described as a model for collaborative approaches to Indigenous history that draws on Aboriginal sources and the work of outside experts



**Yosef Wosk**

to masterfully integrate oral histories and “western” scholarship.

The event at UBC began with an official welcome from

**Morgan Guerin**, councillor of the Musqueam Nation, followed by opening remarks from University Librarian **Susan E. Parker**, speeches from the winning authors and a lively Q&A session.

In a surprise announcement, the prize amount of \$1,000 was doubled this year to \$2,000, thanks to the generous support of **Yosef Wosk**.

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## STELLAR FALL FICTION & POETRY

**Ordinary Strangers**  
A Novel  
Bill Stenson

**Ordinary Strangers, a novel**  
**Bill Stenson**  
WINNER of the 4th Great BC Novel Contest.  
978-1-896949-70-3 | 282 pages | \$23.95

This astonishing novel begins at a fair on a hot August day in 1971 in Hope, B.C. Sage and Della Howard are driving to Fernie to start a job and begin a new life. They stop for a break, and find a crying toddler in the nearby woods, soon they are continuing their journey with her. A compelling and original story, that takes you to the other side of happenstance and fear.

“Never, since Jack Hodgins made mirth and myth out of lumberjacks, has Settler Coast culture been so accurately rendered. Humour and wisdom flesh out their liturgy of lies, a web these Ordinary Strangers spin around a stolen child in this tragic-comic thriller.”  
—LINDA ROGERS

**Bill Stenson's** previous fiction includes; *Translating Women*, *Svoboda* and *Hanne and Her Brother*. A former English and Creative Writing teacher, and co-founder of The Claremont Review, he lives in the Cowichan Valley and writes every day.

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**Al Rempel** has published two previous books of poetry and two chapbooks and is included in several anthologies, including *Rocksalt* and *4Poets*. He was awarded Prince George's Arts & Culture Award for Poetry and shortlisted for the Fred Cogswell Excellence in Poetry Award.

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## WHERE URBAN MEETS RURAL

## HOME TO DAGGER EDITIONS

# NOT Crazy RICH Asians

**The Woo-Woo: How I Survived Ice Hockey, Drug Raids, Demons and My Crazy Chinese Family**  
by **Lindsay Wong**  
(Arsenal Pulp Press \$19.95)

BY **JOAN GIVNER**

ON CANADA DAY 2008 the Second Narrows Bridge spanning the Burrard Inlet was shut down for several hours as a distraught woman dangled over the side from a cable. Holiday traffic was thrown into chaos during the rescue operation, causing subsequent recriminations between various municipal jurisdictions. Mental health workers were outraged by Transport Minister **Kevin Falcon**'s complaint: "How can it take six hours to deal with an elderly female?"

She was not elderly at that time. She was the 42-year-old favourite aunt of **Lindsay Wong**, and like other women in the family was plagued by mental illness. Grandmother Poh-Poh suffers from paranoid schizophrenia and fears the refrigerator is out to assassinate her. Wong's mother, Quiet Snow, suffers from depression and severe anxiety. Beautiful One, the bridge jumper, who planned suicide attempts on every national holiday for two years after the bridge episode, has periodic psychotic breakdowns.

Lindsay Wong has ample material here for the kind of human misery memoir that has been a dominant literary genre since around 2005 when **Martin Levin** of *The Globe and Mail* noted that literary agents were asking their clients for accounts of autism, alcoholism, abuse etc. Wong's inclination, on the other hand, is for irreverence, parody, and subversion. The result is a comic tour de force, no less powerful for its tragic undercurrent.

Her favourite target is the deep-rooted superstition that dismisses mental illness as "Western bullshit" and prevents it from being medically treated. "No such fucking thing as brain disease," says her mother, whose English vo-

cabulary is rife with profanity: she would never dream of using in her native tongue. She believes the real cause of every mental disorder is possession by malignant supernatural creatures, known collectively as the Woo-Woo. Because these ghosts fear bright lights and noise, Wong's mother and her three children took refuge in their early years in the food court at the shopping mall, where they stayed from opening to closing time. Hudson's Bay was another safe place, Sears less so because it was not as bright.

The danger of being possessed is at its highest in the bathroom. It is not safe anymore, her mother warns, nor is going to the bathroom unaccompanied. "Leave the door open when you pee." Showering is particularly dangerous, as is taking too long on the toilet. In one relative's home, bowel-movement times are closely monitored and checked off by a responsible adult.

When a doctor is consulted, he becomes a source of contemptuous jokes. Poh-Poh's psychiatrist, for example, is described as loving "Poh-Poh so much he studied Poh-Poh in college! P is for Poh-Poh and phony PhD." "That neurologist is crazy...He's just giving you bullshit because you paid him."

Alert to every literary and racist cliché, Wong co-opts them and plays relentlessly with their satiric possibilities, especially in describing her exceptionally thriving immigrant family. Even Beautiful One, is "a franchise queen," who successfully operates three Vietnamese restaurants. The family home, "Belcarra," is a sprawling McMansion with three white garages that always house three or four new American cars. It is located on the side of a mountain, a two hour drive from the city of "Hongcouver," where white families moan about the "Asian tsunami." "Pot Mountain" or "The Poteau" is ideal for growing and harvesting pot.

Family gatherings are lavish affairs and a cousin's wedding, attended by fifteen hundred guests, provides rich scope for the author's

"[Lindsay is] the future of Asian Canadian writing."

**KEVIN CHONG**

author of *The Plague*

wicked observations:

*A barbequed pig is ushered in on a tray, double doors propped open, five pall bearers from the butchers conveying the wide-eyed carcass, still shocked. Tummy hollowed out, skin like a fitted cape, dyed shocking sienna. One of the uncles hacked the animal into bite-sized snacks with an executioner's axe. Another uncle yanked out the pig's underbelly.*

A "camping" holiday, in which the families depart in matching trailers for a "dehydrated" RV resort in Osoyoos produces similar soaring prose.

*...we huddled miserably, suffocating in the choky desert heat, inside our claustrophobic 150-square-foot mobile cabins, skinny, rectangular travelling motels that had the frigid luxury and malfunctioning comfort of unplugged commercial freezers. This was what we thought real North Americans did: that we were fruitfully living the American dream if we owned one brand-new R.V. per family.*

Although the derisive impulse is not restrained in describing Wong's own life ("Ivy League graduate escapes her crazy family"), it does not conceal either her accomplishments or her courage. Her academic success began at UBC ("The University of a Million Chinese") where teachers spotted the raw potential in the "weirdo character profiles" she wrote of her relatives; from there she went on to graduate work at Columbia University.

accurate medical diagnosis and treatment. In spite of the severity of her migraine-associated vestibulopathy (MAV), she completed the MFA degree, and went on to earn many awards.

Should she fear repercussions from her revelations of "the Chinese loony-bin"? **Kevin Chong** apparently thinks so for he warns "Someone get Lindsay Wong into a witness protection program." He couples that plea with the opinion that she is "the future of Asian Canadian writing."

Anyone seeking a gloss on his last remark might look to **Philip Roth**'s extensive responses, in essays and interviews, to attacks by some members of the Jewish community on his racy portrayal of Jewish life in *Goodbye Columbus* and *Portnoy's Complaint*.

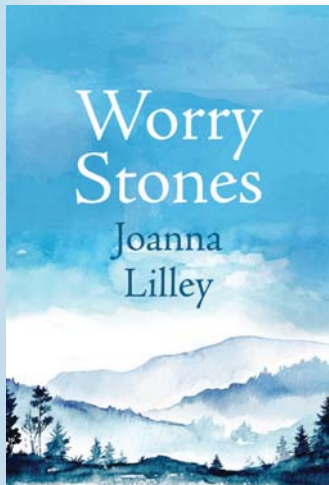
978-1551527369

Joan Givner reviews from Victoria.

**Lindsay Wong will be one of 102 authors at the Vancouver Writers Fest, October 15-21.**



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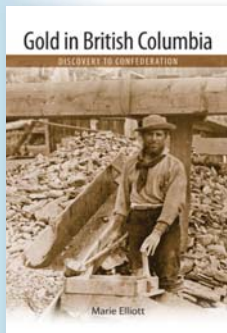


# Worry Stones

Joanna Lilley

Set in the Canadian Arctic and Scottish Highlands, Lilley’s captivating debut novel portrays art historian Jenny in her struggle to rescue her mother from a religious cult and keep her fanatical father at bay. All the while, Jenny tries to move beyond her need for the comfort of “worry stones” and to foster her own talents as a sculptor, working alongside Inuit artists.

978-1-55380-541-0 (PRINT) 978-1-55380-542-7 (EBOOK) 290 pp \$18.95

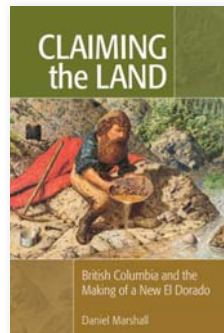


## Gold in British Columbia

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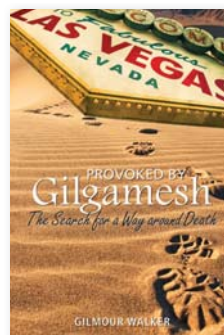


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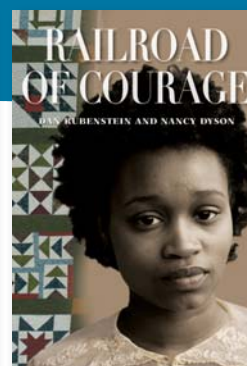


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Norma Charles

Jeanie Leclare discovers that a giant cedar tree next to her school is going to be bulldozed by her uncle. How can she become a tree musketeer and save the tree?

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## FOR YOUNG READERS

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152 pp \$11.95

Chevrolet Nomad station wagon at the Arch at the Great Divide, circa 1960—Kicking Horse Pass, Yoho National Park, Alberta.

## THE GREAT DIVIDE

**Surveying the Great Divide: The Alberta/BC Boundary Survey, 1913-1917** by Jay Sherwood (Caitlin Press \$29.95)

BY ROBERT ALLEN

THE PROVINCIAL boundary between B.C. and Alberta is the longest in Canada.

**Surveying the Great Divide** by Jay Sherwood recalls how surveying that line between the two most-western provinces was a remarkable feat.

The “man-defined” northern section follows along the 120th meridian of longitude whereas the southern part follows a natural feature, the Continental Divide.

Sherwood’s focus is the latter—the spine of the Rocky Mountains commonly referred to as the Great Divide.



FROM THE TIME THAT BRITISH Columbia became a province in 1871 until almost the end of the nineteenth century, the province was continually in debt. Very little money was allocated to surveying any boundaries, let alone the main eastern one.

Sensitivity to the province’s extensive borders started to change with the Klondike gold rush of 1896-99, when the province’s northern and northwestern boundaries came into focus.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the B.C. government also required more precise knowledge of its

boundaries to regulate mining and timber interests and to encourage railway and mountain tourism in the Rockies.

Finally, in April 1912, **Richard McBride**’s government committed to surveying B.C.’s eastern boundary.

**George Herbert Dawson**, B.C.’s Surveyor General, contacted **Edouard Deville**, the Dominion of Canada’s Surveyor General, to discuss timing, methods of surveying, and cost sharing.

In 1913, the Dominion, B.C., and Alberta governments agreed to a tripartite agreement to jointly fund the boundary survey.

Of the mountain passes to be surveyed, Kicking Horse Pass was chosen first, even though the Crowsnest Pass had the most economic importance.

Kicking Horse, on the CPR mainline and accessible to Banff and Calgary, offered the commissioners easy access by rail. Men and supplies were moved to the site easily.

Each pass was designated a letter as it was surveyed. Pass A was Kicking Horse, Pass B was Vermillion, C was Simpson, and the list continued on to Pass S, the Yellowhead Pass.

The monument (or survey marker) set at the lowest point of Kicking Horse Pass was numbered 1A. All other monuments set going southerly were given odd numbers such as 3A, 5A, 7A, etc. Monuments

set going northerly were given even numbers such as 2A, 4A, 6A, etc.

As the remaining passes were surveyed, the same numbering system was retained, but the letter designated for the pass was changed to B, C, D, etc.

Fortunately, a number of field party members kept diaries and careful field notes or described their progress in letters to family and friends.

Two normally civil provinces have now been at loggerheads over Alberta pipelines and B.C. wine. But the geographical schism has always been far greater.

Many such documents have survived, and Sherwood has reviewed and drawn from them precise information about the surveys and conditions under which the crews worked.

Sherwood has gone through the documentary and photographic records meticulously to provide a detailed chapter for each year’s fieldwork from 1913 to 1917.

Besides these five yearly chapters, he provides chapters entitled Background, Cast of Characters, Surveying Methods, Geographical Names, Afterword, and Survey Crews. Rounding out the book are acknowledgements, a lengthy list of sources, and

a useful index.

Required to take a “round” of photographs at each of his survey stations, B.C. commissioner **A.O. Wheeler** took nearly 2,000 of them, an astonishing record of mountain photography. Sherwood has incorporated a number of these in each chapter.

During this past decade, members of the Mountain Legacy Project at the University of Victoria have returned to some

of Wheeler’s survey stations to compile a “before and after” photographic record in a technique known as “repeat photography.”

“The repeat photographs that they have taken,” notes Sherwood, “are being used by scientists to document a variety of changes that have

occurred in the landscape during the past century.” Sherwood also uses his own repeat photographs throughout the book.

For example, in the summer of 2017, a large wild fire burned in the Akamina Pass, altering its landscape and ecosystem. Between the original photographs taken by Wheeler and Alberta commissioner **Bill Cautley**, and recent ones by the Mountain Legacy Project and Sherwood, scientists will be able to document the regeneration of the ecosystem and a century of landscape change in this scenic location.

The boundary survey coincided with the worst part of the First World War.

Later, from 1918 to 1924, the impressive and resolute A.O. Wheeler—whose son **Edward Oliver Wheeler** took part in the first topographical survey of Mount Everest in 1921—added to the survey of the Great Divide, while Alberta commissioner Bill Cautley moved further north to survey the 120th meridian from the Great Divide through the Peace River area. Cautley’s later work could probably fill a book of its own.



*SURVEYING THE GREAT DIVIDE* leaves me awestruck by the hardships involved in surveying that border and full of admiration for the detailed fieldwork of a century ago.

We have all driven by signs saying, “Welcome to Alberta” (and “Welcome to British Columbia”), and so now I will have a new and better appreciation of what was involved in determining our intricate eastern boundary from high elevation survey stations in mountains that had never or only very recently been climbed.

Indeed, on my next journey through one of those passes, I will stop and tip my hat to Wheeler, Cautley, and their crews.

I am still spellbound every time I drive through the Yellowhead, Kicking Horse, Vermillion, or Crowsnest passes.

9781987915525

*Robert Allen is a life member of the Association of British Columbia Land Surveyors (ABCLS), a life member of the Canadian Institute of Geomatics, and a Canada Lands Surveyor.*

A Matter of Confidence is a fast-paced political thriller.

THE BRITISH COLUMBIA PROVINCIAL ELECTION on May 9, 2017 was one for the history books. After a long night of ballot counting the Liberal and New Democratic parties were locked in a virtual tie, with the upstart Green Party holding the balance of power in the legislature with three seats, but the final seat count was not known until two weeks later after a painstaking recount and count of absentee ballots in the riding of Courtenay-Comox.

When these ballots were finally tallied, **Christy Clark** and the Liberals had come up one seat short of a bare majority. The stage was set for the NDP to assume power with the support of the Green Party.

But Christy Clark was determined to exercise her right to test the confidence of the legislature some six weeks after the election, only to be handed an inevitable defeat. As per convention, she visited the lieutenant-governor to inform her that she was not in a position to govern, but we now know—in violation of the convention that conversations between the first minister and the Crown’s representative remain secret—that she appealed to the lieutenant-governor to dissolve the legislature.

Lieutenant-Governor **Judith Guichon** refused Clark’s appeal and asked the leader of the NDP if he could obtain the confidence of the legislature. When John Horgan indicated that he would have the confidence of the legislature with the support of the Green Party, the lieutenant-governor invited him to form a government.

**A Matter of Confidence: The Inside Story of the Political Battle for BC** by veteran journalists **Rob Shaw** and **Richard Zussman** is a gripping account of B.C.’s most dramatic election. The 336-page book is a first-hand account of the election based on more than seventy interviews with political operatives, including all of the principal players (save the lieutenant-governor). This primary research has been supplemented by a few newspaper reports; there are no direct references to the secondary (i.e., academic) literature on B.C. politics and history. The book reads like a fast-paced political thriller.

While extensive reference to secondary sources would slow the book down, there are a few places when additional information would have been helpful. For example, the authors note that even though Clark was a trail-blazer for women in politics she was intensely disliked by many female voters, and “as she increased her efforts to speak out about the obstacles faced by women leaders... her credibility was simultaneously eroded by the growing, visceral, negative reaction she elicited from voters—especially, ironically, women.” I have no doubt that the narrative is accurate, but it would have been helpful to have some opinion poll data to support the assertion, as well as perhaps some explanation for this puzzling phenomenon.

The book provides some fascinating glimpses from behind the political lines. Two stand out in particular for me. The election was really won and lost in some of the areas outside Vancouver, principally Surrey as well as Maple Ridge and the defining issue in these communities was bridge tolls. Shaw and Zussman recount that the Liberal Party promised to cap bridge tolls at \$500 per year, saving commuters up to \$1,000 per year. When NDP campaign director **Bob Dewar** saw this announcement in the newspaper, he instantly decided that the NDP would respond with a promise to eliminate bridge tolls entirely and within five hours John Horgan was announcing the new policy to “thunderous applause at a rally in Surrey.”

The authors almost seem to celebrate this policy-making on the fly as a stroke of political genius, but it really amounts to a great condemnation of the populist tendencies in our democracy. The Port Mann Bridge was a \$3.6 billion dollar project, and the Golden Ears Bridge cost \$800 million. The NDP completely upset the financing of these projects on the spur of the moment for immediate political benefit—and damn the consequences or the

greater good. Maybe the bridge tolls were unfair, but one would hope that a multi-billion dollar decision would be the product of long and considered deliberation. I certainly expect my students to work more than five hours on their essays.

The book’s account of the political negotiations that led to the formation of the new government is especially compelling. As kingmaker, the Greens entered into negotiations with both the Liberal and New Democratic parties. While there was always a better policy fit between the Greens and the NDP, **Andrew Weaver** had a

better working relationship with Christy Clark and previously **Gordon Campbell** than with John Horgan. Indeed, the relationship between Weaver and Horgan was apparently frosty, at least initially. However, the Liberals reportedly did not offer the Greens much in their meetings, whereas the NDP was very keen to work with the Green Party to form a government.

But Shaw and Zussman report that the outcome of the negotiations was essentially pre-determined by the visceral dislike of the Liberals by Green MLA **Sonia Furstenau**, who had battled the Liberal government for years over the dumping of toxic waste in a quarry near her community of Shawnigan Lake on Vancouver Island.

Furstenau was the deal breaker. She “simply could not be brought onside to consider any type of deal that would allow the Liberal government to spend one more day in office.” There were hints of this enmity in the media at the time, but Shaw and Zussman offer a much fuller account of these tense negotiations.

In sum, Shaw and Zussman have provided a comprehensive and highly readable account not just of the B.C. election of 2017 and the first minority government in the province in sixty-five years, but the entire decade of politics in the province that preceded these historic events. *A Matter of Confidence* is a great summer read for any political junkie.

*Hamish Telford is an associate professor of political science at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford. His latest book is Talking Past Each Other: Quebec and the Federal Dialogue in Canada, 1867-2017 (Peter Lang Pub. Group).*

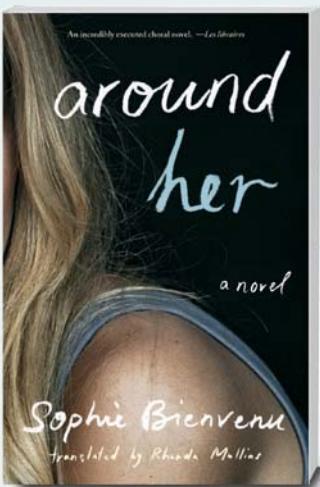
# CHRISTY CLARK DOWNFALL



LYLE STAFFORD PHOTO/POSTMEDIA NEWS

# TALONBOOKS

## LATE-SPRING / EARLY-FALL TITLES



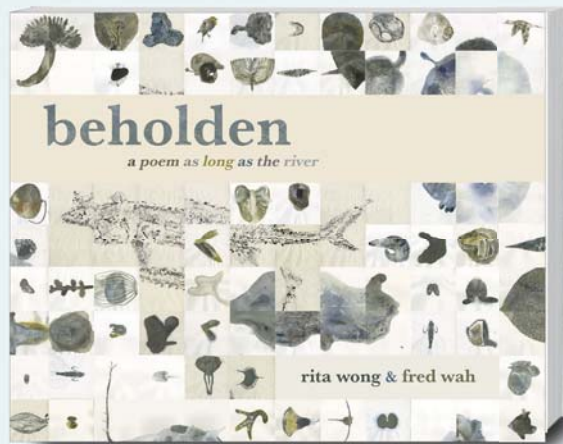
### Around Her

SOPHIE BIENVENU

translated by Rhonda Mullins

In the mid-1990s, a sixteen-year-old gives birth to a healthy boy in the anonymity of a Montreal hospital. She gives him up for adoption – a parting that will affect all successive stages of her adult life. *Around Her* traces twenty years of the lives of Florence Gaudreault and her estranged son Adrien through the prism of twenty characters who have crossed their paths and who, each in turn and with their own unique voice, tell their story.

978-1-77201-209-5 • \$19.95 • Fiction  
Available September 2018

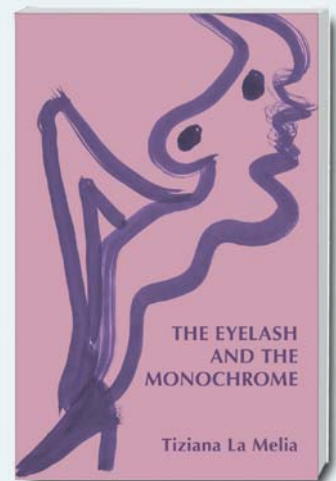


### beholden

FRED WAH & RITA WONG

Comprised of two lines of poetic text flowing along a 114-foot-long map of the Columbia River, this powerful image-poem by acclaimed poets Fred Wah and Rita Wong presents language yearning to understand the consequences of our hydroelectric manipulation of one of North America's largest river systems.

978-1-77201-211-8 • \$19.95 • Poetry  
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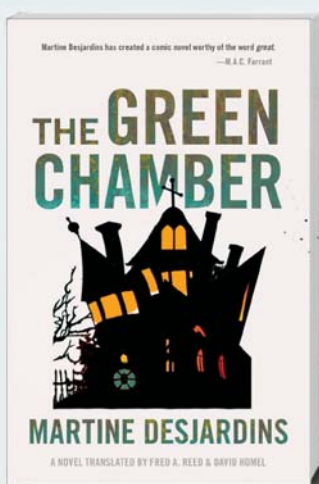


### The Eyelash and the Monochrome

TIZIANA LA MELIA

*The Eyelash and the Monochrome* asks: What happens when material becomes thought and thought becomes object? At once a book of poetry and an artist's book, it gathers together poems, performance scripts, and parallel texts, illustrating the hybrid nature of these texts and trespassing upon the boundaries of genres.

978-1-77201-197-5 • \$19.95 • Poetry  
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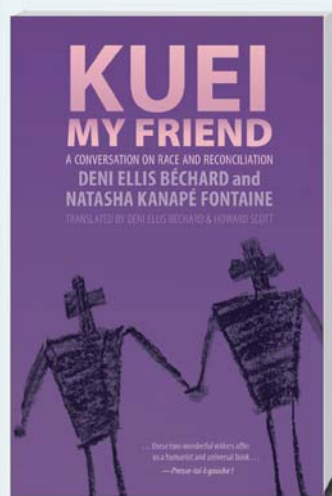
### The Green Chamber

MARTINE DESJARDINS

translated by Fred A. Reed & David Homel

Set between 1913 and 1964 in one of Montreal's upper-middle-class, suburban neighbourhoods, Martine Desjardins's *The Green Chamber* is a riveting, fast-paced, highly atmospheric novel that chronicles the decline of a wealthy French-Canadian family over the course of three generations.

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### Kuei, My Friend

A Conversation on Race and Reconciliation

DENI ELLIS BÉCHARD &  
NATASHA KANAPÉ FONTAINE

translated by Deni Ellis Béchard & Howard Scott

*Kuei, My Friend* is an engaging book of letters: a literary and political encounter between Innu poet Natasha Kanapé Fontaine and Québécois-American novelist Deni Ellis Béchard. They engage in a frank conversation about racism and reconciliation, posing questions we should all be discussing.

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### White

DENI ELLIS BÉCHARD

Assigned to write an exposé on Richmond Hew, the conservation world's most elusive and corrupt humanitarian worker, an intrepid journalist finds himself on a plane to the Democratic Republic of the Congo – a country he thinks he understands. But when he meets Sola, a woman searching for a rootless white orphan, he slowly uncovers a tapestry of corruption and racial tensions generations in the making.

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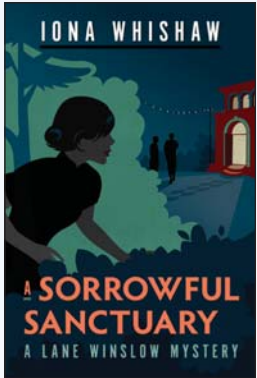
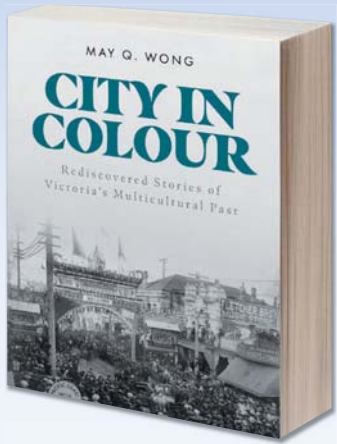
# BEAUTIFUL BOOKS TO LEAF THROUGH

## City in Colour

Rediscovered Stories of Victoria's Multicultural Past  
**May Q. Wong**

A timely, intriguing collection of the overlooked stories of Victoria's pioneers, trailblazers, and community builders who were also people of colour. Learn about the Hawaiian Islanders who constructed Fort Victoria, Manzo Nagano, Canada's first recorded immigrant from Japan, and more.

TouchWood Editions | \$22 pb | \$12.99 epub

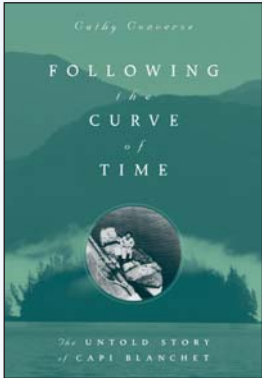


**A Sorrowful Sanctuary**  
A Lane Winslow Mystery (#5)  
**Iona Whishaw**

“Engrossing.” —Anna Lee Huber

1947. Lane Winslow and Inspector Darling investigate the murder of an unidentified man found in a sinking rowboat, whose death seems to be linked to the fascist National Unity Party of Canada.

TouchWood Editions | \$16.95 pb | \$7.99 epub



**Following the Curve of Time**  
The Untold Story of Capi Blanchet  
**Cathy Converse**

Converse follows the same route taken by Capi Blanchet in *The Curve of Time* and, in her own memoir, pays tribute to Blanchet. Includes insiders' recollections of Blanchet and new information about the places they both saw. Previously available in hardcover.

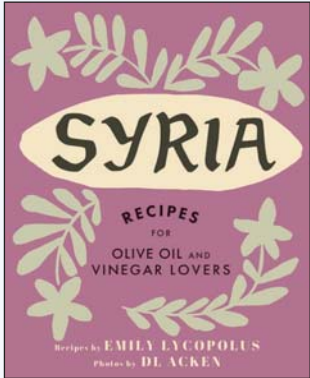
TouchWood Editions | \$20 pb | \$12.99 epub



**Great Canadian Ghost Stories**  
Legendary Tales of Hauntings from Coast to Coast  
**Barbara Smith**

A compelling collection of more than 100 iconic ghost stories from all ten provinces and three territories of Canada. Includes both well-known and rarely told supernatural tales.

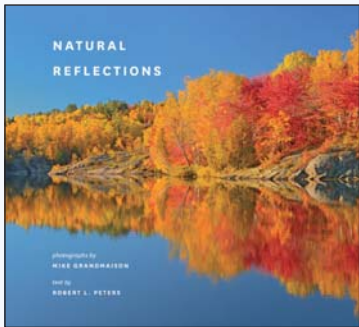
TouchWood Editions | \$20 pb | \$12.99 epub



**Syria**  
Recipes for Olive Oil and Vinegar Lovers  
**Emily Lycopoulus, Photos by DL Acken**

A new cookbook in the gorgeous series that reveals the best ways to use specialty olive oils and vinegars in the authentic and flavourful dishes of Syria, such as falafel, fatteh, kibbeh, and atayef.

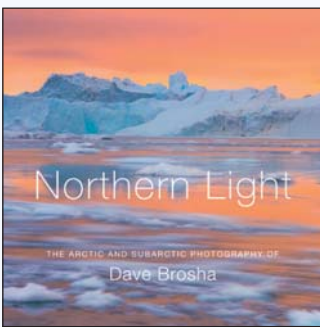
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**Natural Reflections**  
by **Mike Grandmaison, Robert L. Peters**

An inspiring book of photography that takes the reader on a walk through the vast beauty of “Natural Canada.” Explore Canada's natural beauty from the unique perspective of Mike Grandmaison's lens and amplified by the observations of Robert L. Peters.

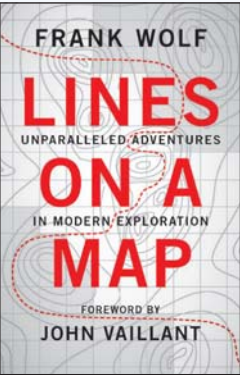
RMB | \$40 hc



**Northern Light**  
The Arctic and Subarctic Photography of Dave Brosha  
**Dave Brosha**

With stunning photographs taken in Iceland, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Yukon, this original portfolio will inspire everyone to reconsider the nature of these sometimes forgotten landscapes.

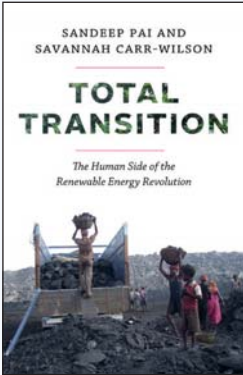
RMB | \$50 hc



**Lines on a Map**  
Unparalleled Adventures in Modern Exploration  
by **Frank Wolf**

Two decades of adventure writing are captured in this entertaining and inspiring collection of travel journalism by renowned adventurer, writer, filmmaker and environmentalist Frank Wolf.

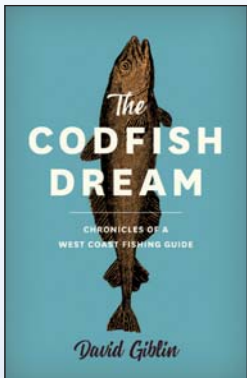
RMB | \$25 pb



**Total Transition**  
The Human Side of the Renewable Energy Revolution  
by **Sandeep Pai, Savannah Carr-Wilson**

Follow the journey of a Canadian and Indian couple, Savannah and Sandeep, as they travel the world to capture the human side of one of the biggest energy transitions of our times—the global shift from fossil fuels to renewables.

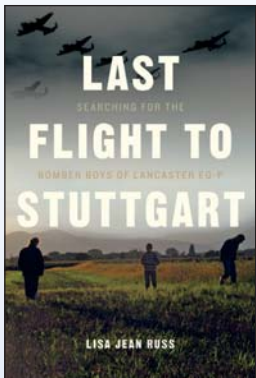
RMB | \$22 pb



**The Codfish Dream**  
Chronicles of a West Coast Fishing Guide  
**David Giblin**

West Coasters will delight in this amusing and slightly surreal account of life as a fishing guide for the well-to-do on a remote BC island in the summer of 1983.

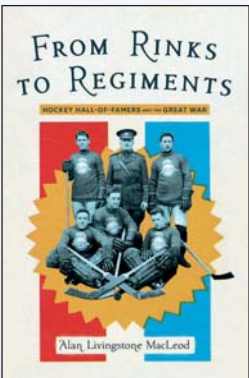
Heritage House | \$19.95 pb | \$15.99 ebook



**Last Flight to Stuttgart**  
Searching for the Bomber Boys of Lancaster EQ-P  
**Lisa Jean Russ**

A Canadian woman living in Australia traces her journey to learn about and give remembrance to a family member who died in World War II at the age of 19.

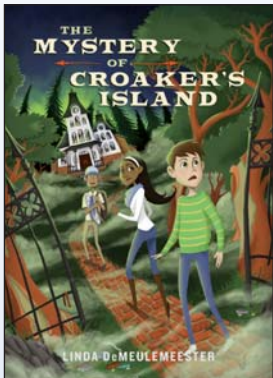
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**From Rinks to Regiments**  
Hockey Hall-of-Famers and the Great War  
**Alan Livingstone MacLeod**

A fascinating look at the early years of hockey in Canada and how the careers of elite players were altered by the call to war.

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**The Mystery of Croaker's Island**  
**Linda DeMeulemeester**

A group of unlikely friends are drawn into a mystery involving a haunted island and vanishing teenagers in this new novel from the author of the award-winning Grim Hill series.

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**The Canadian Party System: An Analytic History**  
by **Richard Johnston**  
(UBC Press \$55)

BY ADAM COOMBS

**F**EW POLITICAL PARTIES in countries within the Westminster political system have been as successful over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as the Liberal Party of Canada. Not only have they governed for ninety of the previous 118 years, but only three leaders in the party's entire history have not become prime minister.

Even when suffering historic election defeats as they did

overwhelming voting base in any region. Alternatively, however, the parliamentary logic of the system pushes parties in the other direction due to a tendency to produce one-party governments with a tremendous amount of power, thus encouraging all parties to aim to form government by competing nationally.

The second force is that, despite creating a system that

cording to Johnston, it is this cycle of Conservative Party victory and defeat that gives the Canadian party system its extreme volatility.

Québec's willingness to vote en masse for one party is not the only factor leading to long-term instability. Rather, what Johnston calls "insurgent" parties with short life spans and a geographic focus also lead to instability, as he

these thematic arguments to provide a sweeping and in-depth explanation of the Canadian party system as it evolved over the twentieth century. It is his historical emphasis that makes this book such a valuable contribution to the relatively limited literature of Canadian political parties.

To me, as a historian of Canadian politics, I welcome this analysis of the volatility and

on the interactions between the parties.

Moreover, much of the political science research done explicitly on Canada's party system is over forty years old, written before the rise to dominance of quantitative analysis in academic political analysis, which makes *The Canadian Party System: An Analytic History* a much-needed intervention in the field and invaluable for anyone seeking to understand Canadian politics in the twentieth century. Johnston's expertise in the methods of political science allows him to quantitatively assess important questions regarding voter behaviour and identity that could only be inferred using traditional methods of historical research.

Most Canadians don't realize the extent to which the federal Liberal Party has been dominant for 118 years.

ALL HAIL THE MIDDLE OF

# THE ROAD

in 1958 and 1984, the federal Liberal Party bounced back, never remaining in opposition for longer than nine years.

While standard political science theories of party systems suggest that the Westminster model will trend towards two dominant parties, what is remarkable about the Liberals is that rather than being a party of the right or the left, they were—and remain—a party of the ideological centre, consistently fighting off attacks on both their left and right flanks. Furthermore, the Liberals have faced not one consistent opposition but an array of insurgent parties that rapidly attracted substantial support in certain regions of the country, and in most instances just as rapidly lost it.

This fractionalized and unstable nature of the Canadian party system also seems to defy standard interpretive theories. But how much does Canada actually depart from the political norm? And if indeed it does depart from the norm, as the examples above suggest, why?

It is these questions that University of British Columbia political scientist **Richard Johnston** addresses in ***The Canadian Party System: An Analytical History***.

For Johnston, the nature of the Canadian party system is fundamentally shaped by three main forces. The first is the electoral logic within the Westminster system which rewards parties for developing concentrated support in one geographic region and punishes parties with broad national support but not an

should encourage voters to act on a riding level, where they can have the greatest effect, Canadians instead act on a national, or at least regional level, where each individual has almost no effect. Finally, for Johnston, the historical context within which parties act matters, and the party's past shapes how they respond to subsequent issues in what he calls "reactive sequences." Ultimately, for Johnston, "the upshot is [that] history counts...."

Taking these three factors into account, Johnston makes a series of arguments to explain the nature of the Canadian party system and its evolution. While he lists ten specific arguments in his conclusion, these can be summarized in four broad themes. The first group of arguments addresses the Liberal Party's electoral dominance, which Johnston explains as a result of the party's consistent ability to win the majority of seats in Québec combined with extensive support from non-francophone Catholic voters.

But as Johnston details in his second group of arguments, Québec also plays an important role in shaping the Conservative Party's electoral fortunes, which are determined by whether Québec swings for the party or not. If it does swing for the Tories, as Québec did in 1930, 1958, and 1984, then the Conservatives win a majority government. However, when Québec inevitably swings back to the Liberals, the Conservatives' seat totals collapse, as they did in 1935, 1962, and 1993. Ac-



**Yup, that's Pierre Trudeau with hair back in 1968 when the Liberal Party won 158 seats (an increase of 22).**

PETER BRIGGS / CANADIAN PRESS PHOTO

details in his third group of arguments. These insurgent parties compete almost exclusively with the Conservative Party for votes, and they cycle in reverse to the Conservatives' fortunes to contribute to the system's volatility.

One insurgent party stands apart from all the others: the left-wing Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, founded in 1932, which morphed into the New Democratic Party (NDP) in 1961. A traditional party of the left, the NDP's growth, while slower than expected, mirrors that of other leftist parties in Westminster systems. Johnston argues that the CCF/NDP competes almost exclusively with the Liberals for votes, which makes it the primary factor leading to the fractionalization of the electorate in Canada.

Overall, Johnston combines

fractionalization of the electorate—and I am also surprised that the atypical example of the Canadian party system within the Westminster system has gone understudied for so many years.

Johnston's bibliography reveals that much of the literature on Canadian political parties is now decades old and mostly qualitative in its analysis. One such example is the brief (1920-1930) history of the Progressive Party, where only one monograph and a limited number of unpublished graduate theses exist.

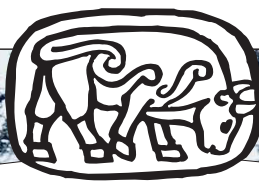
While the work by scholars such as **C.B. Macpherson**, **W.L. Morton**, **Walter Young**, and **Reginald Whitaker** on Social Credit, the Progressive Party, the CCF, and the Liberal Party respectively are excellent, they are exclusively qualitative and do not focus

As a historian of Canadian political parties, I find Johnston's prose clear and straightforward.

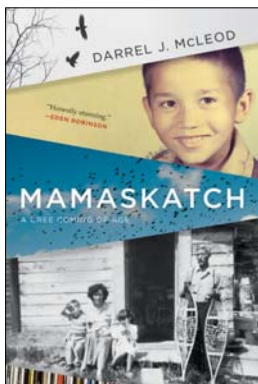
Ultimately, Johnston has written a book that will be required reading for students of Canadian politics for decades to come. In identifying and explaining the role of the Liberal and Conservative parties and their relationship to Québec, while also highlighting the importance of what he calls "insurgent" third parties, Johnston provides a valuable explanatory framework for the unique nature of Canada's party system.

9780774836074

*Adam Coombs did his graduate work in twentieth century Canadian politics and ideology at UBC. He co-hosts Tuesday Morning Special Blend on CKCU FM 93.1 (Ottawa), which features political commentary.*



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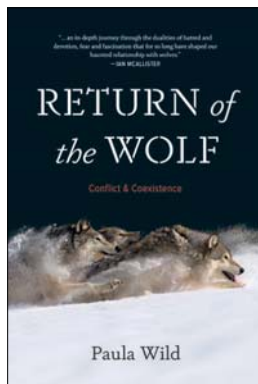


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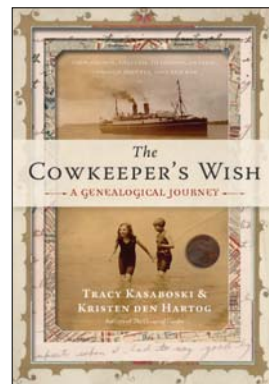


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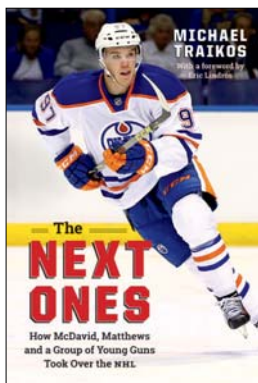


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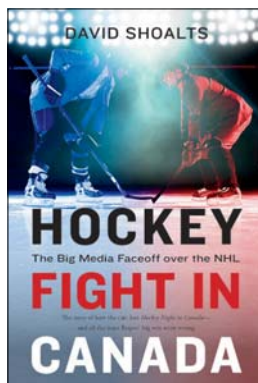


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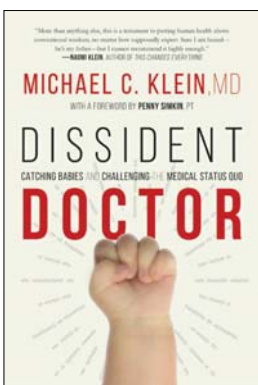


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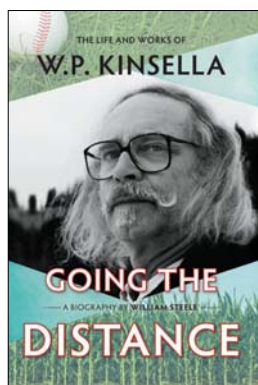


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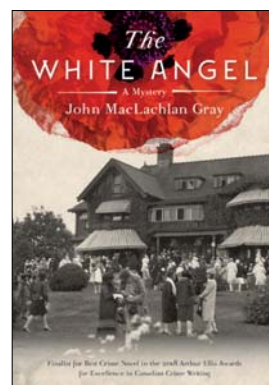


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**Better Sex Through Mindfulness: How Women Can Cultivate Desire**  
by **Lori A. Brotto**  
(Greystone Books \$22.95)

BY BECKI L. ROSS

**L**ORI A. BROTTTO IS A feminist sex scientist at UBC whose goal is to translate sexological findings into digestible and meaningful knowledge for women in search of fulfilling sexual activity.

At 260 pages, her **Better Sex Through Mindfulness: How Women Can Cultivate Desire** marks a sprightly addition to the raft of sex advice books marketed to women over the past thirty years such as *Becoming Orgasmic* (1987), *For Yourself* (2000), *The Elusive Orgasm* (2007) and *Come as You Are* (2017).

In *Better Sex*, Brotto notes that upwards of 30% of women globally experience some form of sexual difficulty, whether it is low desire or loss of libido, dissatisfaction as a result of sexual trauma, gynecological cancers, or genital pain.

She therefore aims “to bring the issue of low sexual desire in women into the open so that women feel less shame and are empowered to cultivate their feelings of sexual desire.”

Brotto points to stress arising from work, family, and money, the ‘tyranny of infomania,’ as well as the pressures of navigating contradictory cultural messages.

Such messages can pummel women into normative ways of looking, acting, and thinking.

The well-documented ‘orgasm gap’ among straight women suggests that women have been paying attention to men’s sexual satisfaction much more than their own for far too long.

Brotto boldly criticizes the alleged benefits of ceaseless multi-tasking. Cognitive overload often leads to less efficiency, more mistakes and unwanted distractions in the bedroom.

Rather than endorse the promise of a pharmaceutical fix, such as Addyi—the ‘pink pill’ equivalent to Viagra — Brotto makes a persuasive case for applying the 4000-year-old Buddhist practice of mindfulness to matters of women’s sexual dysfunction.

Mindfulness is a therapeutic approach with boundless capacity for lubricating women’s sexual potential. As she explains, “when we pay attention to the body in a kind, compassionate, and non-judgmental, and present-oriented way, it offers us a new way of being in the world. And that new way of being might just be critical for the sexual satisfaction that so many women crave.”

Alert to the path-clearing work of others, Brotto carefully cites **William Masters** and **Virginia Johnson** who developed ‘sensate focus’ in sex therapy with couples in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as molecular biologist,

**Jon Kabat-Zinn**, who began introducing mindfulness to patients suffering from chronic pain in the 1970s and 1980s.

We learn that Brotto, in collaboration with the B.C. Centre for Sexual Medicine in Vancouver, has co-led a mindfulness-based sex therapy program for hundreds of women over the past fifteen years.

During an eight-week period, Brotto and her interdisciplinary team at UBC lead small groups of women through awareness exercises



BECKI L. ROSS

encounter instructions for awakening the vagina, vulva, and clitoris through solely paying attention to genitals while lying on a bed.

In a later chapter, readers are invited to try hands-on ‘pleasurable touch’ exercises designed to enhance sexual response in both singles

and couples, emphasizing the benefits of employing all five senses during sexual activity.

In her final substantive chapter, ‘Tuning In To Pain,’ Brotto addresses the 15% of women in North America for whom acutely painful sex is a regular occurrence.

While noting that research findings are still scant, Brotto draws on several studies to show that group mindfulness-based therapy—with its

enous women and women of colour navigate the added minefield of racialized misogyny en route to expressions of healthy sexual subjectivity?

For asexuals who narrate their contentment in life without sex, what might be the unintended consequences of the reductive claim that all areas of life suffer when sex suffers?

And might sex-based mindfulness yield dividends for the polyamorous and kinky as much as for the conventionally coupled?

I also wonder about the specific sex-related concerns of sex workers—escorts, cam girls, sugar babies, porn actors, and erotic dancers—who have rarely received non-judgmental treatment for sex complaints from health care providers?

Nevertheless, as a queer sociologist disturbed by sexol-

and even imprisonment.

It is no wonder that so many women in Brotto’s research expressed self-criticism and self-doubt about their sexual selves, as well as unhappiness with obligatory and unrewarding sex.

Brotto also exposes the lack of evidence-based education in schools dedicated to the theme of sexual pleasure.

On the campaign trail, the new premier of Ontario, **Doug Ford**, catered to his fundamentally sex-negative and fearful base by promising to roll back the previous government’s revised sex education curriculum.

Months later, as Ford and his conservatives dither, let’s consider the value of re-imagining pedagogy in high school classrooms that a) introduces sex toys as valued stimuli for sexual arousal, b) explores

**Lori Brotto has enhanced the ethically minded campaign to boost women’s sexual self-esteem worldwide.**

first COMINGS

MARTIN DEE PHOTO

such as the Body Scan (taking note of sensations in each part of the body, including genitals), guided meditation, and discussion about what participants are discovering, including the vulva-like properties of a raisin.

At week 5, women are encouraged to use sexual aids such as erotica (made by and for women) and/or vibrators to elicit sexual arousal. Post-session facilitation, or coaching, is made available online and through audio-recordings, and women are encouraged to complete up to 40 minutes of daily meditation between sessions.

Evidence-based results, including questionnaires and self-reports by session participants, reveal increased sexual satisfaction by 66%, as well as improvements in desire, orgasms, mood, and overall well-being.

To me, it was refreshing to

emphasis on acceptance and compassion—helps sufferers reduce genital pain, sex-related distress, and depression.



EXHILARATING PROMISE RESIDES in Brotto’s thesis that mindfulness practice can change the brain’s structure and function to enable cultivation of more nourishing human sexual exchange.

At the same time, Brotto’s research would benefit from a more rigorous adoption of an intersectional analytical framework. For example, she relies heavily on stories from white, heterosexual women, with very brief gestures to lesbians, bisexuals, and same-sex couples.

We could have learned more about the sexual desires and frustrations of LGBTQ folks and two-spirits, including those who identify as trans or non-binary.

Moreover, how do Indig-

ogy’s legacy of pathologizing non-normative sexuality, I found *Better Sex* to be both surprisingly radical and immensely stimulating.



LORI BROTTTO’S HOPE-FILLED BOOK arrives at an auspicious moment: women, girls, and non-binary folks are breaking the silence about sexual harassment and assault at the hands of predatory men in the era of #MeToo and #TimesUp. Yet as we learn more about the contours and content of widespread sexual danger, and as we seek to redress the alarming under-reportage of sex-based crimes, our grasp of women’s sexual pleasure remains murky.

Sexual literacy, desire, and practice have always been thorny arenas for women, given that possession of a lusty sexual appetite has sometimes meant the risk of shame, stigma, punishment,

the meaning and practice of enthusiastic consent, c) foregrounds knowledge of sexual and gender minorities, and d) integrates sex-based mindfulness as a strategy for sexual enlightenment, joy, and healing.

Lori Brotto’s *Better Sex* not only inoculates the reader against the scourge of sexual ignorance, guilt, and dread, her book bravely enlarges our grasp of what might be possible on a new or even revolutionary sexual horizon.

978-1771642354

*Becki Ross teaches at the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice at UBC. She is co-founder of the West End Sex Workers Memorial and author of Burlesque West: Showgirls, Sex, & Sin in Post-war Vancouver (UTP, 2009).*

*For the unabridged version of this commentary, visit The Ormsby Review.*

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# review

## I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE DOG WON

As early as eight weeks, puppies are tested to determine whether or not they have the personality to do police work.

**The Dog Lover Unit: Lessons in  
Courage from the World's K9 Cops**  
by Rachel Rose  
(St. Martin's/Macmillan \$28.99)

BY BONNIE REILLY SCHMIDT

**R**ACHEL ROSE'S **THE DOG Lover Unit: Lessons in Courage from the World's K9 Cops** is a surprising departure from her previous publications of poetry. On the surface, her study of police dogs and their handlers seems an unlikely subject for Vancouver's poet laureate (2014 to 2017). Rose demonstrates, however, that perhaps only a poet can interpret the human-animal connection in such an insightful and articulate way.

Rose's research was conducted over a four-year period and takes her to canine units (K9 in police vernacular) in four countries. As she states, "I go wherever the dogs take me," and she gains access to units that few civilians are afforded. Rose "tracks" along with the units during investigations, and volunteers to allow the dogs to "take a bite" of her during their training. She interviews the dog handlers and researches some of the more controversial issues facing police forces today, such as the harassment of female police officers and the use of deadly force, making for an informed narrative.

Anyone who loves dogs will enjoy this book. One of the first things readers learn is that police dogs are highly trained working dogs, not pets. No one should pet or touch these animals except their handlers, who are referred to in the canine unit as a dog's "mom" or "dad." Rose discovers the close and loving connection between police handlers and their dogs. The two live and work together and most handlers keep their dogs long after the dog is retired, and

often until death. This relationship begins as early as eight weeks, when puppies are tested to determine whether or not they have the personality to do police work, a fascinating process and one of the most interesting chapters of the book.

Once the puppy passes muster, a handler is assigned. Handlers, too, are subject to intense periods of physical training and years of voluntary work with police dogs before being selected as members of a canine unit. The dogs are issued with a regimental number and are considered partners with their handlers, an indication of their value in police work.



IN *THE DOG LOVER UNIT*, ROSE MANAGES to capture the personality of each dog and describes in detail their ability to do what they are trained to do. The dogs she meets are experts in water recovery, searching for drugs in prisons, locating cadavers, finding missing people, and chasing down suspects, to name a few of their responsibilities. As a reward for their obedience, the dogs are always highly praised by their handlers and allowed time to play.

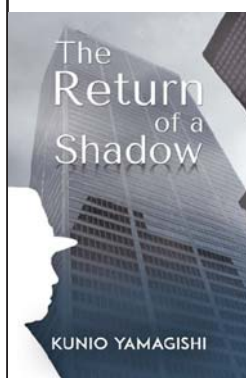
Rose supplements these stories with photographs of many of the dogs she meets along with their police parents. Although the dogs are happy to be working, few of us consider that they are also exposed to danger. For example, they may inhale an illicit drug such as heroin during a search. They can also die in the line of duty, often while defending their handler. This was true of **Chip** who, along with RCMP officer **Doug Lewis**, was stabbed multiple times by a violent suspect during a foot chase. Chip did not survive, and Lewis almost lost his life.

We also learn more about how police forces in other countries use canines. In France, for example, the public has a general fear of police dogs. This is

## The Return of a Shadow

By Kunio Yamagishi

*A poignant novel about the Japanese internment in Canada and an internee's life after his release*



Eizo Osada had his shadow, always there inside his head, ready, unbidden, to announce itself. It had been there since he left Japan for Canada over forty years ago. He had left his wife and three sons, one of them only two years old, to earn money to maintain the family back home.

Then Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. A worried Canadian government interned Japanese people. After his release his shadow questioned why he did not go back to his family, but there was the last letter from his wife twenty-three years ago asking him to stay in Canada as there was no employment in war-torn Japan. Now, approaching retirement, the time had come to return to the wife and family that he had not seen for so long.

Little did he know what awaited him and how he in turn would become a shadow.

ISBN 9781786937155 • Available on amazon.ca, amazon.co.uk, amazon.com, or bookstores near you.



RCMP Constable Nathalie Cuvele training Eryx for a K9 unit near Nanaimo.

because the Nazis used dogs to control the population during the occupation of France in the Second World War, a factor still ingrained in the minds of many French citizens. To this day, French police officers muzzle their dogs while in public.

In the United Kingdom, most of the dog handlers are men, though Rose just happened to visit a squad with a majority of women. In contrast, few women make it into canine units in Canada. Rose notes that many women canine handlers in the RCMP face “years of discrimination and bullying.” In the RCMP, this gendered viewpoint also extends to female dogs, which are considered a liability because they are thought to lack aggression. The majority of the canines used by the RCMP are male.



BUT THE DOG LOVER UNIT IS ABOUT MORE than police dogs and their work. It is also a book about crime and punishment in western society, a weighty issue that appears alongside Rose’s own experience as a “righteous victim” of sexual abuse as a child. It is this victimization, first introduced in the prologue, that leads Rose on her journey with the canine units. Questions about loyalty, fear, violence, and human injustice in her personal life emerge and are confronted the more she learns about police dogs.

Rose also discovers that police officers are people too. Readers will realize this as well, largely because Rose is so adept at asking the officers relevant and meaningful questions such as “What made you who you are?” “How do you handle negative publicity?” “What’s your normal routine?” and “What do you wish people knew?”

These conversations provide insight into the thoughts of the men and women who place their lives on the line for their communities on a daily basis. In the process, Rose distills some of the more recent controversies involving the police over issues such as the appropriate use of force. She compares the public’s perceptions of the police with the “situational awareness” skills that all police officers are trained to use, and she offers alternative ways to look at these issues and the work police officers do.

Rose acknowledges in the epilogue that people will be conflicted over her conclusions. She ruminates that she finds herself caught in between two groups: between her “leftie circle” of friends in the arts community who she anticipates “will not support this work” because of its focus on policing, and those people “on the right politically [who] likely will not support me, either personally or ideologically” because she is from that community.

Politics and ideology aside, Rose insists that we are all part of the conversation, noting that there is “danger” in adopting any one “single story” when it comes to justice. It is a powerful reminder that not only stirs our admiration for Rose’s honesty and courage, but makes for challenging but engaging reading.

9781250110749

*Bonnie Reilly Schmidt was an RCMP officer between 1977 and 1987. She wrote **Silenced: The Untold Story of the Fight for Equality in the RCMP** (Caitlin Press, 2015). She recently retired from NightShift, a non-profit that feeds the homeless and those with mental illness and addictions in Surrey.*

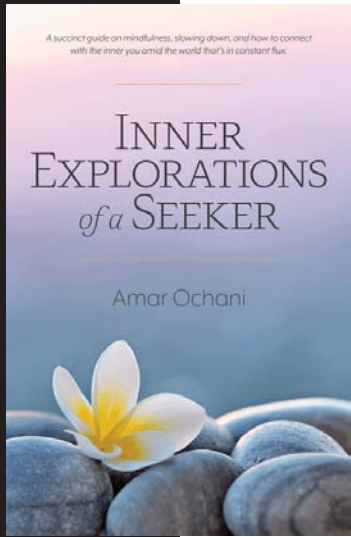
## Inner Explorations of a Seeker

by Amar Ochani

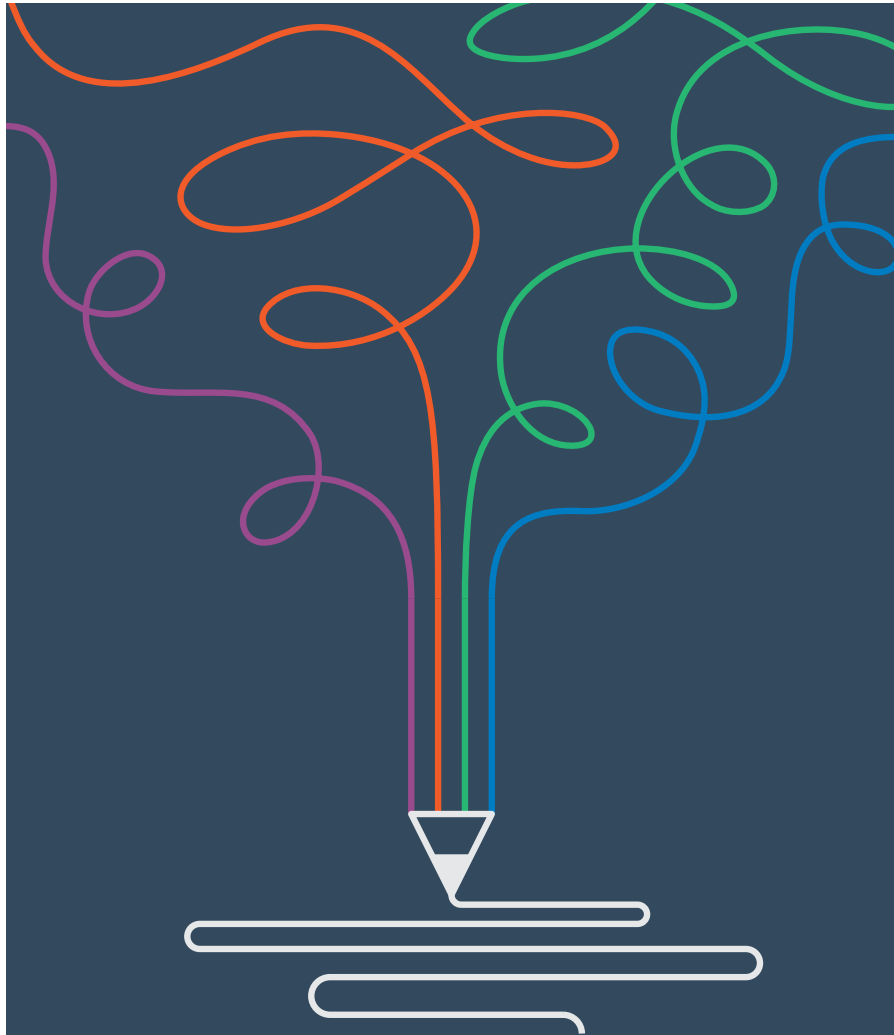
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**Changemakers: Embracing Hope, Taking Action and Transforming the World** by Fay Weller & Mary Wilson (New Society \$17.99)

BY SANDI RATCH

**T**EN YEARS AGO, I WAS carrying glass straws because I could see the damage plastic ones were doing. Eventually I gave up.

After years of trying to make a difference by helping our environment, I became jaded. I became lazy in my efforts because it felt like so many others were doing nothing.

This book explained to me how iterative learning happens: change is slow and individual changes in lifestyle are necessary even if they feel pointless—they are the starting point.

Millions of other people were still using plastic straws, so what difference would my little action make? Well, we are at a tipping point as enough people now see plastic straws affecting ecology and wildlife that plastic straws are being banned.

It's a success started by many individuals like myself who acted a decade earlier. Our actions weren't for naught. Environmental improvement is a process and what we do matters.

"By changing ourselves or changing a relatively small detail of the way we live, we change the world," write **Fay Weller** and **Mary Wilson** in **Changemakers: Embracing Hope, Taking Action and Transforming the World**. As they explain the psychology of

it all, how social change happens, they provide examples of individual and community efforts in the Gulf Islands, one of Canada's more environmentally-conscious areas. This is the area that elected the only federal Green Party MP, **Elizabeth May**.

Many of these island com-

attitudes in these communities generated an alternate-thinking, regulation-bending atmosphere where people were more apt to think outside the box and to be cooperative in

pump systems, one person influences another, who then influences another, and so on.

Change can induce distress when it becomes clear that shifts in attitudes and actions

Informative narratives show how small groups of dedicated individuals have created change for their communities. The topics include food (production and provision), transportation, plumbing, clothing, resource re-use, energy options, and challenging the economic system.

The process of expanding similar changes to larger groups might seem arduous and grim but there is something satisfying about reflecting upon the way we exist in this world, and something even more satisfying about living a life aligned with our values. It is one definition of happiness.

The final fourth of the book is a hands-on manual for individuals wanting to build change in their communities. There is room for reflection and mindfulness here, and the examples are useful guidelines for community action. Facilitation techniques are provided.

If you are the kind of person who likes to engage people, do workshops, and wants to make environmental change or other community changes, *Changemakers* is a vital resource.

In the era of Trump, when environmental protection measures are being cut and environmentalists are losing ground, it is a relief to read about people who are making important changes for our environment. 9780865718753

*Historian and blogger Sandi Ratch received her master's degree in archaeology from Simon Fraser University in 1995.*



**Fay Weller is a community organizer and artist; Mary Wilson holds a Ph.D. in education.**

need to be made. The authors describe how dissonance often occurs when "the societal story that we have learned [about our way of life] does not fit with our reality or experience [when we see that we have to fix the environment]."

Coincidentally, we can feel a positive resonance when we see people working towards a new world that fits with our core values. Weller and Wilson argue that we need to develop a new societal story that matches the changes we need to make in order to protect the environment. To support this argument, about half of the book is dedicated to examples from Gulf Island communities that have made significant adjustments to help the environment.



**SANDI RATCH**

# THE LAST PLASTIC STRAW

## How Gulf Islanders have led the way with communal & personal activism

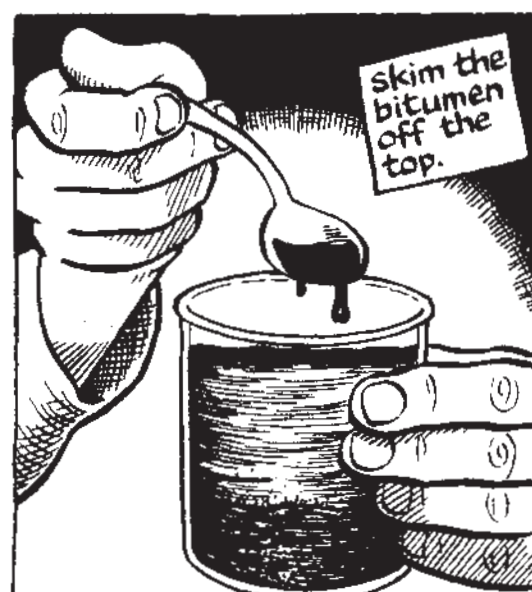
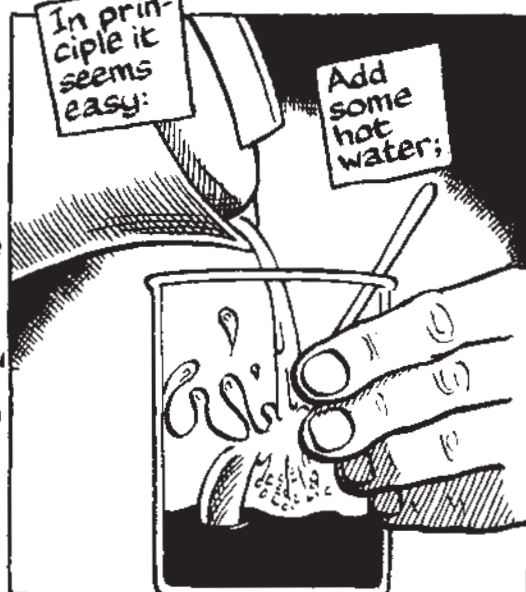
munities changed drastically in the 1960s and '70s when draft evaders came to Canada from the U.S. The isolated nature of islands like Salt Spring, Pender and Gabriola made them ideal bastions for left-leaning immigrants—places where action could happen under the government's radar. In conjunction with B.C.'s so-called counter-culture,

community action.

The creation of The Islands Trust by the provincial NDP also empowered local activism.

One important dynamic discussed by Weller and Wilson is the "neighbour effect" whereby a change by one person will inspire others nearby to make the same change. Whether it is, for example, the use of solar panels or heat

At Fort McMurray's Oil Sands Discovery Centre, an Alberta government museum "generously supported" by the industry it features, we get a demonstration of how the viscous bitumen, which does not flow naturally like regular crude oil, is separated from sand and clay.



**J**oe Sacco, one of the world's greatest comics journalists has teamed up with Vancouverites **Am Johal** and **Matt Hern** for **Global Warming and the Sweetness of Life: A Tar Sands Tale** (MIT Press \$19.95). The three go on a road trip from Vancouver to the Alberta tar sands. Along the way they talk to people

## Oily tales

whose lives and fortunes depend on, or are imperiled by, the tar sands. Sacco contributes a chapter-length comic

about the contradictions of life in an oil town.

Combining travelogue, political analysis, and ecological theory, the authors argue that confronting global warming requires a politics that speaks to a different way of being in the

**Panels from Joe Sacco's chapter in *Global Warming and the Sweetness of Life: A Tar Sands Tale***

world—a reconstituted understanding of the sweetness of life.

Joe Sacco is best known for his books *Palestine* (1996) and *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009). Am Johal is director of SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement and Matt Hern is a Vancouver activist.

9780262037648

# ABROAD WAY

For a student in 1960, forsaking Vancouver for Italy was one step removed from making a trip to the moon. Now it's called taking a gap year.

**Florence, Dante and Me**  
by Robert Thomson  
(Godwin Books \$25)

BY BEVERLY CRAMP

**I**N 1960, THE MOVIES *Roman Holiday* and *Three Coins in a Fountain* glamourized Italy and its capital city, Rome.

Italian songs on the radio included **Dean Martin's** *That's Amore!*, **Rosemary Clooney's** *Mambo Italiano*, and **Domenico Modugno's** *Volare*.

So when twenty-year old UBC student **Robert Thomson** won a scholarship to spend a year studying in Italy, he was ready to live the dream.

"Italy had panache and style," Thomson remembers in his memoir about the trip, **Florence, Dante and Me**.

"Many of my generation were enchanted by the beauty and glamor of Italy, not to mention her distinctive style that could be seen even in everyday things such as Vespa scooters, Olivetti typewriters and Vesuvius espresso coffee machines."

By comparison, Vancouver was a stodgy, small port city. Thomson recalls there was one opera company, The Vancouver Opera, but it produced only three or four operas a year. There was a city art gallery but its holdings in Italian Renaissance

**1960: Robert Thomson (holding a book on Italian history) departs from the CNR station in Vancouver en route to Jasper (visiting his fiancée), Quebec and boarding a ship to Europe.**

art were negligible.

"There was only one good bookstore in town, Duthie's on Robson St., and probably only one good shop for buying long playing classical records, Len Timbers', also on Robson."

Thomson's memoir is derived from a cache of almost

50 letters that he wrote to his fiancée back in Vancouver. She would share highlights from the letters with other students and professors at UBC, making Thomson notorious at the time.

"When I realized who was reading my letters I took extra care with them," Thomson says in his introduction.

Many of the letters chronicle his delight in discovering the arts such as the paintings of **Bot-ticelli** and **Caravaggio**; sculptures by **Michelangelo** and **Cellini**; ancient architecture in Rome and Pompeii; opera houses

like La Pergola and San Carlo; and popular singers of the era including **Peppino di Capri** and **Mina**. Thomson describes the thrill of hearing dramatic poetry readings of the work of **Dante**.

The letters describe in detail the many people Thomson befriended: Franco, a retired colonel; Gino, a violinist from Naples; and Ede, a woman who shared his love of opera and lyric poetry.

Many of his passages comment on Italian attitudes towards fashion, friendship and child rearing.

Readers get to share in the young Thomson's glee when he buys fine Italian clothing. At the same time he laments "pseudo-bohemianism," which he describes as, "people who think they're European and cool just because they eat cheese and baguettes and drink wine."

"One of the unexpected benefits of my year in Italy," he writes, "was to see my life in a more moral and spiritual way. I gained insights into my upbringing and education and began to see that they had molded me in a very narrow way."

Unfortunately for him, his steady stream of letters didn't sufficiently impress their recipient to the extent that she felt she owed her heart to him.

Discrete, Thomson never reveals her name and omits all writings as he delicately puts it, "of a private nature."

Thomson went to Italy because he was studying European languages. He has since written and published numerous books, including *Operatic Italian* and *Learn Spanish with Love Songs*. For more info, visit [abcbookworld.com](http://abcbookworld.com).

978-0-9958760-0-2

*Beverly Cramp is associate editor of BC BookWorld.*

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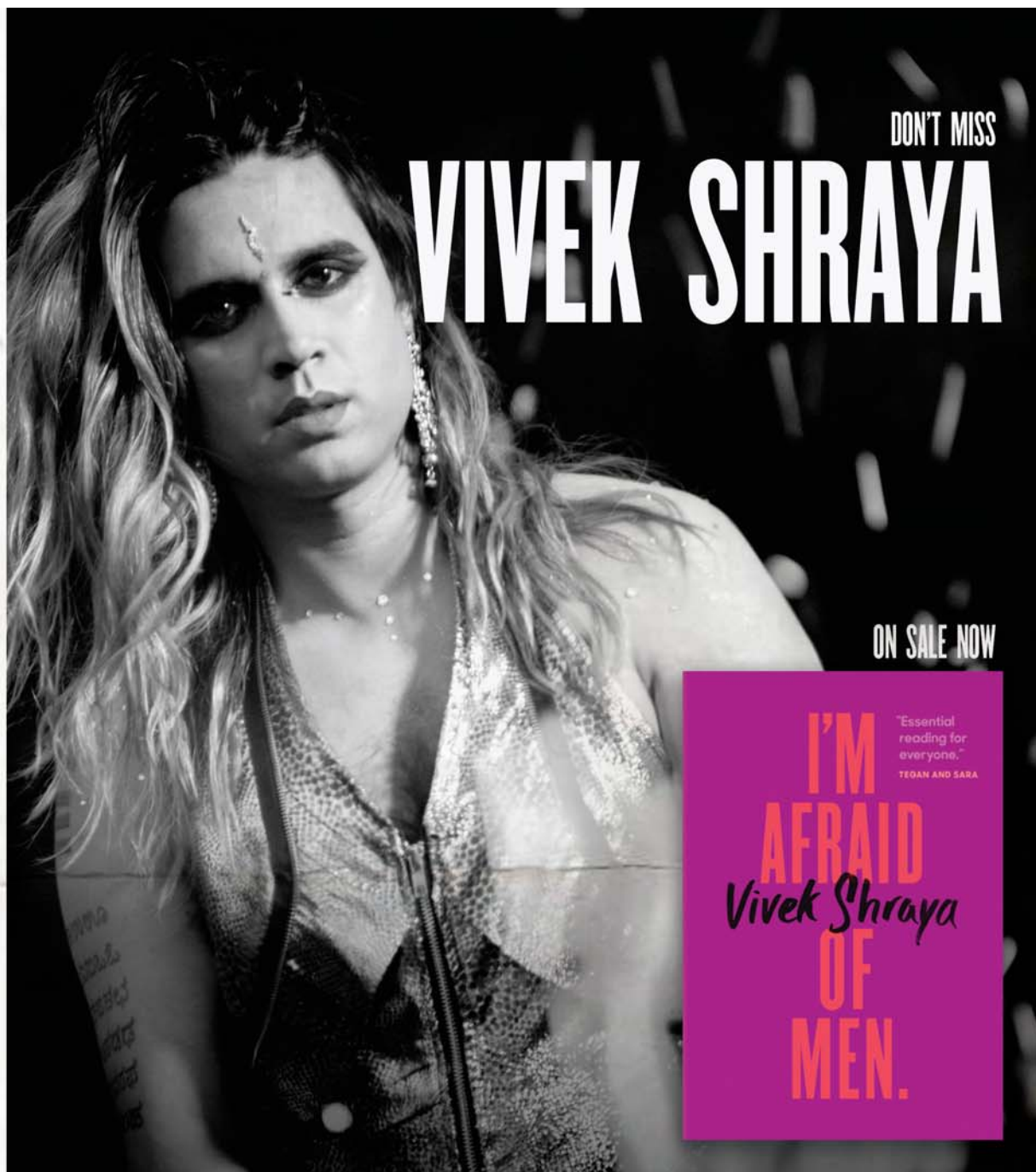
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# review

## BEAU DICK WAS THE REAL MCCOY

The Audain Art Museum at Whistler continues to amaze.

**Beau Dick: Revolutionary Spirit**  
by Darren J. Martens, in collaboration with the Audain Art Museum (Figure 1 \$40)

BY ALAN L. HOOVER

CHIEF **BEAU DICK** (WALAS Gwa'yam) (1955-2017) was a much-honoured artist and activist in the Kwakwaka'wakw community, and the wider Indigenous and non-Indigenous arts community of British Columbia.

Like many Kwakwaka'wakw artists, Beau Dick produced work that was used in the continuing dramatic ceremonial life of his people's communities.

However, Dick then chose to apply his knowledge of Kwakwaka'wakw cultural traditions on to the world of politics and social advocacy.

In 2013, supported by his family, community, and the Idle No More movement, he initiated a trek from Quatsino on northern Vancouver Island to the legislature in Victoria.

He and his companions ceremonially broke a copper shield, an act fraught with traditional meaning and an expression of anguish to shame the government of B.C. for its inaction in addressing longstanding Indigenous and environmental grievances and injustices.

Copper shields are a measure of wealth and power. The shaming rite, once practised throughout the Pacific Northwest, had all but disappeared until Beau Dick revived it.

In 2014 Haida leader **Guujaaw**

(Gary Edenshaw) and Beau Dick led a group of protesters across Canada to Ottawa, where they broke copper shields to draw attention to the Harper government's broken relations with Indigenous peoples. "[The] copper that is being provided is brought forth by the Haida Nation who have suffered atrocities over the last 150 years, almost totally alienated through genocide," said Dick.

This activism is recorded in the 2018 documentary movie *Maker of Monsters*:



**Beau Dick with Otter Woman, a spirit guardian mask carved from red cedar, 2009**

*The Extraordinary Life of Beau Dick*, written and directed by **Natalie Boll** and **LaTiesha Fazakas**.

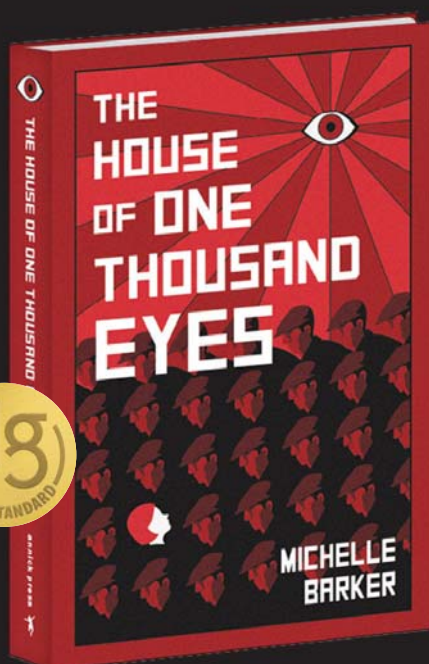
★  
BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED, **BEAU DICK: Revolutionary Spirit** is a record of a retrospective featuring 89 pieces of Dick's work exhibited at Whistler's Audain Art Museum in 2018.

This book includes 44 of Dick's wonderfully carved masks, two dramatic articulated puppets, a fine raven rattle, two dancing headdresses, a painted leather apron, and ten silkscreen prints.

“The issues we have as First Nations, our concerns, are really everybody's concerns. There's a lot at stake here, our whole credibility as Canadians is at stake. Where do we stand now and where do we go from here is the question. Are we ready to reconcile and face the truth?”

— **BEAU DICK**

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A number of pieces illustrating Beau Dick's mastery of different Northwest Coast art styles appear in the book, including a large model totem pole in the style of Haida artist **Charles Edenshaw**, a Tsimshian style head-dress frontlet, and two Nuxalk-style Thunder masks.

In addition to the colour photographs of objects and stills of the artist, exhibit co-curator and book editor **Darren J. Martens** discusses Dick's work and career in a 13-page essay divided into headings "The Man," "The Mentor," "The Activist," "The Artist," and "The Legacy."

Martens emphasizes the differences between Dick's work produced for the art market and for potlatches.

"Each piece is carefully considered," he writes, "meticulously executed and presented for maximum effect, [which is] a very different approach from that used in his work for potlatch ceremonies."

And it was here that I wanted a bit more curatorial input. Martens introduces Dick's appealing phrase "potlatch perfect" to describe his pieces intended for use in the potlatch. Martens explains that this was "not meant as a term of derision or an insult; rather, it references a series of works (often masks that are not market ready) created for use within a potlatch celebration."

However, none of the objects illustrated in *Beau Dick: Revolutionary Spirit* are identified as having been made specifically for potlatch use, so the reader cannot see the differences that Martens references.

Nor does Martens discuss the attraction that both museums and collectors have in obtaining pieces that were in fact used in potlatches and thus carry the cachet of "authenticity."

The book's other textual piece is a *Letter to Beau Dick* written by Tahltan Nation

writer and academic **Peter Morin** some time after the artist passed away. Morin then burned the letter, but it is reproduced here in its original seven-page hand-printed form. In it, Morin discusses the role of the Indigenous artist and how Beau Dick was, and remains, so important to the practice of west coast art.

An unusual and poignant touch is the inclusion of a poem about the artist written by his daughter **Linnea Dick**, who also contributed as co-curator of the exhibition that the book memorializes.

If you are unfamiliar with Beau Dick's work or simply want a record of it, *Beau Dick: Revolutionary Spirit* will serve you well.



BORN IN ALERT BAY AND RAISED IN THE small community of Kingcome, and then in Vancouver, Beau Dick worked with his father, **Ben Dick**, and later studied under senior artists **Doug Cranmer** and **Henry Hunt**.

His work was first collected by major B.C. museums in the 1970s and 1980s, when he was in his twenties. From the start of his career he was recognized as having a talent to carve in many tribal styles, not just in the style of his own Kwakwaka'wakw tradition.

Beau Dick's work is in many private and institutional collections including the Canadian Museum of History, the Royal BC Museum, the UBC Museum of Anthropology, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Heard Museum (Phoenix), and the Burke Museum (Seattle).

9781773270401

*Alan Hoover worked for 33 years at the Royal British Columbia Museum as a curator and manager. Most recently he has published **Southern Northwest Coast Indigenous Canoe Racing: A Brief History** (available via RBCM \$14.95), an historical account of Indigenous canoe racing in Northwest Washington State and Southwest B.C.*

**Beau Dick with broken copper at the B.C. Legislature, 2013.**

GEOFFREY MCNAMARA PHOTO

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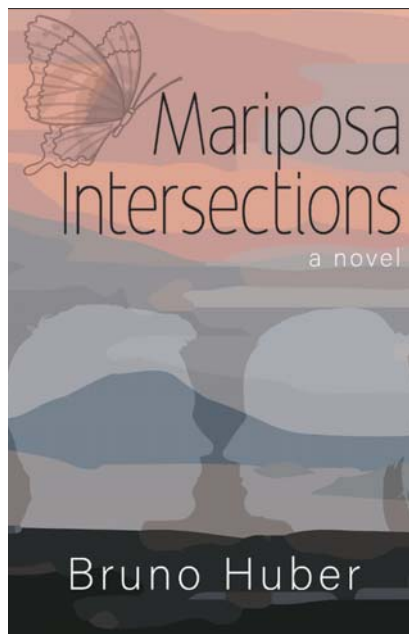
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**The World's Most Travelled Man:  
A Twenty-Three Year Odyssey to and  
through Every Country on the Planet**  
by Mike Spencer Bown  
(D&M \$29.95)

BY HOWARD STEWART

**M**IKE SPENCER BOWN HAS spent the better part of 23 years travelling to every country in the world. I didn't do a careful count but I'm pretty sure that every one of those 195 countries is mentioned somewhere in his remarkable book.

In the process of criss-crossing the globe, Bown saw some of the world's most exquisite landscapes and undertook the most remarkable travel experiences our planet can offer. He describes these with much economy, making it clear that we need to go and see them for ourselves.

This book is rich in advice about how to do just that.

As Bown explains, *The World's Most Travelled Man* is a tale about how to maximize our travel and have the most fun possible in the process, while on a modest budget. This involves, among other things, discount air travel and even judicious bribing of local officials to expedite otherwise time consuming and annoying waits for visas.

I enjoyed the book most where Bown dwells on local colour, recounting those moments when he met people and discussed their lives, hopes, and challenges. His tales of travel through Central Asia, much of which he did with a Kazakh woman friend, are among the most entertaining.

I must admit, however, that I've been spoiled recently by the global travel narrative of another western Canadian writer, **Andrew Struthers**, whose *Around the World on Minimum Wage* (New Star, 2014) hooked me with its manic stream of the sublime, the sublimely ridiculous, and much that lies strewn somewhere between the two. Struthers is a hard act to follow.

Bown also offers fascinating glimpses into the troubled Horn of Africa, where he became something of a local celebrity. Perhaps the most memorable is his time spent deep in the backwoods of the Congo with the

Bambutis, a group of pygmies. These are people who, we are told—if they live to be thirty—have “more fun than an office worker who drags his living carcass around for three score and ten.”

This pygmy interlude becomes fraught with danger after an alcohol fuelled conflict arises from cultural differences and competition for women. The crisis was neatly resolved however, by lighting up a bit of mellow Bambuti bud.

The Congo adventure is one of several places where we are offered insights into Bown's unique sensory capacities. These have been honed, he tells us, by long periods of solitude in the Canadian wilderness. Life alone in the wilds of western Canada has resulted in him being able virtually to read the minds of others, discerning who is truly a friend or foe, who's dangerous and who's not. This helps immeasurably when it comes to navigating tricky situations abroad, particularly when one might feel tempted to get involved in local difficulties, which Bown steadfastly eschews.

This sort of spidey sense cultivated in the “fourth world” (as he calls our local wilderness) proved remarkably effective in helping him wend his frugal way through countries and situations where he otherwise had only the most superficial understanding of local conditions and personalities.

I felt a bit motion sick at times from all the movement in rapid succession, from Central America to South East Asia to the Balkans, from Central Asia to the Amazon basin, back to Asia again and on to central Africa. I suppose this is inevitable in a tale covering nearly 195 countries in less than 400 pages, but it might be disorienting for the more obtuse among us.

There is a chapter, for example, entitled “The Forest Primeval.” While the title suggests Central Africa, the posted itinerary starts in Morocco and the actual discussion

sion begins in the Belarussian capital of Minsk. *The World's Most Travelled Man* contains many such geographically-extended examples that might result from a need to include each of the 195 countries somewhere in the narrative.

I couldn't help wondering if organizing the book more rigorously according to geography might have helped overcome my occasional travel sickness. But that might have required more careful introductions and a clearer framing of each region, which is not Bown's style. Rather, *The World's Most Travelled Man* is a kind of **Hakluyt's Voyages** for the Facebook age, describing the details of how one might travel if one wanted to go everywhere in the known world on an extended voyage recounted by Bown, the seasoned, loquacious traveller.

The reader is offered tips not just on how to get to and through these places, but also how to do so without losing sleep. Passing through Rwanda, our traveller was briefly daunted by thoughts of genocide in that place, once again a “peaceful green land.” He reassured himself by remembering that it all happened long ago, in 1994, “back when the colours of my backpack were still bright and all the zippers worked.” A similar close brush with disorienting local reality came when Bown was offloaded from a Guatemalan bus, early in his travelling days, by soldiers inclined to “disappear” those passengers they suspected of supporting an insurgency. Once again, the solution

# KING OF THE BACKPACKERS

How to maximize your travel, budget and fun from perhaps the most interesting guy you'll ever meet.

was easy because the author was a foreign tourist, free to continue untroubled on to a pretty lake town.

Similarly, by the time Bown reached Nepal's capital of Kathmandu, in the midst of that country's communist uprising, he was fully able to enjoy the hash-fuelled partying of fellow backpackers, undisturbed by the “encroaching army of rebels” who were so clearly someone else's problem. While this attitude may sometimes strike the reader as trivialising or being a spectator to the trauma of others, Bown makes it clear that we must cultivate this kind of tough mindedness if we want to ensure that our travel remains fun—picking up girls, drinking beer, swimming, riding dune buggies, and so on—over the long haul.

His crucible in the western Canadian woods and mountains has combined with Bown's subsequent odyssey to make him a veritable font of wisdom about the places and people he encountered, as well as how to travel smart. Sweeping and worldly aphorisms and travel advice come naturally. Rio de Janeiro is “a violent city, which is disturbing if you are not born there....”

“With backpacking, each continent requires unique ways and means. European travel is very strange compared to that in the Middle East.”

“The DRC (the Democratic Republic of Congo) was not ready for mass tourism yet (there had been a particularly gruesome murder there).”

“Just as in Tunisia, the economy [of oil rich Libya] seems to be based on street vendors selling one another sunglasses and dresses, coffee, fruit juice, and shawarma...”

“It is always a good sign for the stability of a region if you see

Western women.”

And so on.

At least as precious are the author's insights and cautions about bigger questions, like the environment, the UN, and other hapless and bumbling international “do-gooders.”

“It's a good thing that as cultures modernize, they invest in other ways to gain prestige, including cars, vacations, motorboats, and big houses, because there are few deeds more damaging to the environment than having loads of kids.”

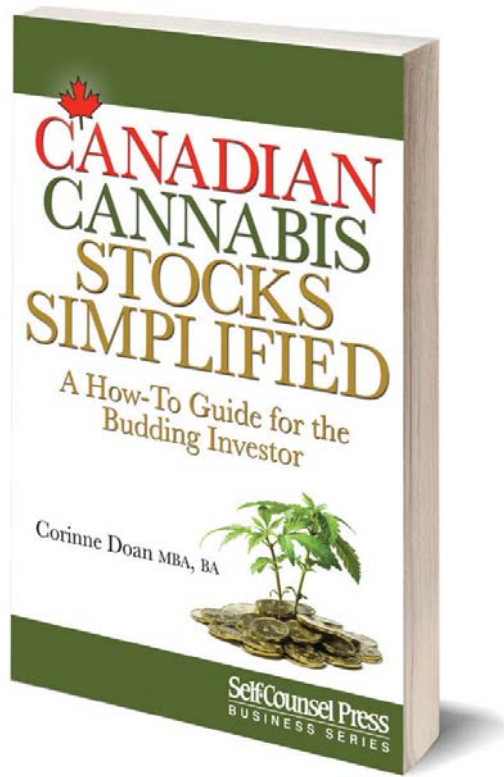
The Kafkaesque process of getting a Sudanese visa illustrated “the pernicious bureaucratic mess that keeps the third world just so.” “Human rights campaigners have made a fetish of this line called the border, and all sorts of legal rights for the person who steps over it.” Feckless attempts to help refugees, Bown reminds us, have complicated the lives of innocent backpackers.

The author's growing travel expertise and wisdom have not gone unnoticed. Less than half way through the book we learn that, on at least a dozen occasions, Bown joined travellers' discussions only to learn they were “discussing various tales about me and my travel exploits.” As he neared the end of his travels, Bown had become a celebrity traveller, a kind of **Paris Hilton** of the hostel trail known not only at home in Canada but in many other countries, from Somalia to Ireland.

As this book so carefully documents, Mike Spencer Bown's renown as the king of backpackers was hard earned and well deserved. By the time he got to Dublin, Ireland, the host of *The Ray D'Arcy Show* declared Bown “the most interesting guy he'd ever met.”

9781771621427

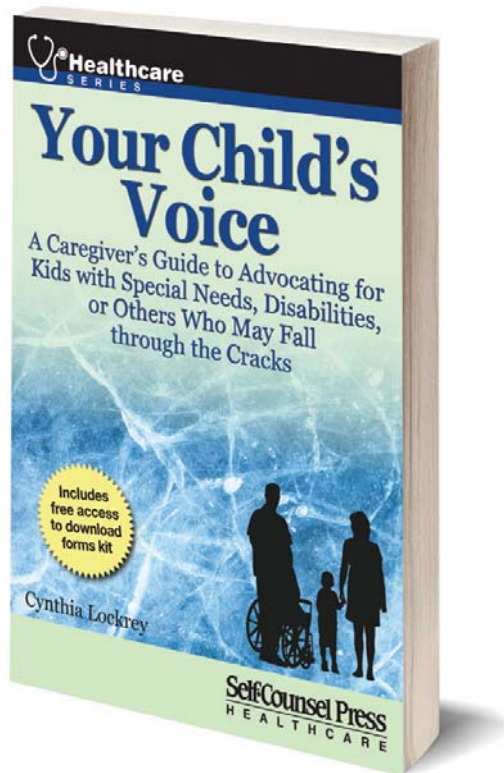
Howard Stewart's **Views of the Salish Sea: One Hundred and Fifty Years of Change around the Strait of Georgia** (Harbour, 2017) was longlisted for the George Ryga Award for Social Awareness and awarded third prize in the British Columbia Historical Federation's competition for the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Historical Writing.



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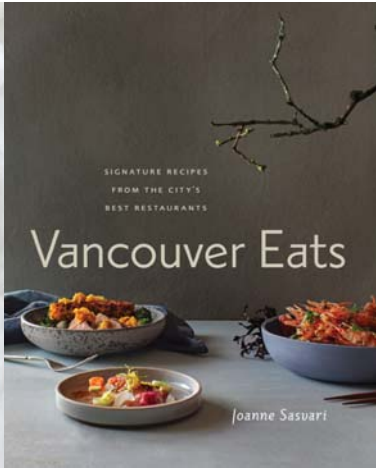

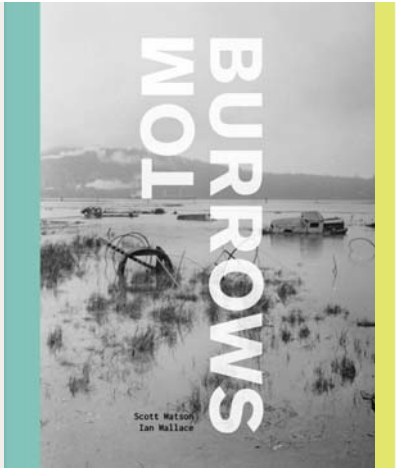
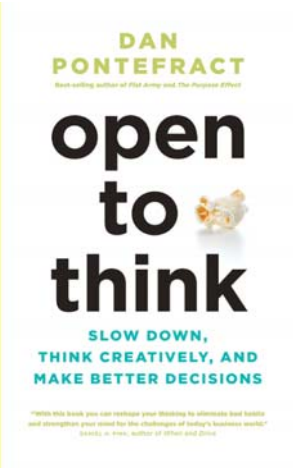
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Mike Spencer Bown in  
Bagan, Myanmar, 1998.

PHOTO COURTESY MIKE SPENCER BOWN.



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# ZAPPA

FROM  
A-Z



Frank Zappa, his parents, and cat at his Los Angeles home, 1970.

**The Big Note: A Guide to the Recordings of Frank Zappa**  
By Charles Ulrich  
(New Star \$45)

BY DEREK VON ESSEN

**I**DON'T CONSIDER MYSELF a Zappa collector. On a scale of one to ten, my level of fandom is around 7.5, though it reaches ten during some guitar solos. I own ten of his LPs, under a dozen CDs, and a few bootlegs.

In some circles I'd be considered an extreme fan. In Zappa circles, where there's 100+ official releases (hundreds more if re-mastered re-releases are included), I'm merely the average, bystander fan. I mean, how many versions of "Black Napkins" does a guy really need? Apparently—a lot! And now I'm curious to hear all the others listed in **The Big Note: A Guide to the Recordings of Frank Zappa**, a definitive guide to Zappa's musical output from 1966 until his early death in 1993.

In addition to **Charles Ulrich's** lengthy introductory section, which also has a bit of a "how to" on deciphering *The Big Note*, each album has been listed alphabetically with bootlegs finishing it off. When it came to looking up all the Zappa LPs I own, the alpha listing certainly made quick work of finding their place in the book. With Zappa and most artists with extensive back catalogues, my brain works chronologically, so I appreciated that it was listed in the back of the book, followed by an unbelievably lengthy song index.

The notes on recording sessions are extraordinary. The technical information is only one aspect included.

Performer details, personal dramas, lyrical references, and sometimes historical context play into each section, as well as sidebar interviews and bios of selected players, which also have their own index at the back.

Given Zappa's soured opinion of journalists and how they misrepresented him, it's a treat to read so many quotes from him directly related to Ulrich's vast enterprise. Interspersed throughout, Zappa's own words play well into Ulrich's text and give excellent context.

One of my favourite albums, *Over-nite Sensation* (1973) immediately gave up the goods in Ulrich's assiduous treatment. Among much else, I learned that **Tina Turner** and The Ikettes performed on the album without credit, at the request of **Ike Turner**, who insisted that Zappa pay them each \$25 per song, which was Ike's rate for them. In the end Zappa paid them \$25 per hour at the recording session.

There was much material for Ulrich to compile from Zappa's career as a composer, bandleader, lyricist, and overall large personality, but it never gets boring; in fact, quite the opposite. Reading through the individual song details is fascinating. While some were recorded right off the floor, most came to life in pieces and in a multi-layered—more like multi-multi-multi-layered—fashion. Zappa then utilized his outstanding and patient editing skills to stitch together the ideal version for release.

I hadn't realized how much editing went into many of my favourite tracks, which then

appeared years later on live albums sounding insanely complicated in performance—and rightly and inevitably so.



*THE BIG NOTE* IS NOT ONLY FOR Zappa fans. Musicians of all genres will benefit from his approach to creating complex arrangements with uncommon devices and instruments. Xenochrony, polyrhythms, Lydian melodies, and other uncommon time signatures—sure, I can dig it; but when we get into Electro-Wagnerian Emancipators and Pignoses, I start to wonder if the casual reader might be interested in any of this. But would anyone other than Zappa and music fans be reading such a hefty

Buying this book for a Zappa collector would be akin to gifting a dictionary to an aspiring writer, or *Gray's Anatomy* to a medical student.

brick of a book anyway?

As a non-musician but appreciative listener, I encountered a lot of terminology that I don't understand, and wish I did. But this is what search engines are for. I admit to checking many references while reading this reference book.

I also ended up shopping around for more Zappa material to satiate my yearning after some inspired reading. Three days into reading I bought Zappa's first album, *Freak Out!* (1966) because it concerned me that it wasn't in my collection of 2,000+

LPs/500+ CDs. I realized a couple of days later that my crappy cassette tape of *Hot Rats* (1969) wasn't good enough, followed by *Cruising with Ruben & the Jets* (1968) because, well—why not?

*The Big Note* should come with a warning that purchasers are entirely likely to buy more albums by Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention even before they've finished reading it. By the time I'd drafted this review and read the passages on the corresponding recordings, I'd also bought *Burnt Weeny Sandwich* (1970) and *Imaginary*

connecting his life's work into one massive and impressive conceptual project.

Having sold more than a few albums in my time from the front counters of record shops, I can say that *The Big Note* hits every mark from every conversation on the floor with clerks and shoppers alike. Buying this book for a Zappa collector would be akin to gifting a dictionary to an aspiring writer, or *Gray's Anatomy* to a medical student. The details within these pages are vast and no one could absorb all of them—though thankfully Charles Ulrich did. As a book to take in before bedtime it gets painful at almost 800 pages. But as a reference tool—wow—absolutely wow.

From that record shop floor I recall a few Zappa-centric debates that could easily have been settled with *The Big Note*. In fact, for those record shops still in operation, this is an absolute must-have book to have at hand. Forget the baseball bat under the counter, this volume would decide all arguments with its information.

P.S. "First printing: Mothers Day 2018."—well timed.

9781554201464

*Derek von Essen's most recent book is No Flash, Please! Underground Music in Toronto 1987-92 (Anvil Press, 2016). He lives in Roberts Creek.*



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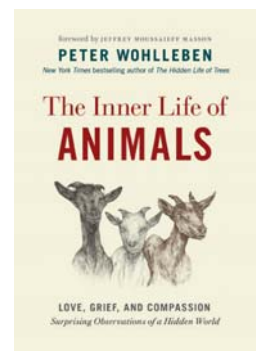
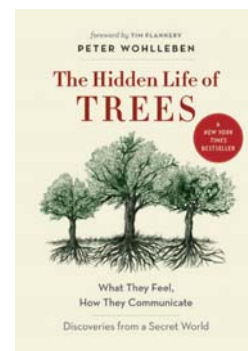
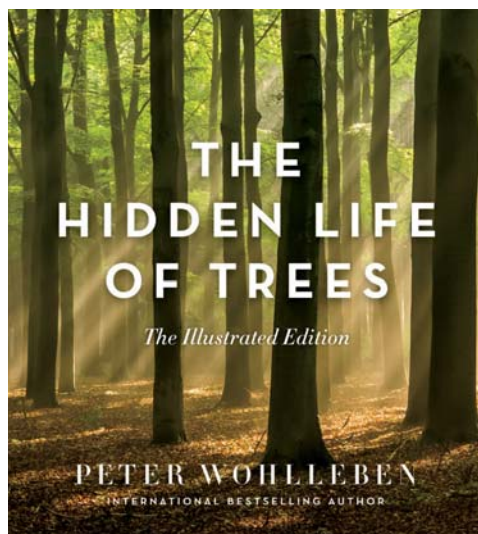
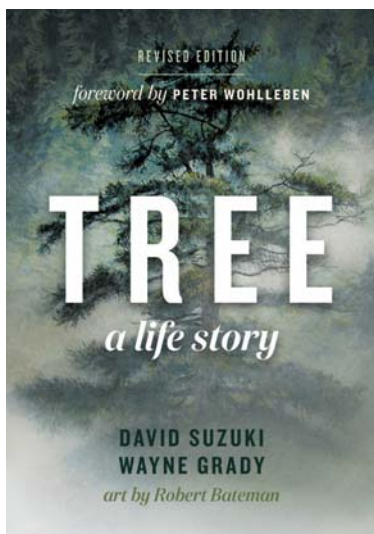


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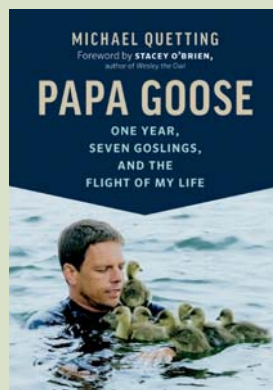
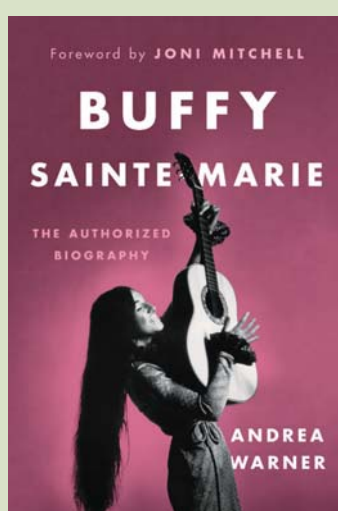
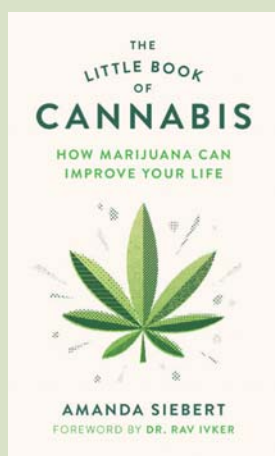
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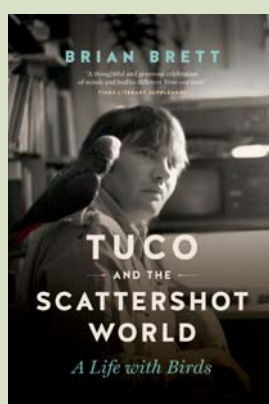
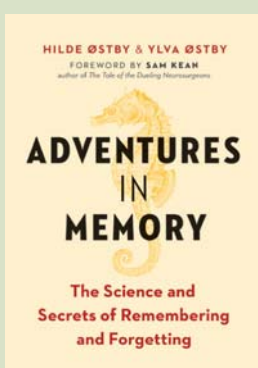
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**Straight Circles**  
by Jackie Bateman  
(Anvil Press \$20)

BY CAROLINE  
WOODWARD

IN THE DIVERSE GENRE of suspense writing, North Vancouver’s Jackie Bateman offers us **Straight Circles**, the final book in her Lizzy Trilogy set in Scotland, a grim inspection of domestic abuse, child neglect and murder. This is hard-boiled suspense despite the clever insertion of a cozy knitting shop in the fictional Scottish town of Dalbegie where winter is setting in and “it’s Baltic out there,” as one landlady aptly puts it.

It will come as no surprise to fans of these well-written novels—albeit deeply chilling at several levels—who also favour gritty British and Nordic Noir television mystery series (okay, full disclosure, rabid fans like my own self) that the Lizzy Trilogy has been optioned for a TV series. I can only hope they get the production values, and the terrific writing and acting chops, of the *Cardinal* series, based on the acclaimed police procedural novels by **Giles Blunt**, also a Canadian.

★  
JACKIE BATEMAN OBVIOUSLY knows her suspense writing formulas and sub-genres and skillfully applies cracking good dialogue and just the right amount of Scottish dialect, a deft hand at pacing and acutely observant descriptive powers. She uses four main narrators to tell this story, dipping us in and out of their heads, while ratcheting up the tension to nearly unbearable levels. Former runaway Lizzy is the main narrator, newly pregnant and on a quest to find out what happened to her mother nearly two decades earlier when she simply disappeared from bleak Dalbegie.

Not one, but two serial killers reveal their plans in their respective chapters and what’s worse, they have more than a passing acquaintance with each other. Oliver is an obsessive man, forever cleaning himself and his surroundings, using bleach and scalding hot water. He must wear a hat to conceal the damage he’s done to his own scalp. Oliver, an early computer user, has discovered a way to monetize his murderous urges which led Helen to him some years before. Helen began life as one of the crawling wounded, quite literally the twin given up for adoption as a baby. She has been wreaking her random vengeance on the rest of the world ever since, in a creepily convincing portrayal of the

terminally jealous and forever-angry sibling who refuses to let go of real and imagined childhood grievances.

Helen, squat and heavysset, favours a bowl-cut hairdo, and works full-time in a cat shelter in Edinburgh, where her anti-social and smelly self is avoided by co-workers and strangers alike. The cats are safe. People, randomly chosen, are most certainly not. Unhappily for Lizzy, and a few others, Helen has decided to take her two week vacation in Dalbegie where she continues to compete with Oliver, whether he knows it or not.

The other most frequent

but usually we call these occasions by the more benign term, ‘accidents.’ Not so in Dalbegie, where the author returns to her Scottish roots and pungently evokes the townsfolk’s hard drinking, deep-fried diets and penchant for spreading malicious gossip. Like all first-rate mystery writers, Bateman is keenly aware of societal ills and provides an especially gritty depiction of addictions and the damage done, especially to grubby, malnourished children left to fend for themselves far too much of the time.

Helping others, as Lizzy instinctively does, makes most of us feel more fully connected to other humans because



CAROLINE  
WOODWARD

kindness and empathy expand the heart, put simply and metaphorically, not medically. Whereas harming others makes some of us, like Oliver and Helen, feel more powerful, whether the target is a tiny

child, a timid wife, or an unsuspecting healthy young male hiker. The book does not dwell on their depravity much less revel in it but their character development is an uncanny blend of what onlookers might recognize in an external, superficial way, e.g., “that pale man with the hat” or “that dumpy woman in the long overcoat,” and the internal, or psychological, blind spots experienced by these creatures. They are prisoners

of their own obsessions and ultimately, they lack crucial elements of self-control and self-awareness, which readers will see revealed by the novel’s conclusion. There are black holes in their psyches where souls ought to be, to channel Granny Mac, an off-page, long-dead character who dwells securely in the hearts and minds of her generations of offspring, especially Lauren and Lizzy.

Every single character, major and minor, among the watchful eyes on Dalbegie’s High Street or in the overgrown back yards of the side streets, plays a memorable role and the good and generous nature of small towns is revealed as well in a very satisfying ending to this book and the Lizzy Trilogy. The first two novels in the trilogy also published by Vancouver’s Anvil Press, are *Nondescript* (2011) and *Savour* (2014). 978-1-77214-114-6

Caroline Woodward’s novel, *Alaska Highway Two-Step*, first published by Polestar Press in 1993, was nominated for the Arthur Ellis Best First Mystery Award by the Crime Writers of Canada. It was re-published by Harbour Publishing in 2017.

## LIZZY TRILOGY

## HEADS FOR TV

Empathy and kindness versus two serial killers in Edinburgh

narrator of the main foursome is Lauren, the ghost of Lizzy’s mother. In Bateman’s hands, this does not present a credibility issue. In fact, some of the best writing in the book comes from the point of view of this hovering other-worldly mother, offering wisdom and warning, unheard in death and often ignored in life, the lot of mothers to wayward daughters the world over:

*Beautiful things shouldn’t be hidden away.*

*We think the things that are precious to us will somehow bring us luck, and it’s not true. Even the real necklace didn’t do me any favours. Look at me now. But if you want to live the fairy story, just this once, you deserve to be in it. God knows, we all need to live in our minds once in a while, as long as we’re stuck on earth. Stick the chain in your pocket, touch it once in a while, and make believe it’s looking after you.*

*Because right now, no one else is.”*

★  
JUST AS IN REAL LIFE, the thoughts and actions of damaged and dangerous people do not need to “make sense” and Bateman shows how prevalent vicious behaviour is, especially when fuelled by drugs, alcohol and morbid projections triggered by a voice, a laugh, a briefcase. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time has never made sense



Jackie  
Bateman

RACHEL PICK PHOTO

In Valhalla's Shadow  
by W.D. Valgardson  
(D&M \$32)

BY CHERIE THEISSEN

IN NORSE MYTHOLOGY, Asgard was the dwelling place of the gods, located in another dimension, possibly the sky or a different planet. It was divided into at least twelve realms; Valhalla being one. Valhalla was the home of Odin and Norse heroes slain in earthly battle.

Valhalla is also the name of a town one hour's drive from Winnipeg, located just fifteen minutes from **W.D. Valgardson's** hometown of Gimli. The protagonist in Valgardson's novel, Tom Parsons, who has just arrived at Valhalla on the northern shores of Lake Winnipeg, north of Gimli, is not a warrior. If confronted with crises, he mostly does nothing or behaves foolishly.

After his RCMP career, his marriage and his family have disintegrated, Parsons just wants to escape from Winnipeg. Mind-numbingly cold in winter and searingly hot in summer, Valhalla may be the perfect setting for mosquitoes

## Valhalla is no haven for heroes in a Canadian Gothic crime novel

and ticks but it doesn't seem to have much to recommend it to humans. Why this place then?

Well, there's the fishing, which could have been one of the reasons Parsons' father came here in the long ago past. And then there's the fact that as an RCMP officer, Parsons has been here before, when he came to investigate a mysterious disappearance. Now he's suffering from depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and its subsequent nightmares.

★  
DURING MY INTERVIEW WITH W.D. Valgardson about **In Valhalla's Shadow** he declared that "While I'm never sure about labels, I hope it's successful as a Gothic crime novel. I think it has something worthwhile to say about a number of issues: the RCMP, old age and identity, PTSD, our treatment of Aboriginal people, the importance of the past, the need people have for a place to which they can belong; and the power, good

and bad, of ambition."

Valgardson—repeatedly cited by the late **W.P. Kinsella** as his foremost mentor—thrusts the reader immediately into the middle of the action. Parsons finds the body of a fifteen-year-old Indigenous girl lying near the beach near the rundown home he has just purchased.

Then comes the meticulous weaving of a 'sense of place,' with the introduction of the wacky, wild and wary inhabitants of Valhalla where everyone knows everyone else's business but nobody talks about their own, where everyone threatens but also offers advice.

There's a supporting cast of drug dealers, pimps, probable murderers, chess playing intellectual recluses with killer dogs, unhappy housewives, drunks, crooks, yachters, cultists and plain old thugs.

The atmosphere is pregnant with suspicion, innu-

endoes, mysteries and fear but Valgardson is too good a writer to leave it so one-sided. There is also a sense of community, sharing and compassion, people making the best of their lives.

"When I taught creative writing," Valgardson says, "I taught students to graph once they reached a certain point in their narrative. I used the back of wallpaper rolls for long narratives: chapters across the top, horizontals for

characters, theme, point of view, setting, etc. When there are a lot of characters, plots and subplots, there is a lot to keep track of."

A synopsis of the disparate elements in *In Valhalla's Shadow* will not fit easily onto a wallpaper roll. There's Parsons' PTSD, the corruption and racism in the RCMP, the privileged vs. the poor, the search for lost gold, drugs, sex and two Odin groups living near the lake, one rebelling against the other. Plus, there's all that Nordic mysticism and history of an area

known as New Iceland.

In fact, the origins of this novel's protagonist can be traced back to the days when Valgardson was in graduate school in the United States and some of the Vietnam vets were returning.

"They didn't call it PTSD in those days but it was what they had. My grandfather called it 'shell shock.' As well, when I taught in Missouri, I travelled a bit with a friend who was a highway patrolman and I had the privilege of seeing the world of police from their perspective. I think Tom was forming over a long period of time. It wasn't like I sat and cogitated and said now I will make up characters like this. It was more like they wandered into the room.

"This narrative began with a man who invaded my dreams and who insisted on telling me his story. He was often not consistent, there were pieces missing, sometimes I didn't listen well. And, of course, other characters appeared. When I wrote *The Girl With The Botticelli Face*, I wrote it every night from 3-5 a.m., one chapter a night. One rewrite and it was done. *In Valhalla's Shadows* took six years."

★  
ALWAYS INTERESTED IN THE EFFECTS of isolation on people in remote settings and frequently confronting what he says a Jungian would call his own shadow, William Dempsey Valgardson has written 15 books. *Gentle Sinners* (1980) won the Books in Canada Award for Best Novel of the Year. *The Girl with the Botticelli Face* (1992) won the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. In addition, Valgardson served as editor of the Icelandic publication *Lögberg-Heimskringla* for two years and has kept an apartment in Gimli for many years, returning nearly every summer. He taught creative writing at UVic from 1974 to 2004.

978-1-77162-196-0

*Cherie Theissen regularly reviews fiction from Pender Island.*



CHERIE THEISSEN

# VALHALLA IN NEW ICELAND



W.D. Valgardson

JANIS OLOF MAGNUSSEN PHOTO



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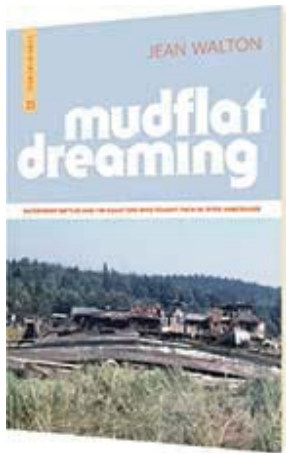
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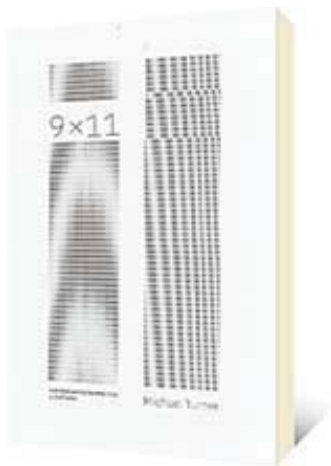


### *Mudflat Dreaming Waterfront Battles and the Squatters Who Fought Them in 1970s Vancouver*

Jean Walton

"Squatters, shackers, beachfront bohemians, whatever you want to call them, they've been a neglected chapter of Vancouver's history for too long. Now Jean Walton has rescued [them] from obscurity in her vivid and thoughtful account."

— Dan Francis



### *9x11 and other poems like Bird, Nine, x, and Eleven*

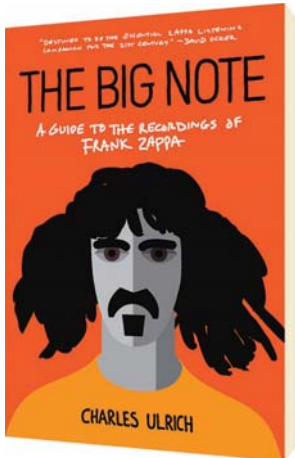
Michael Turner

"Extraordinary... in Turner's/our current state, disruption has become the new norm. Disruption both terrifies and excites the poet... All the reflections and contemplative rhymes add up to a holographic text that begs repeated reading."

— Dodie Bellamy



NEW STAR BOOKS



### *The Big Note: A Guide to the Recordings of Frank Zappa*

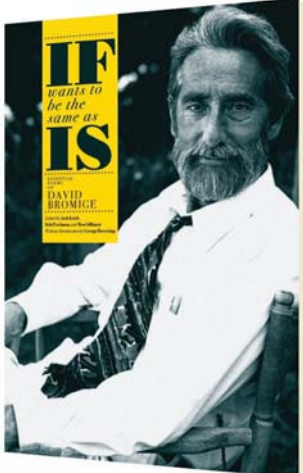
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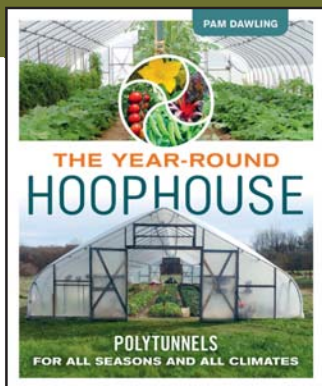
— Kathleen Fraser

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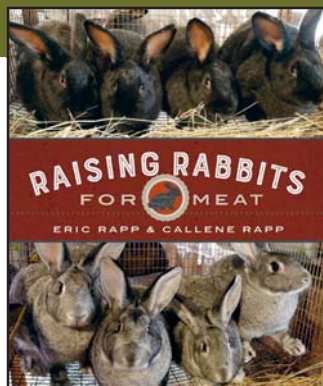
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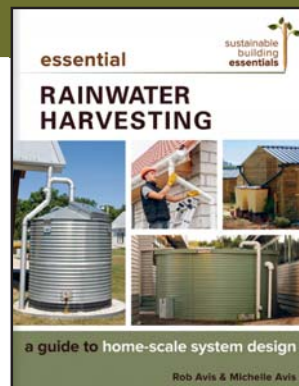


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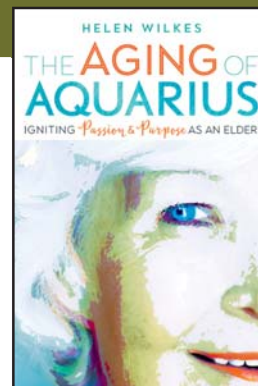
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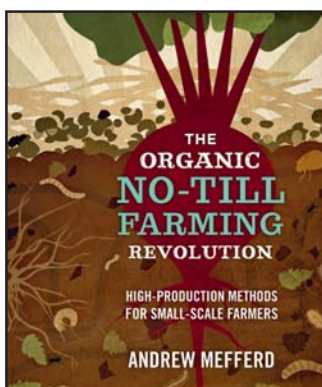
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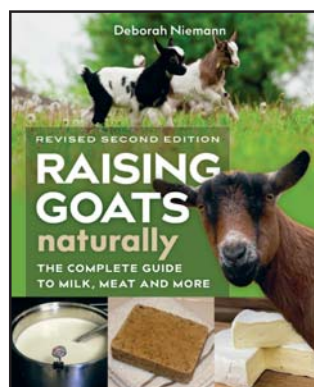
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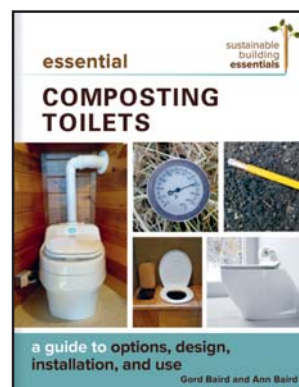
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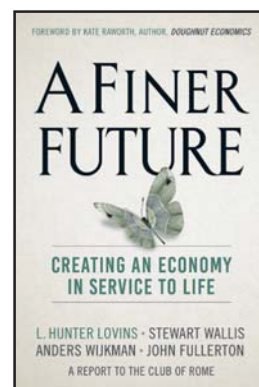
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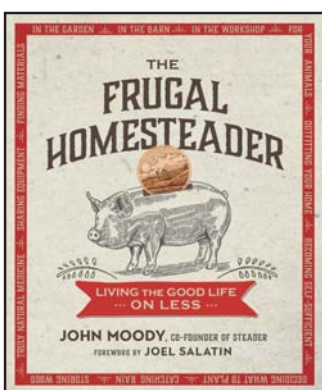
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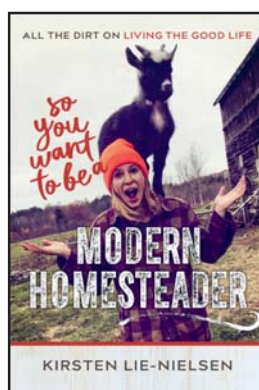
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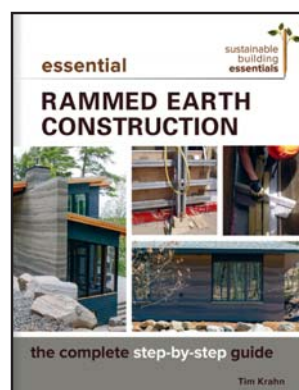
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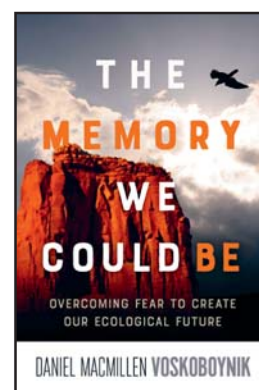
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are, and where we may be headed.  
—Michael Mann, co-author, The Madhouse Effect*



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**Beautiful Communion**  
by Des Kennedy  
(Ronsdale Press \$18.95)

BY **CHERIE THIESSEN**

**G**INGER WANTS TO GET back the family home from the disgraced church of The Congregation of the Great Convergence.

Ginger's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dustin Flynn, gave their mansion to the sect in their will, with the provision that it couldn't change hands until their daughter died.

There had been a son, Frank, but he was killed at the end of WWII. Frank's loss was devastating for both parents but especially for Ginger, who had adored her older brother.

Frank's death was devastating for someone else as well...

That's just a smidgeon of **Beautiful Communion**, the fourth novel by Denman Island's best-known gardener **Des Kennedy**. Among his ten fiction and non-fiction books, three have been nominated for the Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour.

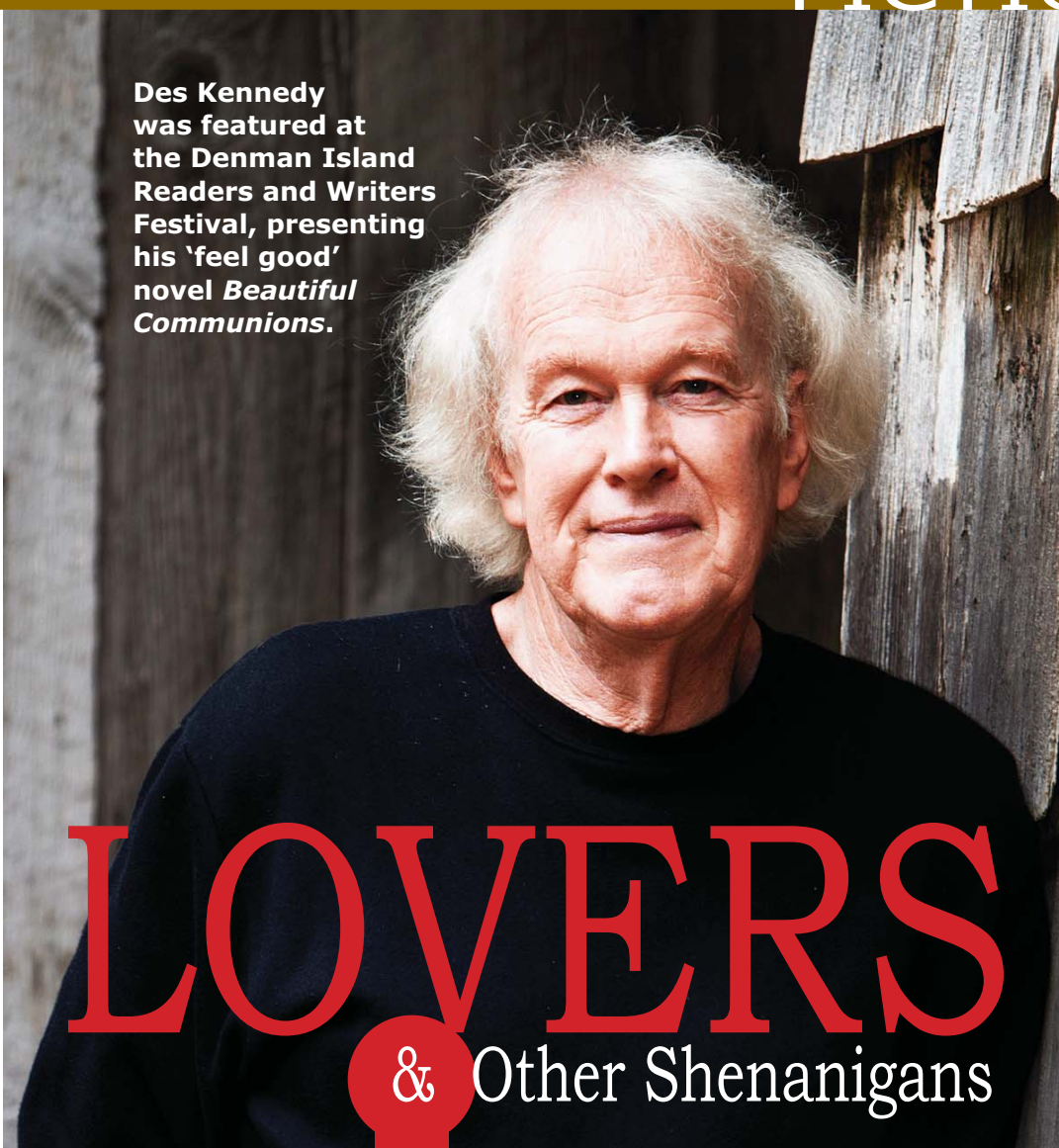
In keeping with his back-to-the-land philosophy, his *Heart & Soil: The Revolutionary Good of Gardens* (Harbour, 2014) was nominated for the Annual Literature Award by the Council of Botanical and Horticultural Libraries. Kennedy walks his talk, from his self-built green home and gardens on Denman Island to his involvement in protests in Clayoquot Sound and Strathcona Park.



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GINGER and her dogmatic parents becomes seriously strained when she falls in love with her charismatic professor, Nigel Childes, at a time when professors taking up with students was only just veering towards being scandalous.

Ginger's amorous adventure precipitates the unusual will. Shortly after writing it up,

**Des Kennedy was featured at the Denman Island Readers and Writers Festival, presenting his 'feel good' novel *Beautiful Communion*.**



# LOVERS & Other Shenanigans

In **Des Kennedy's** latest novel, a Border Collie called Shep maintains the bemused detachment appropriate for most human affairs.

Back in the 1950s, after Ginger's brother, Frank, had been dead five years, Ginger was taking a class from Nigel when he recognized likenesses between Ginger and Frank—whereupon Nigel realizes Ginger is his dead lover's sister.

Yes, you read that correctly.

Nigel had a brief but pas-

sionate affair with Frank when the latter was in wartime London on leave. In fact, the professor was the last person that Frank wrote to, just days before he was killed, asking Nigel to let his family and especially his sister Ginger know if anything happened to him in the war, but the professor had not done that.

As the story zips back and forth between the past and present, there is so much going on that you would think it would be difficult to follow. It isn't. Ginger had envisioned an exciting marriage but after a dozen years of boredom, Nigel up and leaves his wife and daughter, Irene, and never contacts them again—even though his wife is about to have their second child (Peter).

Irene is seriously damaged by the departure of her father because he had appeared to be so devoted to her; the mother-daughter relationship suffers as a result. Why would Nigel do this? Well, Ginger ultimately thinks she knows, and readers will probably guess, too.

The fatherless son, Peter, later endures an unimaginable tragedy. Irene's daughter and subsequent granddaughter also suffer reverberations of the abandonment. But would Ginger have turned out the way she had if Nigel had remained? She has become some kind of uberhuman, spilling over with wisdom, joy of life, and causes.

The indomitable Ginger has so much humanity and love in her that she hugs anyone who reaches out to her and even some of those who don't. It is as if her brimming spirit is the wellspring for the story.

There are good gals and bad guys aplenty and environmental battles, of course. How could there not be?

Observing all these human shenanigans is an uncanny Border Collie, Shep, who maintains the bemused detachment appropriate for most human affairs.

Kennedy weaves together disparate elements and plot-lines with seeming ease for a fun-to-read story. Ultimately, we learn who gets the family mansion.

What's not to love? This is a delightfully wise and mirthful read.

978-1-55380-532-8

*Cherie Thiessen reviews fiction from Pender Island.*

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

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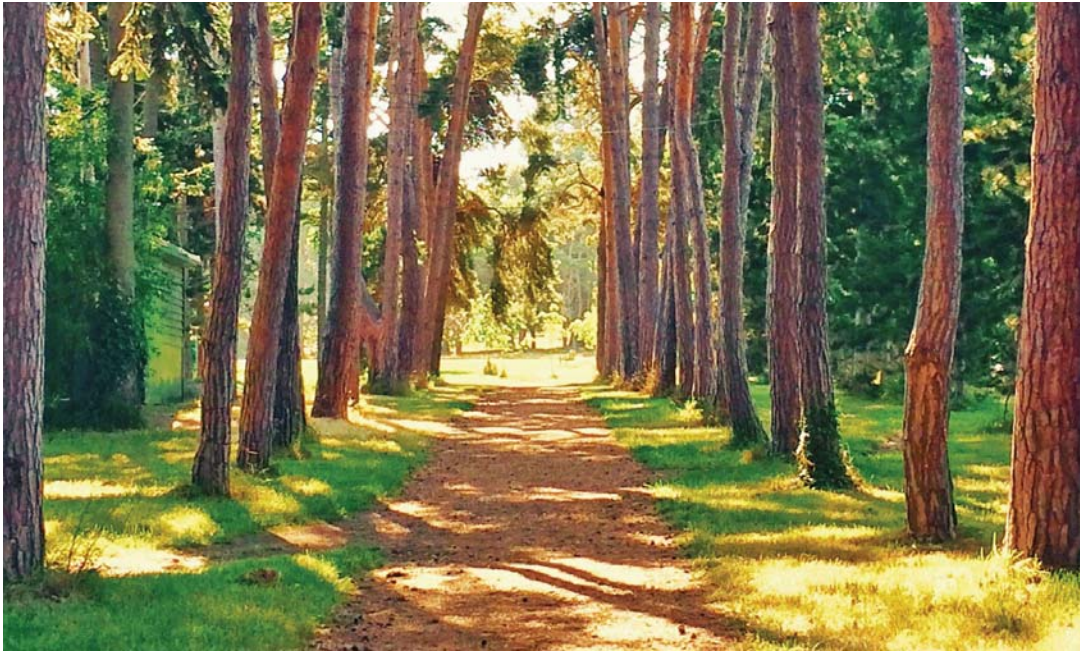
For submission details visit [www.bcbookprizes.ca](http://www.bcbookprizes.ca)

Seaweed under Fire  
by Stanley Evans  
(Ekstasis Editions \$25.95)

BY PHYLLIS REEVE

AHIKER AND HIS DOG find a corpse in Beacon Hill Park. Two cops find another corpse in an Italian restaurant. Before long our provincial capital is littered with more dead bodies than Midsummer on the eve of Beltane. Our hero and narrator Detective Sergeant Silas Seaweed of the Victoria Police Department Crime Scene Investigation Unit arrives, finds clues, more bodies, and several suspects. Once again—for the seventh time—in **Stanley Evans’ Seaweed Under Fire**, he confronts crooked lawyers, crooked policemen, crooked insurance salesmen, crooked restaurateurs, crooked green grocers moonlighting as moneylenders, even a crooked First Nations guy—and murderers. The detective is Indigen-ous—but the author is not. British-born, Stanley Evans has lived in Canada most of his life, had several careers, and written other books and plays prior to inventing Silas Seaweed in 2005. Searching the web I could not find any accusations of cultural appropriation directed at Evans. His work is sold and promoted by Strong Nations Books whose mandate promises to bring Indigenous books into our lives. “Sensitive” is an odd word to apply to writing so blatantly based on the Whodunit police

# SEAWEED’S NONCHALANT TOUGH LOVE



Beacon Hill Park, scene of the first murder in *Seaweed Under Fire*.

procedural formula, but the deadpan narrative learned from Spade and Marlow permits Detective Sergeant Seaweed to treat everyone with the same nonchalant tough love—be they Coast Salish, Italian, Chinese, Filipino, or Caucasian. Silas’s heritage is always present, giving him a perspective useful in his dealing with others on the fringe. Incidents involving tradition and spirituality stop short of sentimentality. Silas Seaweed has two residences: a container on the waterfront and a shack on the reserve, with a small outboard boat to take him

between them. This is a man who rescues a large cedar log from the sea and builds a dugout canoe. He is a shape-shifter, changing effortlessly from someone who lives in a container to someone who goes for a drink at the Laurel Point Hotel and makes love to a beautiful billionaire. A wolf and a racoon assist him in his sleuthing. His boss, Inspector Bernie Tapp, regards Silas as the force’s “Indian specialist.” In the real world he would be less special; the Victoria Police Department has both currently serving and retired members

Detective Sergeant Silas Seaweed confronts the crooked in his quest for clues to murder

☆ NOT ALL LOCALES EXIST AS STANLEY Evans describes them, but he does try to remember to take advantage of attractive local geography; there are a few too many views of the Salish Sea, distant mountains and twinkling lights. Like most detectives of his ilk, he likes jazz but unfortunately when he tries to include a local star he gets her name wrong, so “the piano lady was playing Dianne Krall songs,” instead of Diana.

Sometimes style gets the better of him and he overdoes what, used once, might be an effective sentence structure. For instance, I found “My mentors were and still are shamans and hereditary chieftains”, “Her town home was and still is a large red-brick Queen Anne-style house,” and “Native Indians were and sometimes still are hunter-gatherers.” And yes, he did and still does use both “First Nations” and “Indian.”

Some clichés just keep on giving. I won’t be giving away any plot secrets by quoting the conclusion of the novel: “I drove to Clover Point and parked in the turnaround. Looked out to sea and thought about Felicity Exeter. After a while I went to her house. She opened the door and said hello. She was wearing a turban to cover bandages around her head. That turban looked good on her.” 9781771711920

*Phyllis Parham Reeve recently wrote the foreword to Charlotte Cameron’s play, October Ferries to Gabriola. She is co-founder of the bookstore at Page’s Resort & Marina on Gabriola Island.*

## From Two Strand to twins

SET IN WEST VANCOUVER, **KEITH MAILLARD’S** 14th novel **Twin Studies** (Freehand \$24.95) follows a twin researcher at UBC named Dr. Erica Bauer who meets a set of pre-teen twins, raised by a single mom, who are evidently fraternal, but who urgently insist they are identical. It’s an examination of gender and identity, class and money, and the complicated bonds between twins and siblings, lovers and friends. Maillard was far ahead of his time when he published his first novel about gender fluidity, *Two Strand River* (1982), which also explored the nuances and complications of non-conventional sexual identity. 978-1-988298-31-3

**Pericles in the 20th century**

AT A TIME WHEN MILLIONS ARE CROSSING borders to find a better life, the prolific Cretan-Canadian poet and translator **Manolis** (Emmanuel Aligizakis) of White Rock has donned his fiction cap for **The Quest** (Ekstasis \$25.95), a story set in the 1970s of a boy named Pericles in Romania who

## FICTIONROUND-UP

yearns to return to his family’s home on Crete. Romania is controlled by the Communist Party, so he travels on foot through the mountains. When Pericles finally reaches Greece, he is disillusioned to discover his dreamed-of paradise is controlled by a dictatorship. Pericles then makes his way to Crete where everyone is suspicious of strangers and there is a shocking revelation about his grandfather. Undeterred, Pericles must re-orient his youthful idealism. “There was something in the island Pericles had felt from the first time he stepped onto its soil, something like a little craziness, something different from the rest of Hellas. He couldn’t name it, but one could easily be afraid of it. There was a Cretan word that

described this craziness, the word kouzoulada, something unexplainable. And it was unexplainable to the rest of Hellas but something that meant a lot to the Cretans.” 978-1-77171-283-5

### Cyclades in the 20th century

THIRTEEN YEARS IN THE MAKING AND described as a hybrid novel, **John Gilmore’s** self-published **The Broken Notebooks** (Ellipse Editions \$28.50) merges fact and fiction, prose and poetry, interviews and readings that include **Robert Bringhurst’s** derivations from the works of Haida storytellers. The protagonist searches for insights into the prehistoric marble carvings known as the Cycladic figurines—female fig-



Manolis, poet, author, publisher

ures with folded arms and blank faces that have inspired painters such as **Picasso** and **Modigliani**. During a research trip to Greece, Gilmore tramped around remote hillsides on the Cyclades looking for looted prehistoric cemeteries where figurines were buried with the dead. 9780986786624

### Recently published:

- My Name is Knife** (Penguin Random House \$26) by Alix Hawley
- Hider/Seeker** (Anvil \$20) by Jen Currin
- Angela of the Stones** (Thistle-down \$19.95) by Amanda Hale
- Our Animal Hearts** (Penguin Random House \$24.95) by Dana Tomlinson
- The Ghost Keeper** (Patrick Crean Editions \$22.99) by Natalie Morrill
- Jonny Applesseed** (Arsenal Pulp \$17.95) by Joshua Whitehead
- White** (Talon \$19.95) by Deni Ellis Bechard
- The Light a Body Radiates** (Caitlin \$24) by Ethel Whitty

**The Cure for Death by Lightning: a play adapted by Daryl Cloran from the novel by Gail Anderson-Dargatz** (Talonbooks \$18.95)

**Talker's Town and The Girl Who Swam Forever: Two Plays by Nelson Gray and Marie Clements** (Talonbooks \$18.95)

BY GINNY RATSOY

**T**HE CURE FOR DEATH by Lightning is an adaptation by Daryl Cloran of Gail Anderson-Dargatz's 1996 novel of the

same name which became a bestseller and award-winner in Canada and the U.K. Adhering to the book's plot, the action begins with John, Mother (never named) and fifteen-year-old Beth Weeks tenting on the Adams Plateau, defending themselves and their sheep from a grizzly bear. John emerges from the bush in his attempt to kill it, wild-eyed and forever changed.

"The year I turned fifteen," narrates Beth, "the year the world fell apart and began to come together again..."

The family returns to their farmhouse in a Turtle Valley plagued with fire, suicide, inexplicable deaths, and seemingly possessed animals and humans. John becomes increasingly deranged, combative, and tyrannical, and repeatedly subjects Beth to physical and sexual abuse. When he takes a shotgun to a neighbour whom he blames for his woes, he is apprehended by the authorities and temporarily removed from the community. Mother barely manages to keep the place together, coping through denial, communing with her dead mother, and keeping distant from Beth.

Beth's complicated relationships with the two Indigenous hired hands, cousins Dennis and Filthy Billy, and their Indigenous /settler cousin Nora add to the tumult of her initiation into adulthood. All three have been damaged by intergenerational trauma. Dennis, who copes by drinking, and Nora, who, as the descendant of residential school survivors and "not a real Indian anyway," retreat from society. They provide potential companionship and romantic partnerships for Beth.

They eventually elect to escape to the city. Filthy Billy, who displays symptoms of Tourette Syndrome, is the one shining light in Beth's life. He is steadfastly loyal to her, helps her make sense of things through storytelling, and is a counterbalance to her otherwise troubling home life. More revelations ensue.

Empowered by the sup-



GINNY RATSOY

## Storytelling on stage as a cure for social ills

Three coming-of-age dramas, set in rural areas of Interior B.C., depict cross-cultural interactions in the mid-20th century. One is based on the first novel by **Gail Anderson-Dargatz**, one of 60 authors at the Whistler Writers Festival, Oct. 11-14.

port of Filthy Billy and a belief in the curing power of storytelling, Beth takes matters into her own hands... The play ends with the quartet travelling to nearby Blood Road, which is blanketed with turtles that Billy and Beth help up the embankment where they will lay their eggs. Action replaces paralysis; cooperation with nature replaces fear of it.

The dark tone of *The Cure*

**Swam Forever, Nelson Gray** makes a similar statement, but with an important difference: he sees his work as a settler, and that of **Marie Clements**, who is Métis, as together "enacting ... a cross-cultural dialogue."

Gray acknowledges that, even after he consulted written accounts by Katzie elders and developed face-to-face relationships with several members of the Katzie nation, his attempts to create a female Katzie character for *Talker's Town* were futile. After consulting with Clements, he saw the solution: to commis-

the Catholic school and the town. Piecing together the past events, Talker recalls reporting to police that he had heard her wailing inside the house of Leroux (a slightly older tough guy) but receiving no follow up report. He also recalls the girl's brother, Raymond-Bob, seeking revenge for her disappearance. More memories and revelations ensue.

In a powerful, disturbing denouement, Talker, like Beth in Cloran's play, achieves adulthood by taking action—action that is disturbing,



*The Cure for Death by Lightning* was produced by Western Canada Theatre at the Sagebrush Theatre in Kamloops, 2017.

*for Death by Lightning* is tempered by the occasionally humorous and touching relationships between Beth and her peers. There is also magic realism conveyed by animal puppets that layers a spiritual element onto the realist template.

In a production note, playwright Cloran credits the puppets with creating the "magic of the show." Having seen the play (under Cloran's direction) by Western Canada Theatre in Kamloops in 2017, I can attest that the vivid visual descriptions transfer successfully to the stage.

Cloran's preface identifies the core of the play: "the relationship between Canada's settlers and Indigenous people and our shared connection to the land—all seen from the unique perspective of a fifteen-year-old girl."



IN HIS INTRODUCTION TO **TALKER'S TOWN** and **THE GIRL WHO**

sion her to write a play about the same events as those in *Talker's Town*.

Loosely based on Gray's experiences in the 1960s as a fifteen-year-old in a rough Fraser Valley mill town, "where the men all smelled like sawdust and the women washed it out," *Talker's Town* is a memory play in part about the unreliability of memory—and a great deal about the viciousness of racism and the lasting repercussions of colonialism. The narrator-talker recounts being on the fringes of a tough group of boys in the superstitious town. He is not fully accepted because he was a talker rather than a doer.

The play's point of attack occurs when a pregnant Indigenous teen, Roberta-Bob, with whom Talker had a poignant Platonic night-time encounter at the wharf, disappears from

ambiguous, and complete with spirits and sacrifices. Although this ending is a purging and a personal cleaning for Talker, it is also, ultimately, a scathing indictment of the ethos of the town and, by extension, of the project of colonialism.

As is patent in both the preface and the play itself, the actual events on which *Talker's Town* are based are difficult for Gray to both recall and to process into a fiction that, in turn, is not pleasant for the reader to process. However, confronting the horrors of racism is a necessary step to eradicating racism.



MARIE CLEMENTS TAKES ORAL history from Katzie elder Old Pierre as her starting point in *The Girl Who Swam Forever*. The daughter in the first human family to live on Pitt Lake swims on the lake and is transformed into a sturgeon.

She is the original fish on the lake and the mother of all sturgeon. Her brother, grief stricken at losing his sister, is transformed by their father into "an owl-like bird that can only be seen by the Katzie descendants." Only humans can take a sturgeon's life, and only after they seek the power to do so from the brother.

Clements interweaves this story with a version of the more contemporary one in *Talker's Town*. The setting is both above ("reality") and below ("dream") water, and both the 1960s and the beginning of creation. The Old One acts as a narrator/chorus/guide to the reader, introducing the story by revealing the play's structure, gradually telling Old Pierre's story, and eventually being revealed as the original sturgeon.

In the 1960s story, *Forever*, a pregnant and orphaned residential school student, has the spirits of her grandmother and the Old One to guide her.



*Forever* escapes from the residential school, revealing her situation through dialogue with her brother Ray (Brother Big Eyes) and with the white boy, Jim, the baby's father. More memories and revelations ensue...

The richness and breadth of *The Girl Who Swam Forever* is typical of Clements' style. In works such as *The Unnatural and Accidental Women* (2000) and *The Edward Curtis Project* (2010), for example, she masterfully conjoins different worlds, erasing barriers of time and place and producing works that are at once strong condemnations of the project of colonization and jaw-droppingly beautiful affirmations of the resilience of Indigenous cultures.

The Cure for Death: 9781772012057;  
Talker's Town/The Girl Who Swam: 9781772012019

Ginny Ratsoy is an associate professor of English at Thompson Rivers University specializing in Canadian literature.

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# reviewPOETRY

## NORTHERN B.C. WITHOUT THE SMOKE

**P**RINCE GEORGE POET **Al Rempel** journeys through the grieving process, exploring death and loss in **Undiscovered Country: New Poems** (Mother Tongue \$19.95). His poems unfold through the geographies and seasons of northern B.C. finding hope in an afternoon spent with his daughter or contemplating existence while viewing clouds in spring, leaves in fall, or moonlight on a country road.

Rempel’s poetry was included in the anthology *The Best Canadian Poetry in English* and he was shortlisted for Arc’s Poem of the Year Award in 2015.

978-1-896949-69-7

### Prairies to west coast

FORMERLY A MUSEUM CURATOR IN Barbados, **Wendy Donawa** examines the physical landscapes from her prairie roots to her current West Coast lifestyle in her first collection of poetry, **Thin Air of the Knowable** (Brick \$20). Donawa was a finalist in *The Malahat Review*’s Open Season competition and a runner-up for the Cedric Literary Awards.

978-1-77131-460-6



Al Rempel

### Haiku evolutions

HAIKU SPECIALIST AND AUTHOR OF FIVE collections of poetry, as well as five chapbooks of haiku poetry, **Terry Ann Carter** has edited **deep breath: a book of haiku evolutions** (Leaf Press \$12) with contributions from haiku poets from around the world. Carter, president of Haiku Canada, has participated in the Basho Festival in Japan.

As a community fellow at the Centre for Study of Religion and Society in Victoria, Carter is examining Zen Buddhist influences on English language haiku.

### The future of poetry

THE WORLD OF CANADIAN POETRY SINCE 2000 is examined in **What the Poets Are Doing** (Nightwood Editions \$22.95). The book brings together millennial and Generation X poets in conversation with a focus on the role of poetry

and poets in the twenty-first century. What the Poets are Doing asks the questions, what’s changed, what’s endured and what’s next in Canadian poetry?

The volume is edited by **Rob Taylor**, who teaches creative writing at the University of the Fraser Valley.

978-0-88971-343-7

**KARYOTAKIS-POLYDOURI: THE TRAGIC LOVE STORY**

Poetry translated by **Manolis Aligizakis**

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ISBN: 9781926763453

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Poetry by **Ion Deaconescu**, translated by **Oliver Fraggieri & Manolis Aligizakis**

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**EROTOKRITOS**

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## THE ORMSBY REVIEW

### A rebirth for serious book reviews

After two years as a pilot project in the wilderness, publishing 350 in-depth reviews and essays, **The Ormsby Review** is off ‘n’ running under editor **Richard Mackie**. We hope to erect a stand-alone site for Ormsby materials soon.

Meanwhile, thanks to all our editorial contributors and financial supporters. As of September, the latter include creativeBC, Yosef Wosk, Simon Fraser University (Graduate Liberal Studies), Web Express Printing and B.C. Historical Federation.

—Alan Twigg, PUBLISHER

# THANK YOU

“We sailed on, taking fresh trouble for granted.”  
—CAPTAIN BODEGA Y QUADRA

**We Sang You Home**  
text by Richard Van Camp;  
art by Julie Flett (Orca \$6.95)

**Little You**  
text by Richard Van Camp;  
art by Julie Flett (Orca \$6.95)

**My Heart Fills with Happiness**  
text by Monique Gray Smith;  
art by Julie Flett (Orca \$6.95)

BY BEVERLY CRAMP

ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS now offers dual-language picture books for pre-schoolers; three of which are illustrated by multi-award winner **Julie Flett**. Previously published in English, **We Sang You Home** and **Little You**, both with text by **Richard Van Camp**—a Tlicho Dene from the NWT, and **My Heart Fills with Happiness**, with text by **Monique Gray Smith**—of Cree, Lakota and Scottish ancestry, are now available in bilingual, Plains Cree versions translated by **Mary Cardinal Collins**.

Positive messages of parental love can be a healing balm for Indigenous peoples still struggling after generations of familial destruction wrought by generations of residential school systems that separated First Nation families. And those messages are more effective when they are in traditional languages.

*Little You* is a paean to a newborn baby, much adored by his mother and father. Each double page spread includes one side for text and the other for Flett’s elegant, contemporary illustrations. The book ends with: “You are the birth/of everything new/you are perfect/you are you!” *We Sang You Home* is another love story from parents to a young child.

Narrated from a child’s point of view, *My Heart Fills with Happiness* describes looking into the face of a loved one, smelling bannock baking in the oven, singing, feeling the sun warm your face, walking barefoot on the grass, holding the hand of a loved one, listening to stories, and drumming. The final text is a call to action—“What fills YOUR heart with happiness?”

★ JULIE FLETT DID NOT grow up speaking her traditional languages although her



*We Sang You Home* illustration by Julie Flett

grandparents were multilingual (Michif, Swampy Cree, as well as English and French). “They didn’t teach their languages to their children for complex reasons that many indigenous families face,” says Flett.

When her Swampy Cree-speaking grandfather was in the early stages of Alzheimer’s, Flett asked him on one of their last phone conversations to say a few words in his first language. “It was almost as if he was waiting for me to ask,” she says. “He spoke it to me very well.”

Her grandfather died not long after that ex-

change but it left its mark on Flett. “I was really impacted and began to wonder what I could do for my children’s generation and my nieces to re-connect with our languages.”

An opportunity came when Flett was asked to do a book project of her choice. She opted to write and illustrate an alphabet book, *Owls See*

*Clearly at Night: A Michif Alphabet* (Lii Yüboo Nayaapiwak lii Swer: L’alfabet di Michif) (Simply Read, 2010). Working with two linguists and a Michif speaker, Flett also spent time talking with her Metis relatives and visualizing her family’s experiences to develop the book’s illustrations.

“I wasn’t looking at objects, rather, it was experiences—being and doing—that I worked with. Instead of ‘A is for Apple,’ I used activities like picking berries or actions like ‘fly up, fly away’ that is ohpaho in Michif. It was such an organic process for me and worked really well.”

By the time of the re-release of her Orca books into dual English and Plains Cree, Flett’s intuitive approach to picture book illustration was well-developed. “I’m such a visual person that as soon as I read the story for the first time, I start visualizing it. I begin by doing spontaneous sketches, immediately getting the images down within hours. The labour comes later in developing the sketches, though I usually stick close to the original sketches.”

And in keeping with her instincts to take inspiration from her family experiences, images in the Orca books often reflect Flett’s personal experiences and those of people close to her. An image of two parents lying in bed with their newborn baby in *We Sang You Home* came from times that Flett spent cuddling in bed with her baby son. And the last picture in *My Heart Fills with Happiness* of a father carrying his daughter on his shoulders as he shows her a Narwhal, was conjured by stories of her father, who spent time in his later teens in Churchill, Manitoba where he would have witnessed the northern tusked whales.

After working on dual language books, Flett is learning to speak her traditional languages. “I’m a beginner speaker,” she quickly admits. But clearly, Flett is dedicated to learning more about her grandparents’ languages and helping children do the same.

We Sang: 978-1-4598-2014-2  
Little You: 978-1-4598-2006-7  
My Heart Fills: 978-1-4598-2018-0

*Beverly Cramp is associate editor of BC BookWorld.*

# Julie Flett

A grandfather’s final words spur Cree alphabet project.

“I’m such a visual person that as soon as I read the story for the first time, I start visualizing it. I begin by doing spontaneous sketches, immediately getting the images down within hours.”

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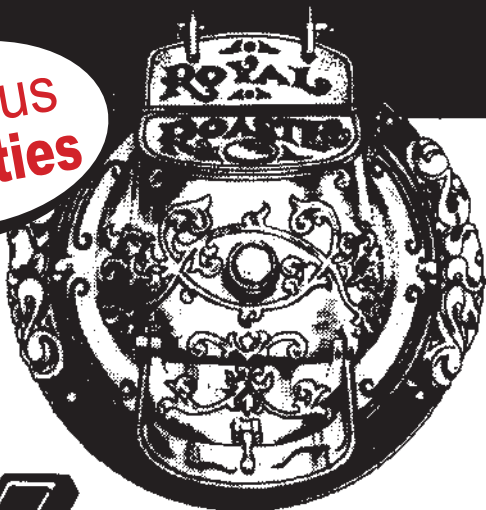
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# O B I T S

**Ryan Correy**  
in 2008, when he took part in Race Across America.



## Ryan Correy 1983-2018

**A**CCLAIMED ENDURANCE CYCLIST AND Rocky Mountain Books author **Ryan Correy** died of cancer on April 28, 2018 at his home. As an indefatigable promoter of cycling and outdoor adventure, he founded Bikepack Canada and recently revised his 2015 RMB memoir *A Purpose Ridden*, to include his marriage and updates on his extensive career as a long-distance competitor throughout the Americas. Due this summer, his posthumous **Bikepacking in the Canadian Rockies** (RMB \$25) will share his passion for some of his favourite backcountry cycling trails. It outlines ten ambitious, multi-day routes complete with directional cues, detailed maps and a "Bikepacking 101" section for newbies.

9781771602372

## Rob Morris 1949-2018

**M**ARINE JOURNALIST AND EDITOR **Rob Morris** was born and raised in St. Catharines, Ontario. He moved to British Columbia in 1974 to attend the University of Victo-

ria. As a marine biologist, he worked in Prince Rupert, also writing for fisheries and aquaculture publications.

In 1991 he became the editor of *Westcoast Mariner* magazine and soon relocated to Courtenay, literally moving his house there via tug and barge. In 2000 he was the founding editor of *Mariner Life*. In 2003 he founded *Western Mariner*, Canada's largest commercial marine magazine which he continued to edit until his death.

Morris wrote the book *Coasters: the Uchuck III, Lady Rose, Francis Barclay and Tyee Princess* (Horsdal & Schubart, 1993), an illustrated tribute to four B.C. vessels and crews that were continuing the delivery of passengers and freight to inlet settlements.

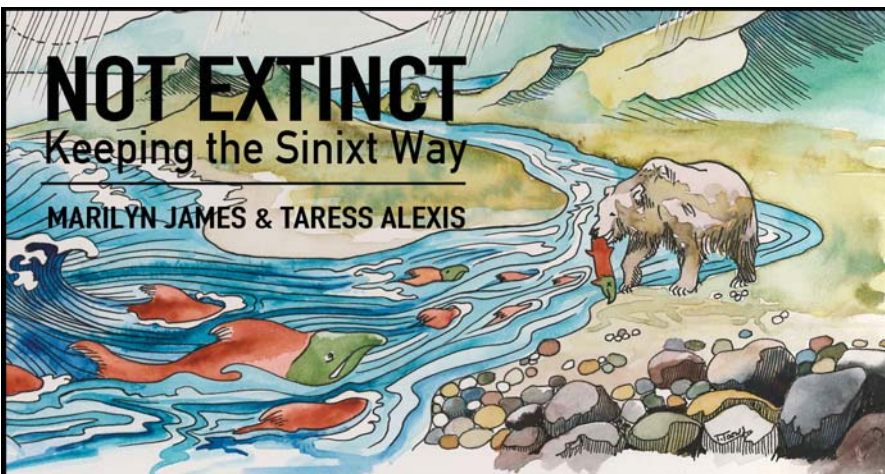
Morris also co-wrote historical articles for compilations like *The Greater Vancouver Book* and *Raincoast Chronicles 22*.

According to Rob Morris' publisher at *Western Mariner*, **David Rahn**, "He leaves an unparalleled legacy that includes thousands of articles on every aspect of west coast maritime life: the history, the vessels, the mariners and fishermen and the coastal communities where they live."

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**A**is for **Albion**  
FORGET FORTUNE COOKIES. AFTER 34 YEARS in business, **Julie Emerson** has installed a hand-cranked Haiku Gumball Machine at Albion Books (523 Richards) in Vancouver to provide bookstore patrons with a free, randomly selected haiku from among works provided by forty B.C. poets, as well as five classic Japanese poets. The ceremonial first crank was performed by poet **Jacquie Pearce** who read aloud one of her own haiku, unraveled from an acorn capsule.

**B**is for **Butler**  
  
**Dave Butler**

THE SECOND NOVEL IN a projected series by biologist and for-ester **Dave Butler** of Cranbrook, **No Place for Wolverines: A Jenny Willson Mystery** (Dundurn \$14.99) follows National Park Warden Jenny Willson as she investigates the death of a wolverine researcher in a mysterious fire. In the process, Willson forms an uneasy alliance with an RCMP corporal and an Idaho-based investigative journalist. She's quickly drawn into a web of political, environmental and criminal intrigue that threatens to tear apart a small British Columbia town, pitting neighbour against neighbour.

978-1-45973-983-3

**C**is for **Coleman**  
**ANNE COLEMAN'S I'LL TELL YOU A SECRET: A Memory of Seven Summers** (M&S, 2004) previously revealed her intimate friendship with revered Canadian novelist **Hugh MacLennan**, almost thirty years her senior, during the 1950s, mostly during summers in the picturesque resort village of North Hatley, Quebec. Coleman has now published a follow-up memoir called **Inland Navigation by the Stars** (BPS Books \$25.95) that covers eight decades of her life. It is again set in North Hatley (and also involves the early lives of writers such as **Michael Ondaatje** and **Margaret Atwood**). Coleman has previously won the Edna Staebler Award for Creative Non-fiction and was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award for Non-fiction.

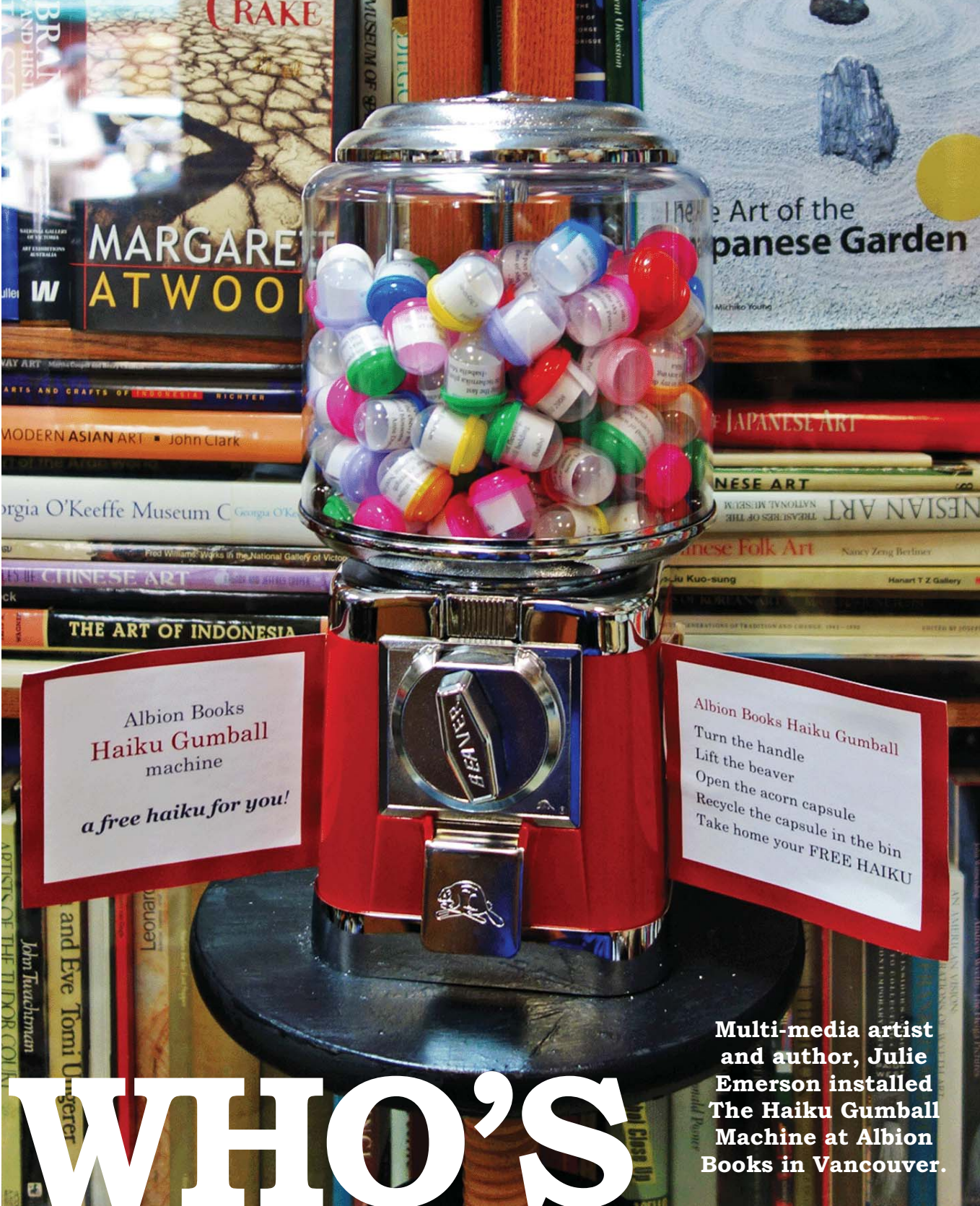
978-1-77236-045-5



Anne Coleman, in the early days

**D**is for **Drown**  
**ROD DROWN** AND CO-AUTHOR **KEN MCINTOSH** have spent six years investigating Metro Vancouver's 1960s drug underworld for **No Dog Barked: Who Killed the MacLauchlans?** (Archives New West \$30), a true story about the unsolved murders of Dr. **Robert Henry MacLauchlan** and his wife **Margaret Ann** in 1966.

978-1-7750952-1-7



**Multi-media artist and author, Julie Emerson installed The Haiku Gumball Machine at Albion Books in Vancouver.**

# WHO'S WHO

**E**is for **Egypt**  
As one of the great empires of the ancient world, Egypt pulls at the imagination with its famous pyramids and pharaohs. Its contemporary state is not so glorious given the country's socio-political troubles, especially after the failure of the "Arab Spring."

One of North America's top scholars on Egypt and the Middle East, Dr. **Robert Springborg** argues in his latest book **Egypt** (Polity Press \$22.95) that the country is in a downward spiral of poor governance. Now a Vancouver resident, Springborg writes that Egypt's accumulated failures under military rule, particularly since a 2013 coup, have become so grave that the nation-state is at risk of collapsing.

Springborg is married to Cairo-born **Anne-Marie Drosso** whose book, **Hookah Nights: Tales from Cairo** (Darf \$12.95), is a collection of 14 short stories of men and women in present-day Egypt.

Egypt: 978-1-509-52049-7  
Hookah: 978-1850773146

**F**is for **Forster**  
WHEN SHE WAS MAINLY KNOWN AS AN astronaut, **Julie Payette** wrote the foreword to **Merna Forster's** second book, **100 More Canadian Heroines: Famous and Forgotten Faces** (Dundurn, 2011). Forster later launched a campaign to include images of notable Canadian women on our banknotes with a petition and website where



Canadians could suggest worthy candidates. That led to rights activist **Viola Desmond** being chosen to appear on the ten-dollar bill. This year, as Governor General of Canada, Julie Payette presented a Meritorious Service Medal (M.S.M) to Forster in Victoria. In 2016, Forster also received the Governor General's History Award for Popular Media, known as The Pierre Berton Award.

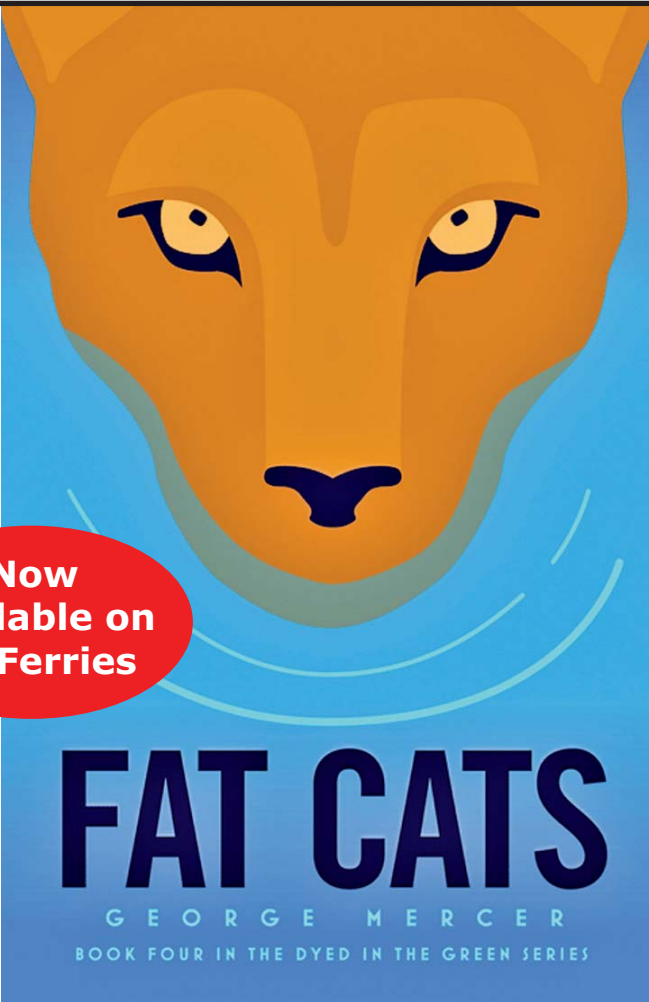
**G**is for **Gaston**  
**BILL GASTON'S MEMOIR JUST LET ME LOOK at You: On Fatherhood** (Penguin Random House \$24.95) delves into the messy relationship that can exist between father and son when it involves alcohol, fishing, rebellion, and all the judgements given and all the words not said. Gaston also unravels

his father's relationship with his father, which involved heavy drinking and family secrets taken to the grave.

Bill Gaston is the author of seven novels and six short story collections, as well as poetry and drama. He will be appearing at the Vancouver Writers Festival (October 15-21). He lives and teaches in Victoria.

9780735234062

**Merna Forster wearing her Meritorious Service Medal (M.S.M) from Governor General Julie Payette in Victoria.**



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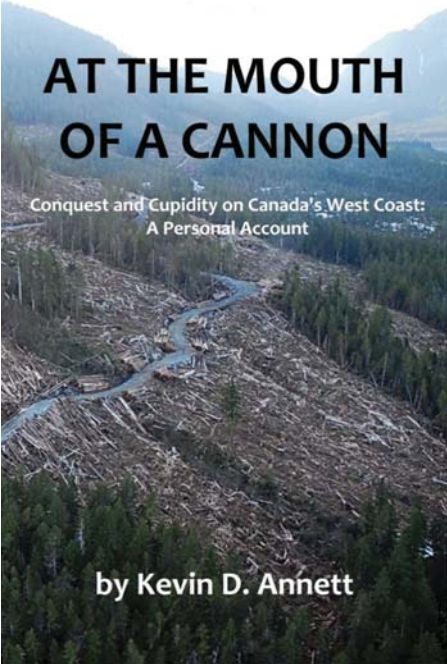
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# WHO'S WHO



**Ann Hansen:** "I found that my experiences did not always conform to politically correct stereotypes of prisoners, guards, wardens, or even myself."

## H is for Hansen

ANN HANSEN WAS ARRESTED IN 1983 WITH the four other members of the radical anarchist group dubbed by the media as the Squamish Five. The bonds and experiences Hansen shared with other imprisoned women during her many years of incarceration have prompted her to write a firsthand account of the brutal effects of imprisonment on women's lives. The heartbreaking and engaging stories in **Taking the Rap: Women Doing Time for Society's Crimes** (Between the Lines \$29.95) make her case for prison abolition.

9781771133555

## I is for India

MEENAL SHRIVASTAVA OF SIDNEY HAS written a creative non-fiction history of the female foot soldiers of Gandhi's national movement, **Amma's Daughters** (UBC Press/Athabasca University Press \$29.95), using her grandmother Amma's 1962 autobiography as a foundation.

Shrivastava recalls the courage of Amma, at the age of twelve, as she joins the nationalist movement and is arrested for making seditious speeches. Despite serving many jail sentences, Amma never wavers from her devotion to Gandhi's teachings and her dream of equality for women who faced deeply patriarchal rules and attitudes.

*Amma's Daughters* documents an important part of India's history. Born in Jaipur, Shrivastava is an alumna of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. She is now coordinator of Political Economy and Global Studies at Athabasca University.

9781771991957

## J is for Jago

FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, RETURNING veterans such as **Al Neil** pioneered the formation of not-for-profit jazz clubs in several Canadian cities, most notably The Cellar on Watson Street in Vancouver. Touring jazz heavyweights mingled with up-and-comers in the 1950s and 1960s, giving rise to a pan-Canadian jazz culture as outlined in **Marian Jago's Live at the Cellar** (UBC Press \$29.95).

9780774837699

## K is for Kim



MICHELLE KIM'S debut, middle-grade youth novel, **Running Through Sprinklers** (Atheneum \$22.99) details a friendship between two girls—one half-Korean and the other half-Japanese—who are separated when one attends high school a year earlier. Kim previously worked for the BBC but now lives in Vancouver.

9781481495288

## L is for Lin

JULIA LIN'S BIOGRAPHY, **SHADOWS OF THE Crimson Sun: One Man's Life in Manchuria, Taiwan, and North America** (Mawenzie House \$24.95), outlines the little-known histories of Manchukuo and Taiwanese immigration to North America. She describes how fourteen-year-old **Akihisa Takayama** escaped with his family to Taiwan after the Russian invasion of the Japanese puppet state of Manchuria (Manchukuo) in 1945. To withstand the brutal Chinese dictatorship of the Kuomintang, Takayama reinvents himself in the 1960s as a physician named **Charles Yang**. First escaping to the U.S., Yang then takes his family to Vancouver where they become the first Taiwanese Canadians.

978-1-988449-17-3



Julia Lin



**Amma (left) with her daughter Rekha and Meenal Shrivastava (author).**

## M is for MacLeod

FOR HIS PREVIOUS BOOK ON POVERTY IN B.C., legislative reporter **Andrew MacLeod** received the George Ryga Award for Social Awareness. In **All Together Healthy, A Canadian Wellness Revolution** (D&M \$22.95), he examines inequities within Canada and draws on international comparisons to assess why Canada’s high spending on health care has failed to achieve better results.

978-1-77162-188-5

## N is for Nesling

JOHN NESLING’S FOURTH BOOK, **THE LONG Cold War and Beyond: a Bystander’s Perception** (Island Blueprint) is about the phenomenon of the Cold War from 1945 to 1991. Nesling discovers that ‘history does not quite repeat itself, but it rhymes’ as Mark Twain so aptly stated. Chapter 9 attempts to speak on the problem of evil and the scapegoat principle with which we avoid it.

978-0-9937401-0-7

## O is for Ochani

SILENCE IS THE PRACTICE GROUND FOR finding inner peace. Honesty without courage is a lost virtue. Vipassana meditator **Amar Ochani** has learned from his renowned Vipassana teacher, the late **S. N. Goenka**, for his debut book, **Inner Explorations of a Seeker** (Inspired Living \$16.95) in which he advises, “The truth hurts, but only once; untruth keeps hurting all the time.” Ochani’s short essays and thoughts are not written for readers of any particular faith, religion, denomination or creed.

Born in Mumbai, Ochani led inspirational seminars for the Landmark Forum in India, and now lives in Coquitlam. He reminisces, “Like most people, I spent a substantial part of life with the feeling that something is missing. This feeling stayed with me until I realized that meditation and spirituality interested me more than money and recognition did. Money and fame still pull me, but their lure is far lesser now.”

Amar Ochani will be signing his book at Chapters-Coquitlam, Saturday Sept. 29. 3:30-5:30.

97801-7750775-0-3

## P is for Potty

GORD AND ANN BAIRD ARE THE OWNERS and co-creators of an internationally recognized Eco-Sense home in Victoria. Its building occurred when greywater, rain water harvesting, compost toilets, and earthen architecture were still on the fringes of cultural acceptance, not yet supported by local regulations.

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The LBC is the most challenging green building rating system globally, and the Baird’s home was the first to achieve petal recognition leading to the status of “World’s Greenest Modern House” for a number of years.

From wastestream to mainstream, the Bairds have flushed forth their knowledge in **Essential Composting Toilets: A Guide to Options, Design,**



Car ownership is rare in North Korea. Commuters (above) on a creaky but affordable trolleybus in Pyongyang (*Red Star Utopia: Inside North Korea*).



Composting toilets do not involve water, septic tanks or sewer systems

**Installation, and Use** (New Society \$39.99).

Gord Baird is the Water Commissioner for the Victoria Capital Regional District’s regional Water Supply Commission and Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission. He was a technical editor for the BC Ministry of Health’s *Manual of Composting Toilets and Greywater Standard Practices* (2016). Ann Baird works on regional climate action initiatives involving water, food, and energy resiliency in climate adaptation and risk management.

9780865718722

## Q is for Quiz Queens

K.L. DENMAN’S **QUIZ QUEENS** (ORCA Currents \$9.95) is about boy-crazy Kiara who convinces her studious pal Jane to create a questionnaire to help find her soulmate. It makes for a cre-

ative blurb on the back of the book: “Your friend asks you to help her land the perfect boyfriend. You: A. Tell her to go away—you’re reading. B. Agree to create a quiz (even though you think it’s a bad idea). C. Withhold the surprising results when a boy you like comes out ahead. D. Try to patch things up after you both say things you regret.”

9781459813960



## R is for Ramji

FORMER POETRY AND REVIEWS EDITOR FOR PRISM International, Irani-Indian poet **Shazia Hafiz Ramji** of Vancouver will launch her debut title, **Port of Being** (Invisible \$16.95) with appearances at the Vancouver Writers Festival and the Surrey International Writers’ Conference. Its content examines migration, immigration, technology and B.C.’s urban housing crisis.

978-1-988784120

## S is for Stainton

BORN IN 1927 ON A PRAIRIE FARM, **SHIRLEY D. Stainton** grew up in the Slocan Valley at a time when the region was

mainly mining communities nestled in the valleys of the Arrow, Slocan, and Kootenay Lakes. Many of those communities are now ghost towns and it’s hard to imagine the hub of economic and social activity they once were. In her book, published posthumously, **Children of the Kootenays: Memories of Mining Towns** (Heritage \$22.95), Stainton shows what a great place it was to grow up with wilderness and wild animals at her doorstep; and how the tight-knit friendships formed were enough to overcome struggles during the 1930s.

978-1-77203-185-0

## T is for Tater

IN HER FIRST COLLECTION OF POEMS, **This Will Be Good** (BookThug \$18), **Mallory Tater** writes about her feminism and struggles with an eating disorder. She also critically observes the suburbs of the Lower Mainland and nearby American lands, from Delta to Point Roberts, painting disturbing images of modern suburban life. She describes the latter as “a bruised thumb of American soil” and people in the former, “where Baptist women get regular perms, where palm trees rest in traffic islands, and a Walmart will soon sprout from the earth.”

978-1-77166-394-6

## U is for Utopia

**Austin Andrews’** photographs from six continents have appeared in *TIME*, *Foreign Policy*, *Maclean’s* and the on-line edition of *National Geographic*. As a film director and editor, his films have screened at Sundance, Tribeca, and the Hot Docs festival. Writer **Simon Cockerell** has made almost two hundred trips to the absurdly named Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) for his Beijing-based company, Koryo Tours, to promote interaction between North Koreans and the rest of the world. Together they’ve produced an unusually engaging coffee table book, **Red Star Utopia: Inside North Korea** (Durville/UTP \$49.95) that reveals the bleak and repressive society, admired by **Donald Trump**, that is home to 25 million freedom-starved and frequently starving North Koreans.

9781988824239



“I am fortunate to have so many strong women and supporters around me who are relieved, excited and supportive that I’ve tried to navigate the body and eating disorders in this book.”  
—MALLORY TATER

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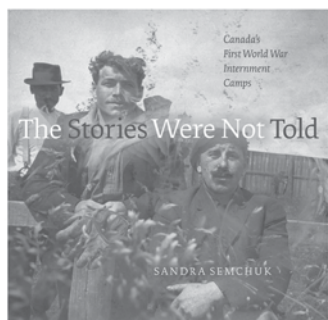
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# WHO'S WHO



ANTHONY REDPATH PHOTO

**Pointe Restaurant, Wickaninnish Inn, Tofino**

## V is for Virag

AFTER FORTY YEARS MAKING OTHER PEOPLE look good as an editor, **Nancy Flight** of Greystone Books has semi-retired having recently earned the inaugural Karen Virag Award which recognizes exceptional efforts by an individual or organization to raise the profile of editing in their community.



**Nancy Flight**

It's named for **Karen Virag**, a member of the Editors' Association of Canada who died in 2014.

## W is for Wick

SINCE 1996, THE POINTE RESTAURANT AT the Tofino-based Wickaninnish Inn (The Wick) has been an innovative proponent of west coast cuisine. Now they've served up **The Wickaninnish Cookbook: Rustic Elegance on Nature's Edge** (Penguin Random House \$45), that shares recipes (combining cutting edge techniques with fresh, seasonal ingredients) from their current and former chefs—Warren Barr, Rod Butters, Matthias Conradi, Mark Filatow, Justin Laboissiere, Duncan Ly, Andrew Springett and Matt Wilson.

9780147530271

## X is for Experiences

**OUT THERE LEARNING: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS on Off-Campus Study Programs** (UTP \$29.95) examines the value of non-traditional avenues of study. This collection offers "voices from the field" experiences of faculty members, students, teaching assistants, and community members engaged in every aspect of off-campus study programs. Edited by UVic professors **Deborah Curran, Cameron Owens, Helga Thorson and Elizabeth Vibert**.

9781487523145

## Y is for Yamagishi

JAPANESE-BORN **KUNIO YAMAGISHI** DID not experience Japanese-Canadian internment camps himself. He was educated in Tokyo before immigrating to Canada without knowing about the camps. Devastated when he found out about them, he has suffered ambivalence towards Canada ever since. His novel, **The Return of a Shadow** (Austin Macauley \$21.95), is based on historical facts, but his protagonist, Eizo Osada, is fictitious.

In 1930s, Eizo leaves his wife and three young sons, one of them only two years old, to come to Canada to earn money for the family back in Japan. Then Japan attacks Pearl Harbor and he is sent to an internment camp. Eizo returns to his family after 43 years in Canada, but will his family accept him?

9781786937155

## Z is for Zuehlke

THE TWELFTH INSTALLMENT IN **MARK Zuehlke's** military history series, **The Cinderella Campaign: First Canadian Army and the Battles for the Channel Ports** (D&M \$37.95) is one of five shortlisted titles for the 2018 John W. Dafoe Book Prize, a \$10,000 prize in memory of Canadian editor **John Wesley Dafoe**.

*The Cinderella Campaign* describes First Canadian Army's urgent and thankless mission of opening the Channel ports to Allied victory in World War II. They thought of themselves as the "Cinderella Army" and international correspondents agreed. This was because First Canadian Army had been relegated to the left flank of the Allied advance toward Germany from the Normandy beaches and given the tough task of opening the Channel ports from Le Havre to Ostend in Belgium against brutal German resistance.

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Despite extensive damage to Dieppe's harbour, the "Cinderella Army" was able to open the harbour so Allied freighters could offload tons of supplies.

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# LETTERS

## BC Ferries-reader

ON A RECENT B.C. FERRY CROSSING FROM Vancouver Island to Vancouver, I picked up a copy of your excellent publication. What a refreshing change to find something like that rather than the usual shopping brochures.

I am now back in UK, complete with my copy and wonder if you might be able to help.

For part of our trip this time we stayed on Quadra and one morning, whilst in the store at Heriot Bay, I overheard some ladies talking about books they have read which are set in Nanaimo and also on some of the islands. I wish I had plucked up the courage to ask for titles and authors but British reserve doesn't let us do that too often! I did go to the bookstore on the island and also to the library but nobody could help me.

Could send me a list of authors who set their work in and around

Vancouver Island? I have just read the first volume of the Emily Carr Travels book and am waiting for Volume 2 to arrive from Munro's ( again, I should have bought it while I was there ...)

**Jean Skelding**  
United Kingdom

[To quickly search for extensive information about more than 11,800 B.C. authors and their books, simply go to our free reference service at [abcbook-world.com](http://abcbook-world.com)—Ed.]

## Anti-anti-aging

ALL IN ALL, THIS WAS AN EXCEPTIONAL ISSUE! So much coverage by or about so many exceptional people. The review of Sarah Cox's book (*Breaching the Peace*) was terrific. Isn't there some kind of prize for such a great title? The reviews of books by Karen Charleson (*Through Different Eyes*) and Cathy Converse (*Against the Current*) were exceptional as well.



**Canada has been ranked as the eleventh-most literate society on the planet, as reported by *The Guardian*.**

Photo on B.C. Ferries by Mark Forsythe.

## Archie & the Holocaust

My copy of *BC BookWorld* came in the mail yesterday (thank you!) and when I opened it, I discovered that my book *Imprint* had been selected for the BC Ferries shops thanks to *BC BookWorld*. This is so exciting for me to hear. Thank you for selecting a book about ancestral Holocaust memories as an exemplary title. I so appreciate your support! I am now looking forward to seeing it on the shelves of a BC Ferry when my son forces me to buy him yet another Archie book!

**Claire Sicherman**  
Salt Spring Island



Claire Sicherman  
on Salt Spring Island

RAMONA LAM PHOTO

## Good tears

THANK YOU! I'VE JUST SEEN THE SUMMER issue online and I feel close to tears.

I know that I will be reading the review more than a few times. I am very grateful that you took the time to read and appreciate my first novel, *Through Different Eyes* and even chose to feature it on the cover of *BC BookWorld*.

**Karen Charleson**  
Hooksum Outdoor School, Tofino



Send letters or emails to:  
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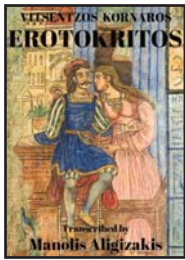


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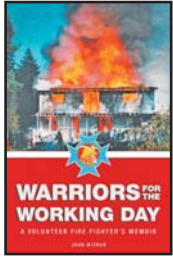
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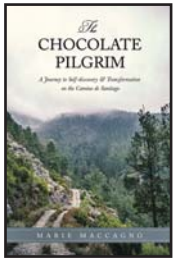


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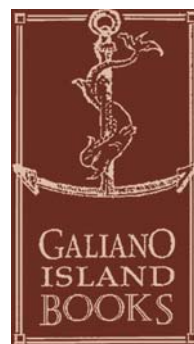


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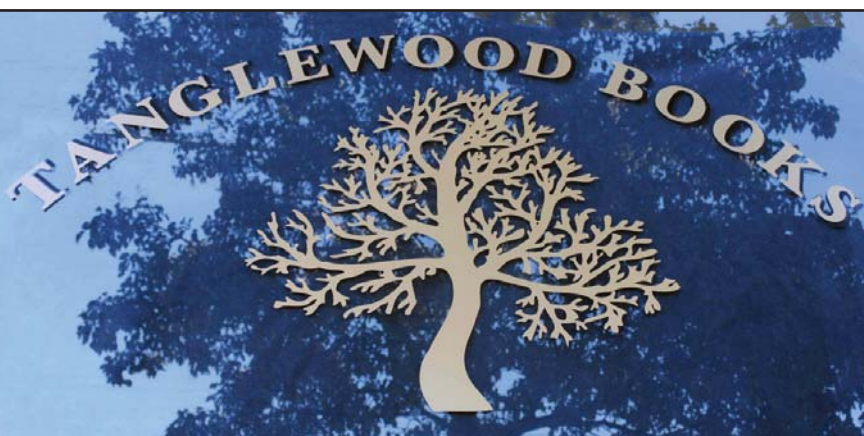
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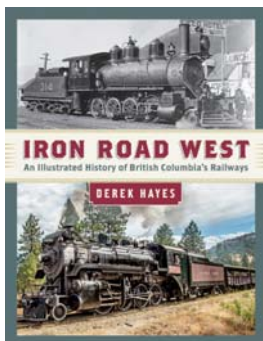
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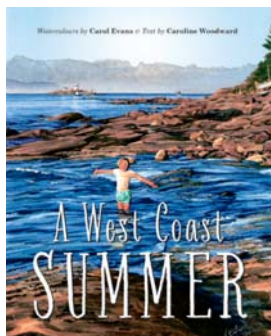


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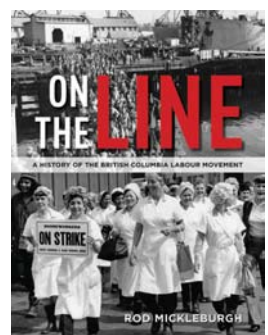
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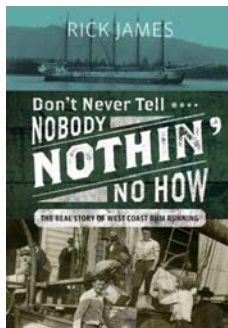


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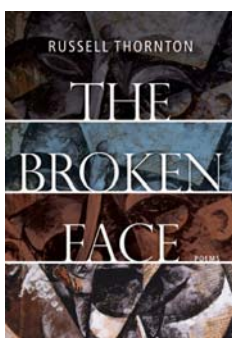


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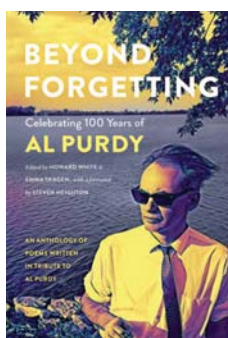
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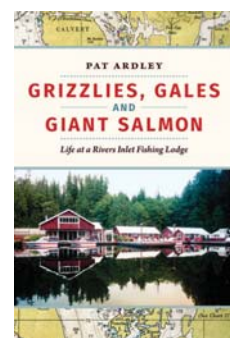


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