

YOUR FREE GUIDE TO BOOKS & AUTHORS

BC
BOOKWORLD

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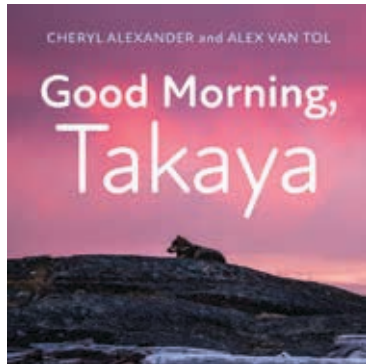
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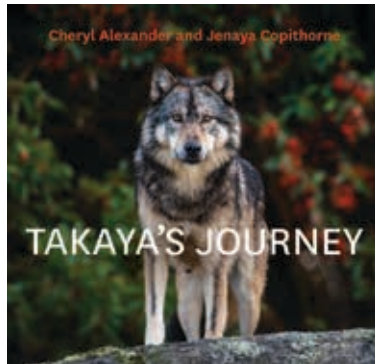


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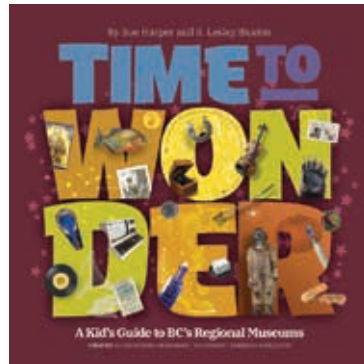


Takaya's Journey

Cheryl Alexander and Jenaya Copithorne

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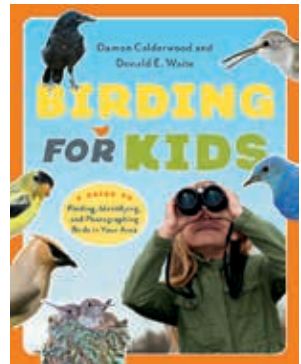


Time to Wonder - Volume 1

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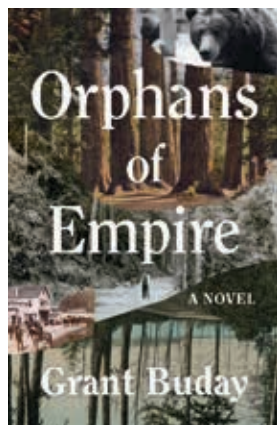


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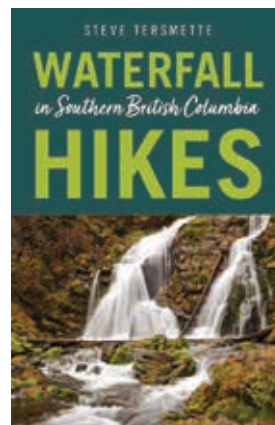


Orphans of Empire

A Novel
Grant Buday

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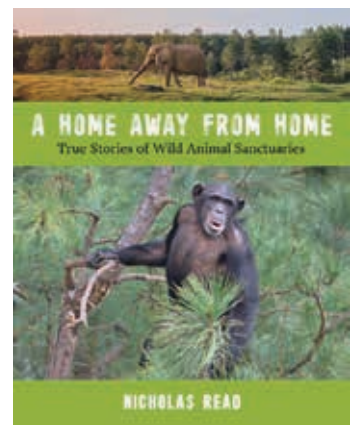


Waterfall Hikes in Southern British Columbia

Steve Tersmette

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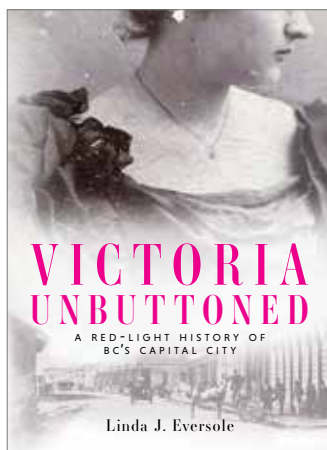


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Nicholas Read

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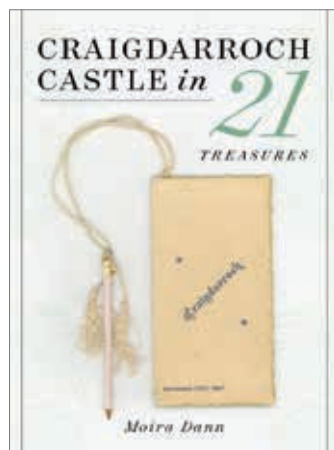


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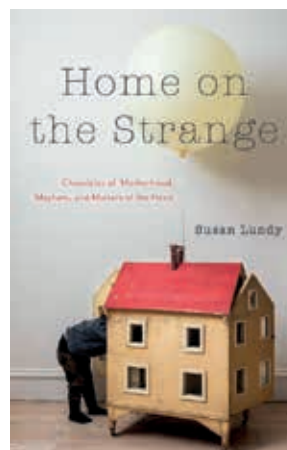


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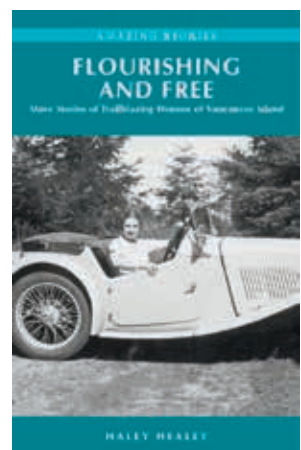


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BC TOP SELLERS

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Crossing the Divide: Discovering a Wilderness Ethic in Canada's Northern Rockies (Sandhill Book Marketing \$21.95)

Claudia Cornwall

British Columbia in Flames: Stories from a Blazing Summer (Harbour \$26.95)

Julia Zarankin

Field Notes from an Unintentional Birder: A Memoir (D&M \$24.95)

Patrice Dutil, editor

The Unexpected Louis St-Laurent (UBC Press \$49.95)

Zach Loeks

The Edible Ecosystem Solution: Growing Biodiversity in Your Backyard and Beyond (New Society \$39.99)



Cheryl Alexander

Takaya: Lone Wolf (Rocky Mountain Books \$30)

Lin Gensing-Pophal

Managing Remote Staff: Capitalize on Work-from-Home Productivity (Self-Counsel Press \$26.95)

Vera Maloff

Our Backs Warmed by the Sun: Memories of a Doukhobor Life (Caitlin \$24.95)

Monique Gray Smith

(illos by Nicole Niedhardt)
When We Are Kind (Orca Books \$19.95)

Charles Ulrich

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

Glen Huser

Firebird (Ronsdale Press \$12.95)

Jesse Donaldson

Fool's Gold: The Life and Legacy of Vancouver's Official Town Fool (Anvil Press \$18)

Dukesang Wong & David McIlwraith

The Diary of Dukesang Wong (Talonbooks \$18.95)

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

PEOPLE



Angie Abdou on Mount Hosmer in the Kootenays.

MARTY HAEKE PHOTO

HIKE NOT NIKE

In her preceding book, **Angie Abdou** gave us a truthful account of her experiences as a hockey mom, frankly describing her young son's sporting experiences on and off the ice in Fernie.

Now, over the course of the summer holidays, she takes to the great outdoors with her daughter, **Katie**. Their peak-a-week adventures are shared in **This One Wild Life: A Mother-Daughter Wilderness Memoir** (ECW \$21.95).

"Writing this book taught me the value of a simple life, the restorative powers of nature, the serenity to be found in a simple walk in the woods and the happiness of spending as much time as possible with my immediate family," says Abdou.

Yes, Katie and Mom bonded. And an important lesson was learned. Abdou, herself a serious athlete, has a passion for the great outdoors and hiking; Katie does not.

9781770416000



Petra Kelly (1947-1992)

Politics and fatal love

Shaena Lambert's novel **Petra** (Random House \$22.95) is inspired by the life of German Green Party co-founder **Petra Kelly**, who was murdered in 1992. *Petra* explores love, jealousy, and the power of social change. It also explores Kelly's unlikely romance with a Nato general who converted to her cause.

9780735279575

New Brighton Hotel makes a fictional comeback

Mayne Island author, **Grant Buday** has turned his social critic's eye on the early settler days of Vancouver in **Orphans of Empire** (TouchWood \$22), in which he brings to life three characters whose lives converge at the site of the historic New Brighton Hotel in the late 1880s.

Having grown up and spent his early adult years in East Vancouver, Buday says he frequented New Brighton Park (the site of the long-gone hotel), swam in its pool and walked past the park toward the Alberta Wheat Pool.

Buday imagines to life Colonel Richard Moody, whom the British government sent to found British Columbia (and establish a 'second England'). "Great things are expected of you," a fellow traveller taunts Moody.

The second character introduced is Frisadie, a Hawaiian who arrives in Victoria at the age of seven after her father dies on the voyage leaving her and her mother destitute. Frisadie grows up and buys the New Brighton Hotel, making it the toast of the settlement.

And finally, there's Henry Fannin, orphaned in London, England but makes his way to New Brighton where he becomes an embalmer and finds happiness.

9781927366899



Grant Buday

EDEN BUDAY PHOTO



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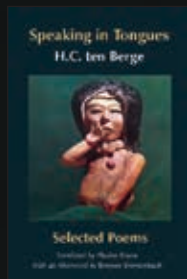
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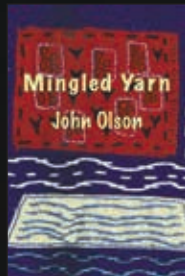
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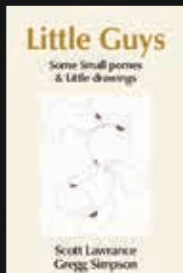


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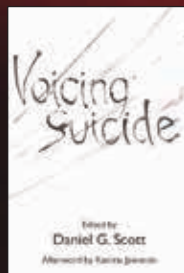
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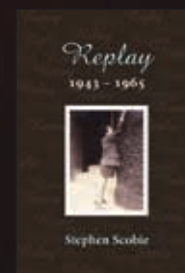
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Neo-noir in perilous times

After receiving award nominations for his first two books of short stories, retired journalist **Don McLellan** has released his third collection, **Ouch: 20 Stories** (Page Count Press \$20), equally worthy of notice. Each story encapsulates a slice of the lives of characters sparsely drawn who are usually stuck in troubling if not downright perilous situations. Like the fireman and his wife, a nurse, who are about to have a child while living in a neighbourhood terrorized by homeless people in *The Unravelling*.

McLellan injects humour, mostly black, which enlivens his dark tales. He also adds sharp perceptions of contemporary issues, such as this backdrop in *Neighbours*, about a diverse collection of people who come together to help a homeless woman (the homeless are a major feature in McLellan’s book).

Also included in this scenario is a family from Hong Kong, so successful that the mother can stay home to raise their kids. And there is also Augie, an Indigenous, sometime longshoreman who lives in a basement rental. “He’s a good man,” writes McLellan, adding “he’s always happy to lend a hand to his non-Native neighbours, whom he only half-jokingly refers to as ‘tourists who’ve overstayed their visas.’”

A major theme runs throughout McLellan’s neo-noir: wounded people struggling to make their way in a difficult world.

9781777361600



Don McLellan



Lynn Henry

Dr. Bonnie Henry has gone from being a faceless bureaucrat to a well-known, well-trusted health officer in her handling of the Covid-19 health menace. Her approach caught the attention of people far away from B.C. including *The New York Times*, which called her “one of the most effective public health figures in the world.”

There is another talented sibling in the family: Bonnie Henry’s sister **Lynn Henry**, publishing director of Knopf Canada. Some may remember Lynn Henry as the chief editor of Polestar, a B.C. publisher founded in 1981 that was eventually bought by Raincoast Books. “I had the good fortune to work at one of B.C.’s most innovative independent literary houses, alongside two wonderful colleagues, **Michelle Benjamin** and **Emiko Morita**,” says Lynn Henry. “We were three dedicated people running this crazy dream of a press on a shoestring, and we published books I’m still proud of today.”

It so happened that Lynn Henry was visiting her sister Bonnie in March 2020, just as the Covid-19 virus was identified as a pandemic. Lynn witnessed first-hand the whirlwind that became her sister’s daily life. With her knowledge of Bonnie Henry’s personal and professional background (that includes fighting SARS in Toronto in 2003 and the Ebola outbreak in Uganda in 2000 among other crises), Lynn Henry teamed up with Bonnie to write **Be Kind, Be Calm, Be Safe** (Allen Lane/Penguin \$26.95). Including Dr. Bonnie Henry’s recollections of how and why decisions were made, the book delves into the delicate balance between individuals, society and the value placed on keeping everyone safe.

9780735241862

Getting silted on THE FRASER

Carol Blacklaws counts herself as one of the lucky few to have traveled the entire 1,375-kilometer length of the Fraser River. With her husband, **Rick Blacklaws**, she has also floated down much of the waterway and witnessed “the river’s chameleon-like character as it transforms from an icy glacial stream in the Rocky Mountains to a cauldron of water sinkholes—with hydraulics that could suck a boat into its boiling whirlpools—in the narrow canyon walls of Hells Gate, and finally to drift west into the river’s estuary at the metropolitan city of Vancouver.”

Both Carol and Rick Blacklaws have worked in the fields of archeology and teaching, which led them to accompany and organize many student rafting trips on the river. Now they have collaborated on a coffeetable book about their trips on B.C.’s defining river, **The Fraser: River of Life and Legend** (Image West \$34.95). Carol wrote the text and Rick contributed the photography.



Carol Blacklaws and Rick Blacklaws

Covering the wild upper reaches of the Fraser (land of the lodgepole pine), through the dry rangelands of the Cariboo and down the treacherous canyon, and finally the fertile delta of Metro Vancouver, the book provides insights into the landscapes of the river and the people who live on its banks.

The Fraser has remained a big part of the Blacklaws’s life. For example, when most wives are getting jewelry and a candle-lit dinner for their tenth wedding anniversary, Carol Blacklaws was getting “silted”—i.e., drenched by river water that dries and leaves a light dusting of sediment. Rick had given her a raft trip down the Fraser.

And the name of their oldest son? It’s Fraser.

9780994817518

To bring awareness of B.C.’s caribou to children, West Kootenays writer **Kathy Sager** collaborates with Cortes Island illustrator **Kristen Scholfield-Sweet** for **Mother Reindeer’s Journey to the Sun: A Tribute to Mountain Caribou** (Maa \$12). The story follows Mother Reindeer on her annual journey to bring warmth and light back to the north. Sager includes facts about mountain caribou and photos of the animal in its habitat.

B.C.’s southeastern South Selkirk herd is considered extirpated while the South Purcell herd, with only three males remaining in the wild, is functionally extirpated according to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources. Thirty of B.C.’s 54 caribou herds are at risk of local extinction, and 14 of those herds have fewer than 25 animals.

Kathy Sager, an early childhood educator, previously published a baking story and recipe book for children, *Suzie’s Sourdough Circus: with Amazing Recipes!* (Harbour, 2011).

9781777306106

Mother Reindeer



Kathy Sager and daughters.

Psychopaths IN BOARDROOMS

**The New Corporation:
How “Good” Corporations are
Bad for Democracy by Joel Bakan**
(Allen Lane/Penguin \$19.95)

When fraudster **Bernie Madoff** and thousands of other Wall Street swindlers jeopardized the lives of millions of Americans, big corporations did nothing to bail out the poor folks who lost their homes. Instead, **President Obama** bailed out the swindlers.

Empowered by the following presidential administration of **Donald Trump**, who rejected the Paris Accord, U.S.-based corporations mostly failed to protect the general populace from a plague far more deadly than the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. Big business in North America kept those meat packing plants open where Covid-19 was easily spread, sacrificed next to nothing and accepted government bailouts whether needed or not.

When the Dow Jones Industrial Average Index reached a record high, most Americans believed that was a good thing. Meanwhile, it was the dreaded boogeyman of Socialism—government bailouts—that kept North American society functioning.

This all comes as no surprise to **Joel Bakan**. His 2003 documentary and television mini-series called *The Corporation* provocatively explained why and how corporations are, by their very design, akin to psychopaths. Corporations, he discerned, are constructs invented to absolve their managers and investors of responsibility for their failures and transgressions.

Now Bakan’s **The New Corporation: How “Good” Corporations are Bad for Democracy** examines the ruse of posturing that is currently in vogue with corporations that want to persuade you they are now suddenly and fully on the side of the environment. The UBC-based law professor examines how corporations are attempting to-rebrand themselves as do-gooders, as partners with progressive organizations working to counteract climate change, etc.

Again, in tandem with a documentary of the same name (*The New Corporation: The Unfortunately Necessary Sequel*), Bakan sets out to convince the reader that by slickly advertising how social and environmental values are at the core of their agenda, corporate entities are simultaneously subverting the public good, seeking more privatization, stagnating wages and only posing as environmentalists.

He also does some math. Between 1979-2013, wages for the top one percent in the U.S. grew by nearly 150

The New Corporation reveals how billionaires are using the rhetoric of serving nature and the public to further manipulate our bodies and minds.



Joel Bakan credits Bruno and his staff at the Corner Cup Café in Vancouver's Kitsilano for providing writing fuel (coffee) and a welcoming place to write.

percent, according to Bakan, while for the bottom 90 percent wages grew by only 15 percent. He states CEOs now make nearly three hundred times what the average worker makes—compared with thirty times as much in 1980.

Bakan echoes the words of **Robert Weissman**, president of **Ralph Nader's** Public Citizen (a consumer rights advocacy group), who notes there are no limits in the Paris Accord on continued exploration and drilling on the Alberta tar sands. “Thanks to big oil’s help in crafting it,” Bakan says, “the Paris Accord is toothless.”

The list of corporate entities who have absorbed multi-billion dollar fines is astonishing (Volkswagen tops the list at \$25 billion) but companies continue to weigh the probabilities of getting caught; Google, Apple, Amazon and Microsoft continue to evade taxation. Corporations are breaking the law “on a grander scale than any-

thing we’ve seen,” says Weissman.

“The real danger,” said **Greta Thunberg** at the 2019 UN climate conference in Madrid, “is when politicians and CEOs are making it look like real action is happening, when in fact almost nothing is being done, apart from clever accounting and creative PR.”

If you feel virtuous about using your blue box and putting papers in a yellow bag, you might want to consider why corporations love to promote recycling. It shifts the responsibility onto the shoulders of private citizens and

government. According to *New York Times* reporters **Tala Schlossberg** and **Nayeema Raza**, the recycling movement is “the greatest trick corporations ever played.”

Marriott Hotels happily reduces laundry costs by asking customers to reuse towels and “Help Save The Planet.” Meanwhile, Bakan maintains there is overwhelming evidence that recycling doesn’t

work. “Much of what goes into recycling bins ends up in landfills and is burned, causing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions,” he says.

“It’s the same for climate change, where corporations deflect blame by insisting we are all responsible for the problem.” He points out that Petro-Canada has stickers on its gas pumps: “Play your part on helping reduce climate change by using our products responsibly” This is a rare Canuck reference. Bakan shows a tendency to overlook or avoid distinctly Canadian perspectives possibly in favour of courting a much larger American audience. *The New Corporation* is published with a distinctly, non-indie imprint owned by the German media group Bertelsmann.

Essentially, corporations are working hard to convince you that profit is not their primary purpose—but Bakan declares it’s a smokescreen. For starters, the collusion of large corporations with repressive regimes around the planet is rarely deemed newsworthy. He notes these corporations “escape blame, quietly slipping out the back door while they bemoan the dysfunctional state of affairs they’ve helped create.”

In the so-called “free world,” Bakan writes that corporations are “leveraging their new personas” to replace government in providing public goods and services. (In December, Canada’s federal government announced it would rely on FedEx to deliver its vaccines, not Canada Post.)

He notes the “new” corporations looked “distinctly less noble” as they lined up during the coronavirus pandemic for bailouts despite record profits, tax dodging and stock buybacks while pushing for more tax cuts, deregulation and privatization.

“The decades-long refrain that corporations are our friends and governments our enemy rings hollow now,” Bakan writes. “It’s telling that even presidential contender [now president], **Joe Biden**, has veered toward a progressive stance, invoking **Roosevelt’s** New Deal.”

Echoing **Bernie Sanders**, the new U.S. president has insisted “that big corporations, which we’ve bailed out twice in twelve years, step up and take responsibility for their workers and their communities.”

But nearly 50% of the Americans who voted in 2020 failed to repudiate Trump. Joe Biden and the Democrats are now stuck with a crumbling economy due to an unchecked pandemic that will give rise to multi-dimensional social insecurity equal to The Great Depression of the 1930s.

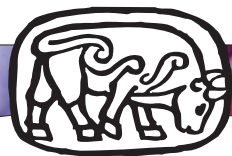
We can now expect to see Joel Bakan’s third volume, perhaps entitled *The Next Corporation*, ten years from now, to once more lay bare the unjust fault lines of our corporate-led society.

978-07352-3884-8



Greta Thunberg at the European Parliament, 2020.

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New books from Douglas & McIntyre



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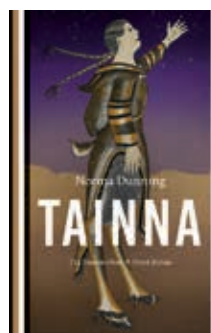


UNRAVELLING CANADA

A Knitting Odyssey

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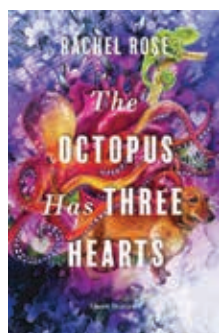


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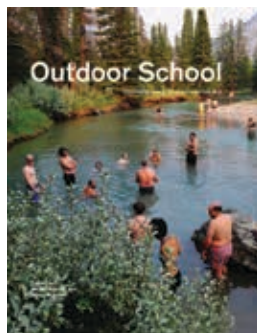


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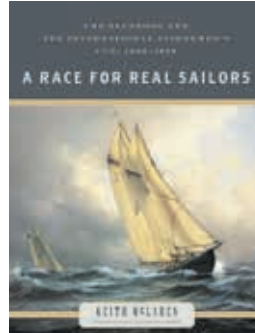


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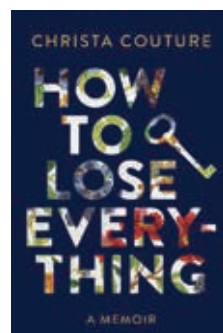
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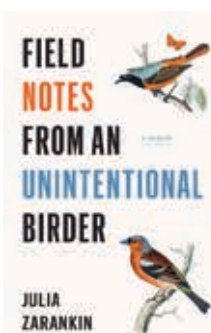


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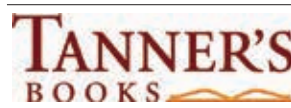
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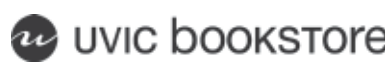
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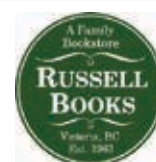
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**Indigenomics:
Taking a Seat at the Economic Table**
by **Carol Anne Hilton**
(New Society \$19.99)

BY LATASH-MAURICE NAHANEE

Indigenous people have been in North America for thousands of years. They lived in a bountiful land filled with natural resources. With such bounty they flourished. They built sustainable economies and cultures. Then came the catastrophe of colonization. With the settlement of Canada came the displacement of Aboriginal people, resulting in the loss of control of their lives, culture and economy.

In **Indigenomics: Taking a Seat at the Economic Table**, **Carol Anne Hilton** takes us deeper. She takes us back to 1763 when **King George III** of England penned the Royal Proclamation which was supposed to help coordinate the settlement of the northern part of North America. This document recognized the rights and title of Indigenous peoples. Hilton proceeds to examine how and why this Royal Proclamation was largely ignored by Canada after Confederation.

One of the urban myths started by Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir **John A. Macdonald** and later Canada's deputy superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs from 1913–1932 **Duncan Campbell Scott**, was that "Indians are a problem."

Indigenous people became such a thorn for government policy makers that an amendment to the Indian Act was enacted to forbid them from hiring lawyers and bringing lawsuits against Canada. Since that odious legislation was struck down in 1951, according to Hilton, Aboriginal people have had 275 Supreme Court rulings in their favour.

These rulings are still changing the political and economic landscape in Canada.



CAROL ANNE HILTON RECEIVED HER MASTER of Business Administration from the University of Hertfordshire, England through a partnership with Vancouver Island University.

Among Indigenous people, it is also important to not only introduce yourself, but to also acknowledge your ancestry. This helps people to understand your position in a community.

Carol Anne Hilton describes herself this way: "I am most influenced by being a Hesquiaht woman. I am of Nuu chah nulth descent from the west coast of Vancouver Island—a name (Nuu chah nulth, replacing Nootka) that describes the location and identity meaning "all along the mountains" and serves to centre me in this world. They call me W'aa?katuush, which refers to Big Sister, a name that means I come from a line of the oldest women. I am from the house of Mam'aayutch, a chief's house that means "on the edge." My roots stretch from Ahousat, Ehattesaht, and as far as the Makah people in Washington State."

RE-SLICING THE PIE

Carol Anne Hilton and other Indigenous business leaders are part of a select group of Indigenous economists working at the forefront of an estimated \$100 billion Indigenous economy.

This essential background information establishes Hilton as a culturally-rooted person. It tells me that she comes from a noble family and is a person that I should pay attention to. With the release of her first book, now others can do the same. Hilton is the founder of the Indigenomics Institute and, as such, works and serves as an advisor to business, governments and First Nations particularly with regards to economic development. She is part of a select group of Indigenous economists who are working at the forefront of an estimated 100-billion-dollar Indigenous economy. As this economy emerges, **Bill Gallagher**, **Don Richardson**, **Dara Kelly**, **JP Gladu**, **Shannin Metawabin** and **Clint Davis** are some of the business leaders who are interpreting and shaping a new economic landscape in favour of Indigenous economies. Their combined years of experience in community development are helping to forge new horizons to stimulate Indigenous wealth.

It's been a long time coming. The federal government imposed so many roadblocks to economic success and community development that it has taken a plethora of court cases to break the shackles of exclusion set up by Canadian governments. In 1969, for example, Prime Minister **Pierre Trudeau** and then Minister

of Indian Affairs **Jean Chretien** proposed the White Paper Policy on Indigenous people. Had they been successful in passing this policy they would have fulfilled the Canadian dream of eliminating the "Indian Problem" in Canada by getting rid of the special status of Indigenous people. Their efforts were defeated by the outrage and protests led by Indigenous people across Canada.

It is important to remember the extent to which British Columbian politics and activism have long been at the forefront of progress. As **Wendy Wickwire's** recent biography of the Scottish-born translator **James Teit** reiterates, in her acclaimed *At The Bridge: James Teit and an Anthropology of Belonging* (UBC Press, 2019) delegations of B.C.'s Indigenous leaders made articulate presentations in Ottawa to assert their rights, with Teit as their writer, as early as 1912.

The crucial game-changer was the Nisga'a victory in the Supreme Court of Canada in 1971 spearheaded by Chief **Frank Calder** and several other Nisga'a leaders. While it was not an outright victory, this now-famous decision paved the way for not only independent First Nations' governance, but also a social climate to stimulate Indigenous commerce. The long-sought agreement confirmed the band's right to a measure of self-government and nearly

2,000 square kilometres of land, while paying the Nisga'a \$190 million in compensation for the release of the rest of their traditional territory. In that case, all judges agreed that Aboriginal Title and Rights had existed at the time of Confederation. Three agreed that those rights continued to exist. Three judges said the rights were extinguished at the time of Confederation. The seventh judge said he could not make a ruling because of a technicality. So, it was a draw. But the Supreme Court of Canada did mention to the prime minister that he must address the concerns of Indigenous people and negotiate fair settlements of grievances.

In his inimitable style, Trudeau the First responded, "Apparently, they have more rights than I thought."

The next major step forward was also British Columbian: **Neil Sterritt**, a member of the House of Gitluu-daahlxw, served as president of the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en Tribal Council from 1981 to 1987, key years leading up to the precedent-setting Aboriginal rights case known as *Delgamuukw v. B.C.* As one of the principal architects of the 1987-1990 court case, Sterritt was on the stand for 34 days during the *Delgamuukw* trial. He later wrote extensively on Aboriginal rights and governance and served as a consultant to many Aboriginal organizations around the world, having co-authored *Tribal Boundaries in the Nass Watershed* (UBC Press, 1999).

Indigenous peoples' economies have always depended on natural resources; Hilton adds, so do Canada's. But there is a marked difference in world views between settlers and First Nations. *Indigenomics* reiterates and examines how and why Indigenous people place a high value on spirituality, fairness and sharing versus the Canadian values of commerce, non-religious state and personal accumulation of wealth. This clash of values has hurt Indigenous economic development. But as Indigenous rights are being clarified and verified by the Canadian Courts, ideally this social progress will lead to a more socially equitable distribution of wealth.

In *Indigenomics*, Hilton asserts that Canadian and international resource development corporations are now learning just how important it is to recognize the power of Indigenous rights and title. Working together as equal partners should be the aim of reconciliation between settlers and First Nations. We are now in an era of consultation when it comes to the use of natural resources.

King George III is mostly known in history as the monarch who lost the thirteen colonies that gave rise to the United States. He got a bad rap.

The foresight and fairness of his Indigenous policies have finally given rise to a new era of hope concerning Indigenous enterprise in the 21st century, led by articulate leaders such as Carol Anne Hilton, who speaks for herself, and for Indigenous people everywhere, in *Indigenomics*.

978-0-8657-194-0-8

Latash-Maurice Nahanee is a member of the Squamish Nation. He has a B.A. degree (Simon Fraser University).



Carol Anne Hilton

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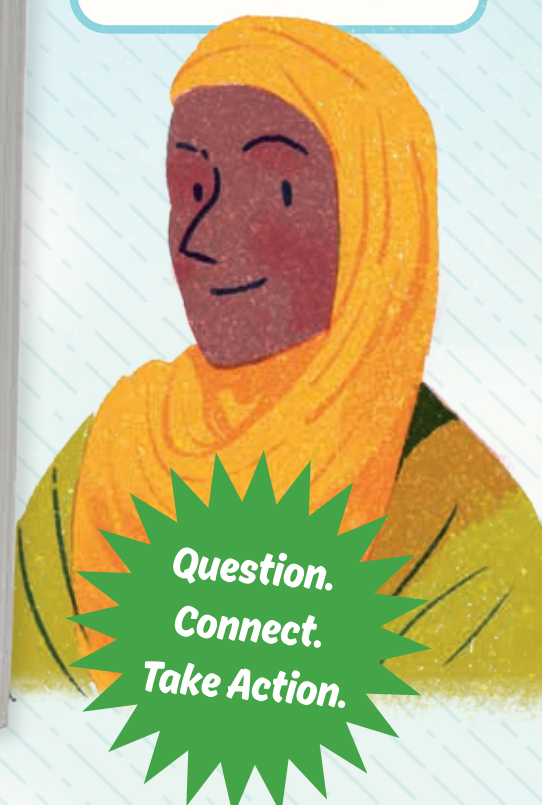


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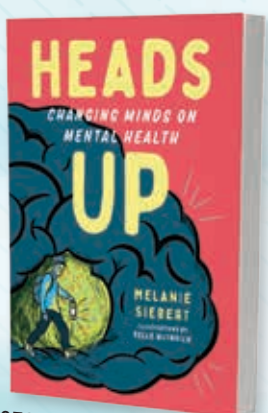
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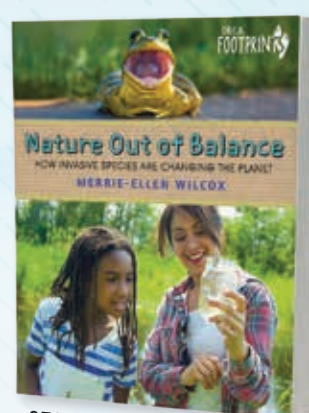


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**The Mediation Guide:
Navigate the Faster, Cheaper,
Kinder Process by David Greig**
(Self-Counsel \$19.95)

Going to court to settle a disagreement is expensive and unpredictable according to a seasoned lawyer of 34 years, **David Greig**.

Even judges say this notes Greig in **The Mediation Guide: Navigate the Faster, Cheaper, Kinder Process**, and will invariably recommend all parties think carefully “before drawing swords and marching off to trial.”

Furthermore, judges make it clear the courts are not the best adjudicators; only the last resort. The judge’s spiel goes something like this, writes Greig:

“I have three to five days to listen to your stories... at the end, I remain an outsider, and yet I am empowered and required to decide how the rest of your lives will proceed. That decision is really one which you should be making—not me. Talk to your lawyers. Make sure that you have tried every single alternative to litigation—whether it be simple negotiation, mediation, or arbitration—and do that before you come back here, and commit to having me (or another judge like me) decide your fate for you.”

Accepting that mediation is the



MEDIATE DON'T LITIGATE

Getting a private settlement is easier and less nasty than fighting in a public court.

preferable route, most people are unfamiliar with how to go about it. Greig provides a concise, clear and interesting treatise on the mediation process. He outlines the history of mediation (it’s more than 4,000 years old), why

it’s better, what types of disagreements are best suited to mediation; how the process works; how to find a mediator; who pays; and what a mediation agreement looks like. He also gives templates for documenting sessions such

Before becoming a lawyer, David Greig wanted to be a musician.

as information intakes, agreements to mediate and screening participants (usually done by the mediator to determine who gets to participate during the mediation).

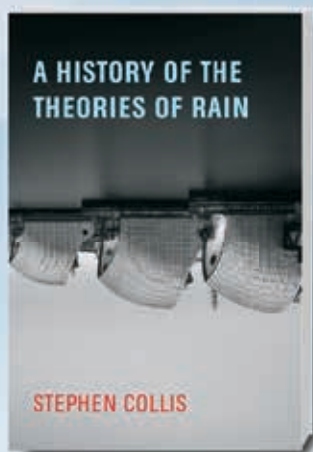
Greig includes many case studies and they are interesting to read. Like the divorced mother, struggling financially who wanted to move away from her children’s father for cheaper rent. Or the man hit by a car who wants compensation for a knee injury that the driver later finds out had previously been injured at a soccer game. Also uncovered is the injured man has a drinking problem. Could be nasty in a court, but a mediator deals directly with the injured man and they negotiate an acceptable monetary settlement that both parties can live with.

Greig is well qualified, coming from a family of legal experts: his father was a judge, his mother a legal secretary and his sister a lawyer. At first, Greig took a different route when he left high school as he wanted to be a musician. But after taking an English degree at the University of Victoria he wound up getting a law degree in 1986 and eventually set up his own law practice group.

“Fortunately, it has been my experience that most disputes are amenable to dispute resolution, and particularly mediation,” he says. “That is so, I believe, because most parties in conflict understand, or can be shown, that peace is best. Even a “so-so” settlement is better than a great war.”

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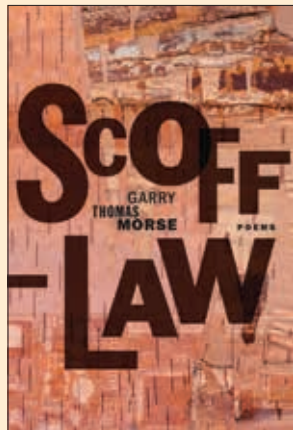
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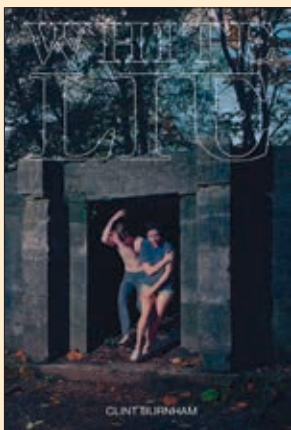
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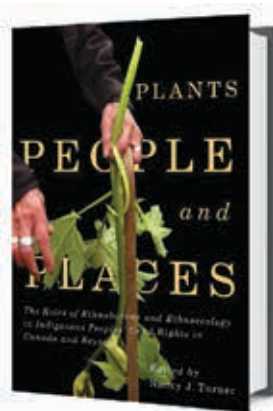
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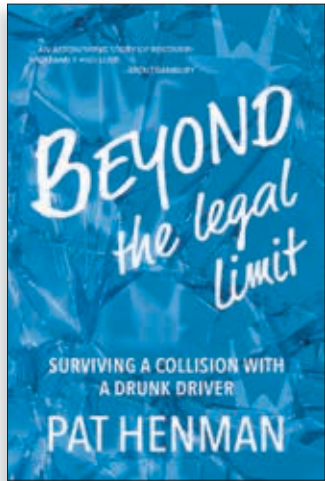
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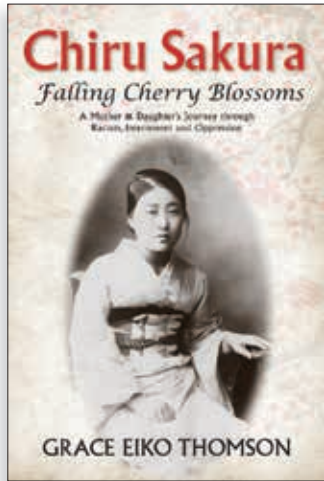
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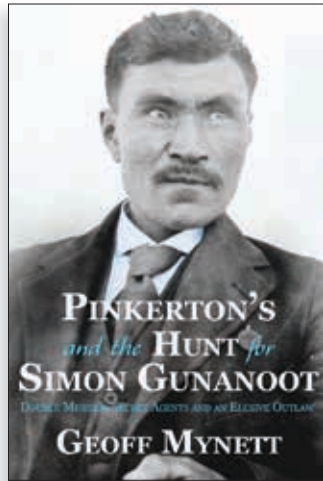
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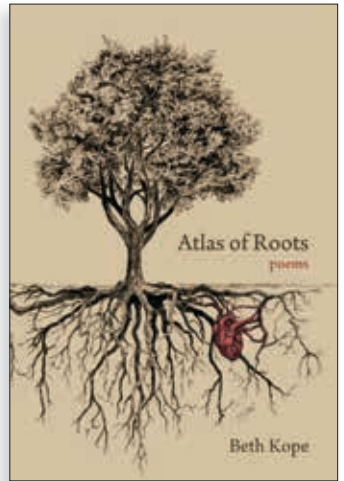
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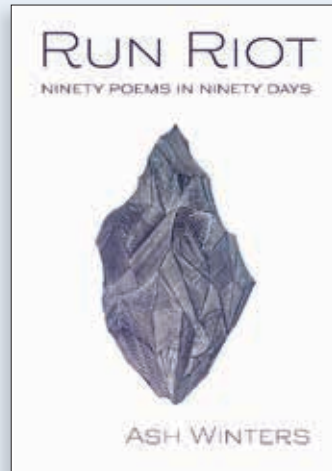
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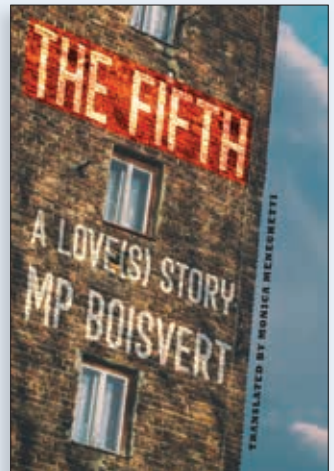
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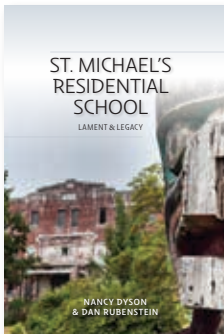
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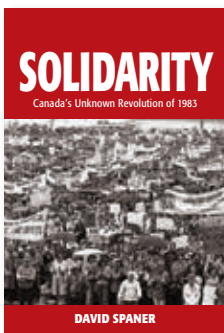
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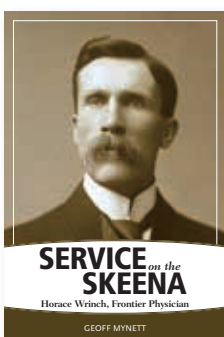
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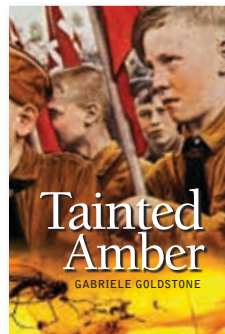
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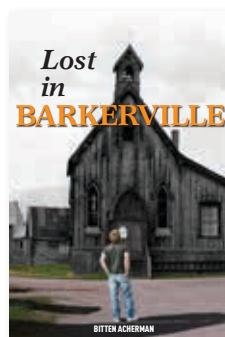
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STARLA ROUNDY PHOTO



Mary Jayne Blackmore

Whatever happened to MARY JAYNE

Balancing Bountiful: What I Learned about Feminism from My Polygamist Grandmothers
by Mary Jayne Blackmore
(Caitlin Press \$24.95)

BY JANE CURRY



Mary Jayne Blackmore is the fifth child of **Winston Blackmore**—the former Mormon Bishop of Bountiful in Creston Valley, B.C. who was convicted of polygamy in 2017, who married 27 times, and who fathered at least 150 children (as of 2019)—and his first wife, **Jane** (different spelling) **Blackmore**.

Mary Jayne Blackmore still lives on the farm where her grandparents settled in 1946, outside of Lister, B.C. Her memoir, **Balancing Bountiful: What I Learned about Feminism from My Polygamist Grandmothers** revisits and explores growing-up in a closed-off, fundamentalist Mormon community.

Mary Jayne Blackmore still lives on the farm where her grandparents settled in 1946, outside of Lister, B.C. Her memoir, **Balancing Bountiful: What I Learned about Feminism from My Polygamist Grandmothers** revisits and explores growing-up in a closed-off, fundamentalist Mormon community.

“I grew up in the glory days of Bountiful,” she proudly states. She sets out to explain how the guidance of her polygamous grandmothers, as well as her education and travel, have influenced her understanding of faith, community, family and—wait for it—feminism.

In the prologue, **Blackmore** explains, “Writing this book has never felt optional. Claiming this narrative has been an essential part of my healing and growth and stepping into my own story as a woman on the planet. This book is about me. It’s my story and I speak only for myself, but my motivation in writing it has never been about me.

“I wrote this book for the ones who don’t remember the story... for those dearest loves in my life, especially

Memoir asserts feminism can arise from polygamy.

the beautiful, powerful young women who come through this proud legacy of mothers and grandmothers.... Empowering my own feminist voice and adding to the collective voice for women has compelled me to keep asking the big questions of womanhood and humanity:

“What is the right kind of woman, the right kind of family and the right kind of feminism?”

Underlying Blackmore’s personal journey are the stories of her father and mother. It is well-known in the news that Winston Blackmore was sentenced on July 24, 2017 to serve six months house arrest for his bountiful unions. It is far less known that Jane Blackmore, a registered nurse and midwife, left Bountiful with her youngest daughter in 2003, moved to nearby Cranbrook, and divorced her husband.

Jane Blackmore is the only wife who testified against him. Her influence on her daughter is clear in the text: encouraging education, providing a strong, compassionate role model and support. Clearly, the mother-daughter bond, forged under what most people

would assume were complex and difficult circumstances, has triumphed over a constrained father-daughter relationship.

The background of Blackmore’s narrative is shrouded by events that threatened her community’s survival over the last twenty years as her Mormon enclave was instructed to prepare for the prophesied, millennial apocalypse or ‘Great Destruction.’ After her father’s official leadership status was revoked, half of Bountiful chose to remain loyal to her father while the other half followed **Warren Jeffs** in Utah.

We learn more about Warren Jeffs’ oppressive hold on his followers, both in Canada and the U.S; the Texas raids on the Yearning for Zion Ranch in April 3, 2008, where 400 children were taken into state custody; and the arrest of Warren Jeffs on August 28, 2006 and his sentencing on August 9, 2011 to life in prison on two counts of sexual assault of a child.

Balancing Bountiful is written in the first person, through differing viewpoints in accordance with the narrator’s age as events unravel. With 65 diary entries, spanning life from age six in 1989 to thirty-seven in 2020, the narrative is tied together with a prologue written in April 2020 and an epilogue completed in July 2020. There are three sections:

CHILDHOOD 1989 – 2000 includes passages: Baptism, Keep Sweet, Ten Weddings, Perverts, Awaiting Placement Marriage and The End is Near. These chronicle her idyllic childhood, as well as strict grooming customs, hints of abuse and worry about the apocalypse.

MARRIAGE 2000 – 2011 includes God Gives Life (And Takes it Away), A Round Belly and Troubled Heart, Dad’s Arrest, Feminist Fire and I’m Broken. These passages detail her feelings

about her church-assigned marriage at sixteen, moving to Alberta and giving birth to her first child, being whisked away to live with her husband’s family in Colorado City, Arizona, and moving back home after realizing she can’t raise children in Warren Jeffs’ oppressive church. She completes her high school education and teaching degree, suffers a miscarriage and divorces her husband.

WANDERING BUT NOT LOST 2011 – 2018 includes Arrested Again, Families not Felons and I am Not a Mormon. These entries document personal growth as she travels to Mexico and Turkey, follows a boy she meets at the Shambhala Music Festival to New York City, New Zealand and attends Burning Man (festival). Just prior to the pandemic lockdown, she also travels to India.

This is not the cloistered lifestyle that one assumes would be *de rigueur* for the daughter of Canada’s most renowned polygamist.

Blackmore now puts her faith in people, community and nature. She dreams of a world peace where we live in balance, creativity and abundance. She lives in a cabin, on her father’s land, with her two teenage children. She is vice-principal of Mormon Hills School where she also teaches. She ran for mayor of Creston in 2018. And she claims to now have an improved relationship with her father due to her redefined faith and a shared love of writing.

You can’t judge a book by its cover. And you can’t judge an author by their father.

9781773860046

Jane Curry is one of the senior branch managers within the Vancouver Public Library system, currently at Joe Fortes branch in Vancouver’s West End. She is also one of the judges for the George Ryga Award for Social Awareness.

MEMOIR REVIEW

**Man at the Airport:
How Social Media Saved My Life –
One Syrian's Story by Hassan Al Kontar**
(Tidewater Press \$23.95)

Trapped without traveling documents by war and geopolitics, a man gets stranded in an airport lounge for six months.

It all started when **Hassan Al Kontar** left his home country, Syria, for well-paying work in the United Arab Emirates in 2006. When the Syrian civil war broke out five years later, he did not want to be part of it.

"I did not exist in this life to kill anyone, no matter what," he says in his memoir **Man at the Airport: How Social Media Saved My Life —One Syrian's Story**, due out this June. "If I could not stop it, I will not be part of it. As simple as that, I thought at the time."

It meant Al Kontar could not renew his passport, leading to problems obtaining work legally in the UAE. The decision to be a conscientious objector came with dire consequences, which Al Kontar acknowledges. "I had surrendered myself to the desert sands and opened the gates of hell for years to come."

Without regular work, he lived homeless for several years, which included living in his car for long periods.



Hassan Al Kontar, during his six months in the arrivals zone at Kuala Lumpur Airport.

Escape by Twitter

Refusing to fight in Syria, Hassan Al Kontar was trapped in an airport with only a cellphone.

"So I know how hell smells and what it feels like—it's a closed car on a summer night in Abu Dhabi with a human being inside it."

Eventually, Al Kontar is arrested in 2016 and kept in jail on trumped up charges. Here, his hope begins to fade. "I was no longer the young guy who wanted to travel the world and meet people, could no longer pretend I was the professional in a nice suit, meeting customers, with big dreams and a bright future. I was a criminal in handcuffs."

After many months and several jails, Al Kontar manages to get some of the charges dropped and travels to Malaysia believing he can get legal status in that country. But upon arriving there, he is denied entry. Next, he tries to gain access to, first Ecuador and then Cambodia. No success. Sent back to Kuala Lumpur International Airport, the authorities keep his passport and he is trapped in the arrivals zone with no official papers.

Not one to give up, Al Kontar still has his cell phone. He concocts a plan

to use social media to attract world-wide attention to his plight and get refuge in another country while managing to survive in the airport (a feat unto itself).

On March 11, 2018, Al Kontar tweets for the first time:

"What does it mean to be a Syrian? My name is Hassan and this is my story. I am from Syria. I just want to explain to people what it means to be Syrian. To be lonely, weak, unwanted, rejected. No one is accepting us."

At first, there are few Twitter followers. But soon, his tweets gain momentum and go viral. *BBC TV* does a news feature on him. *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* newspapers pick up his story as do other media.

A vlogger, **Nuseir (Nas) Yassin**, with 33 million followers, who travels the world making videos, discovers Al Kontar. "I read this crazy story of a man living in an airport for six months and facing arrest in his own country because he refused to participate in a war," writes Yassin in the introduction to *Man at the Airport*. "I thought to myself, 'Wow, I have to make a video about him.'"

Yassin's video about Al Kontar gets 18 million views the first day it's posted. The video reaches the Canadian government and Al Kontar's refugee application is expedited in two months rather than the two years claims usually take.

Living in Canada, Al Kontar decides to write his story. "I am once again a man with a purpose," he says. "To tell the story and show the world who the real Syrians are."

9781777010188

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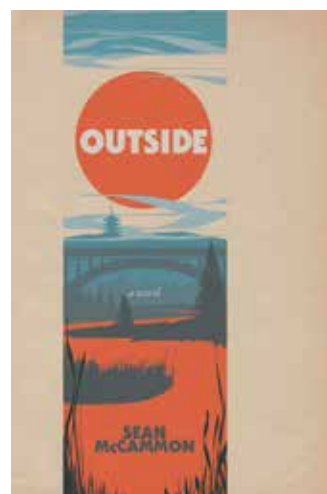
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Watermelon snow, also called snow algae, pink snow, red snow, or blood snow, is a phenomenon caused by unicellular algae.

RED SNOWFIELDS & MELTING ICE CAPS



ERIC ESTERLE PHOTO

Lynne Quarmby holding camera.

Watermelon Snow: Science, Art, and a Lone Polar Bear
by Lynne Quarmby
(McGill-Queen's University Press \$24.95)

BY TREVOR CAROLAN

In the summer of 2017, SFU prof **Lynne Quarmby** took a sea journey with 28 artists and one other fellow scientist to a remote area, the western Svalbard archipelago, which is far north of Norway and east of Greenland.

Aboard the tall ship *Antigua*, Quarmby and her fellow travellers were part of the Arctic Circle Expeditionary Residency. It was an unusual trip for the academic, being Quarmby's first residency after 30 years of attending science conferences. She describes washing up on shore with "nothing but wilderness between me and the next polar bear."

She's there, she explains, to find "watermelon snow"—micro-algae blooms "that turn snowfields red."

There's total daylight here, midnight walks under sunny skies, but global warming is already causing problems. A late-career convert to climate change science, Quarmby must also confront her own inadequacy in facing up to the enormity of the global warming crisis. Arriving travel weary, she mourns the situation she has come to investigate: metaphorically, the house is on fire and she stands at the interface of planetary crisis and melting polar ice-caps.

Quarmby recounts this trip in **Watermelon Snow: Science, Art, and a**

Lone Polar Bear. Chapters alternate between reports on Quarmby's odyssey, her academic reflections and her own inner turbulence. She plays on the Buddha's words in *The Dhammapada*, declaring "everything we perceive with our senses, and our responses to those perceptions, has been honed by billions of years of natural selection." It's a subtle echo concerning interconnectedness, yet she knows there is so much that we still don't sense, concluding, "climate change is happening so fast it should be terrifying."

Daily expeditions allow participants to explore, work at their projects ashore and stay alert for polar bears, even as a huge chunk of glacier shatters into the sea nearby, calving a new iceberg. Quarmby searches for her red snow unsuccessfully, but takes pleasure in the creative discoveries of others.

Readers not conversant with the nature of RNA, DNA and cell biology may find some challenges when Quarmby expounds on photosynthesis and cellular boogie-woogie—how cells divide and replicate. However, she also relates how she became a climate systems activist: at a biology seminar she saw photographs of the violently-suppressed protests during Copenhagen's 2011 climate summit. In response, she began writing letters, signing petitions and attending marches. Her federal research funding soon evaporated. During the **Stephen Harper** years, the Feds played hard ball.

By 2015, instead of re-applying for funding, Quarmby ran federally for the

Green Party. This followed her arrest by the RCMP during the well-publicized Burnaby Mountain protests against the Trans-Mountain Pipeline project owned by Kinder Morgan.

Disclosure: she ran in the riding where I live. We planted her campaign sign out front.

When 'Golden Boy' **Justin Trudeau** won, Quarmby confesses that she was "crushed." She'd believed the public were ready for real change on climate action; they'd simply wanted Harper out.

"By the time I lost the election," she recalls, "I was burned out from activism and the negativity of politics." In her fifties, and searching for answers, why, she asks, is our democratic government not pulling its share of the weight against climate change? Mistrust of our political leadership leaves her bilious.

Wondering if her scientific knowledge could be applied to an Arctic eco-system on the frontline of global warming, she embarks on her Arctic pilgrimage. In meditating on the nature of microbes, she reflects how they, "tie all life on Earth together...we are all functionally connected." Quixotically, the same long streak of evolutionary fortune that led to polar bears and to us, she proposes, "may be broken" by the end of this century: "Pollution, habitat fragmentation and degradation, and now, climate change...Extinction is nothing new."

When Quarmby and a photographer spot a distant polar bear that appears emaciated or old, it's a lonely, disturbing image. Later, challenged to explain

her scientific inquiries in lay language, she addresses gender issues in science, relating that recently she'd spent an hour venting to her therapist about the bias and misogyny she encounters in her work. Quarmby also offers her account of what it's like to stand up on the front lines in a confrontation with "Big Authority," Kinder Morgan, the company whose bullying tactics and legal threats were thrown out in court. Still, she declares bluntly, "I learned how the cheaters have broken our political system."

Once back home, Quarmby the dedicated scientist shakes her head at how "Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and [the environment minister] are telling Canadians, 'If this pipeline doesn't get built, we can't meet our climate targets.' The truth is that we cannot meet climate targets if it does get built." What's the takeaway message here?

Quarmby writes intelligently in a style that, for the most part, lay readers will find accessible. Her voyage crystallizes her own inner contradictions. There's acclaim for the eco-warrior academic, but heroism often comes at a cost. Compassion fatigue is part of the script: she comes to understand that most battles aren't clearly won, the brawling gets ugly and it's a long game. Self-justification, well-deserved renown for standing up and making a difference, an existential search for answers, it's all in here. 978-0-2280-0359-5

Trevor Carolan has a Ph.D. in International Relations and has advocated for conservation issues and Indigenous land claims. He taught for years at the University of the Fraser Valley.



Lynne Quarmby

ADAM LATY PHOTO

**Gold in British Columbia:
Discovery to Confederation**
by Marie Elliott (Ronsdale Press \$24.95)

BY MIKE SELBY



any remarkable as well as discreditable characters from British Columbia's past are to be found in **Marie Elliott's**

Gold in British Columbia: Discovery to Confederation.

It's a thick, exhaustively researched, yet quite readable and oftentimes fun look at how the Fraser River and Cariboo gold rushes created our province.

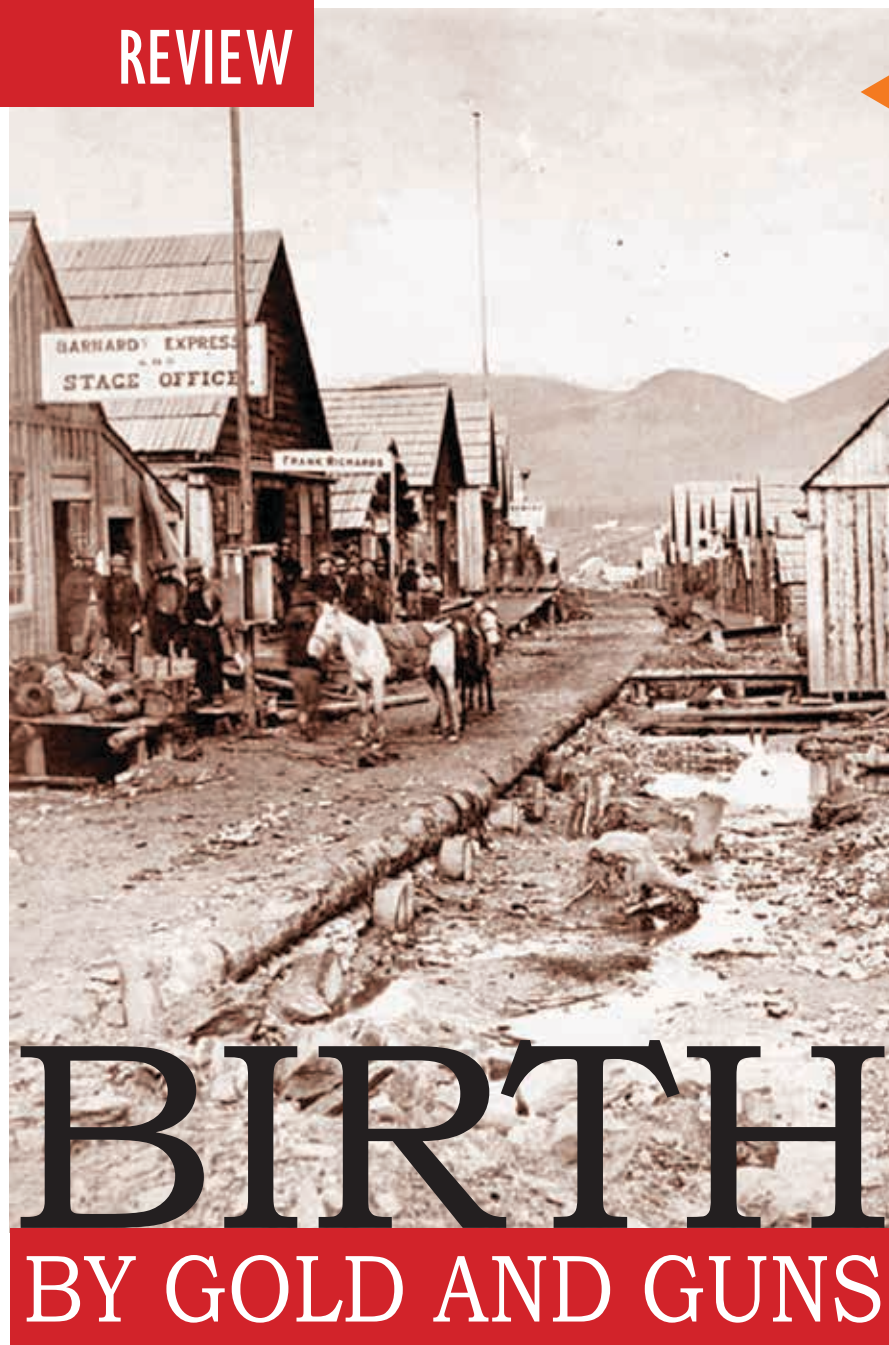
One of the early settlers to British Columbia was **Fanny Bendixen**, originally from France via the United States. Bendixen (her married name) was expelled from France in the 1850s as part of **Napoleon III's** purge of his country's undesirables. She arrived with thousands of others in San Francisco, making a home in that city's growing French District. She quickly became a mistress to a county judge named **Ned McGowan**, whose jealousy of her resulted in a failed bombing attempt of her house. She fled to New Orleans, where she met and married her husband, only to have the American Civil War break out. The newlyweds left New Orleans (which was now part of the Confederacy) and arrived in the small city of Victoria in 1862 where they opened a high-end hotel named the St. George.

History doesn't record her reasons, but in 1865 Fanny leaves the St. George and her husband, making her way towards the gritty town of Barkerville in the interior.

It wasn't an easy journey as described by Elliott and included: "traveling by steamer to Yale, stagecoach to Soda Creek, steamer to Quesnelmouth, stagecoach again to Cottonwood and saddlehorse the last forty miles to Williams Creek."

Once in Barkerville, Bendixen was one of the first and only women to operate a business. She opened a variety of saloons, invested in numerous mining claims, and appeared unfazed by law-suits, robberies and fires. She earned enough money to spend her downtime crisscrossing the United States as a tourist.

Bendixen accomplished all this



How the lure of gold drew settlers to inadvertently create British Columbia, often in ignoble ways.

while never learning to speak much English.

While many new to B.C., like Bendixen, came from the U.S., there is a good argument to be made, and Elliott alludes to this quite well in the book's first part, that British Columbia was formed as a way to keep Americans out of it.

News of gold rushes in the Fraser and Cariboo brought tens of thousands of Americans into what is now known as B.C., but which at the time was divided into two separate colonies. This "American aggression" was foremost on the mind of B.C.'s first governor, **James Douglas**. He had already success-

fully quelled it on the Queen Charlotte Islands (now called Haida Gwaii) by declaring "Crown ownership."

As thousands more began to pour in again, he sought the same solution to protect the future province's gold resources from the American invaders.

Speaking of invaders, Elliott shines an historian's light on what she calls the "Tsilhqot'in Uprising." Sometime in the late spring of 1864, conflict erupted between a road crew and the Tsilhqot'in people, resulting in the deaths of 21 road workers. After a large manhunt, six Tsilhqot'in chiefs were arrested and executed. Elliott is one of the first to explore events from the Tsilhqot'in

Barkerville, 1865

people's side, who—already decimated by smallpox—had sought to defend themselves from a hostile nation of invaders. (Both **Justin Trudeau's** and **Christy Clark's** governments have offered apologies and pardons to the Tsilhqot'in.)

There is frustratingly little judgement in Elliott's writings on this topic—just a factual account of one of the darkest events in British Columbia's history.

Besides keeping Americans out, the other challenge was attempting to police those Americans who were already in. After (wrongly) believing some Yale miners had been decapitated by Indigenous people, an American named **Snyder** rounded up a large group of miners to confront the local Indigenous people. News of a Fraser Canyon War with deaths on both sides reached Douglas, and he marched with a host of Royal Marines to Yale, to find that only two of Snyder's men had been killed—not by Indigenous people but accidentally shot by fellow miners.

Also in Yale was San Francisco judge and would-be bombmaker **Ned McGowan**. Believing B.C. to be another Wild West, McGowan was setting himself up as the law: challenging legal claims, remanding prisoners and trying to assert a United States claim on B.C.

When news of McGowan's War reached Douglas, he again showed up at Yale with the Royal Marines to show McGowan "clear and visible proof of British law and order."

Elliott has taken by far the most tediously boring facts from social studies classes and turned them into a complex story filled with high drama and gripping immediacy. None of the hundreds of individuals she profiles had any idea how their actions would turn out; or that their choices would continue to have far-reaching implications for all Canadians. That the pull of gold birthed British Columbia is an amazing story. *Gold in British Columbia: Discovery to Confederation* is an insightful and valuable contribution to an understanding of it. 9781553805175

*Cranbrook public librarian, Mike Selby's **Freedom Libraries: The Untold Story of Libraries for African Americans in the South** won Outstanding Academic Title of the Year by the Association of College and Research Libraries in the United States, which represents more than 10,000 individuals and libraries.*

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How social media saved my life
Hassan Al Kontar @kontar81
#One Syrian's Story

Non-fiction: his only weapon was his cellphone
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"Indigenomics is the path for the future ..." —Winona LaDuke, executive director, Honor the Earth



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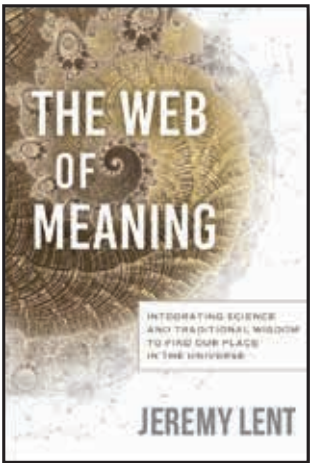
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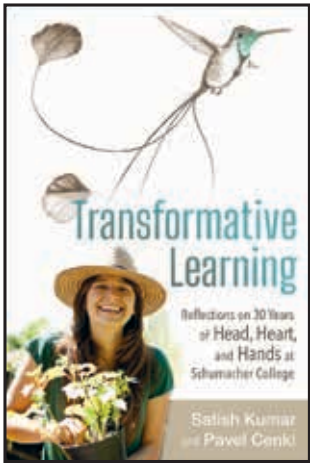
See Carol Anne Hilton's profile in this issue of BC Bookworld



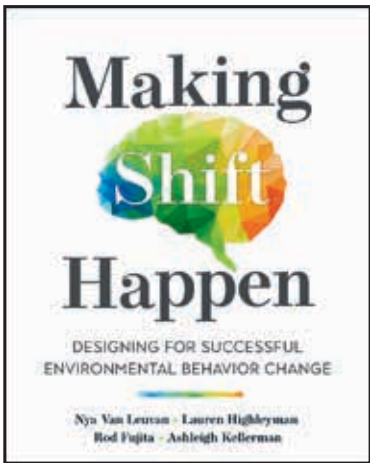
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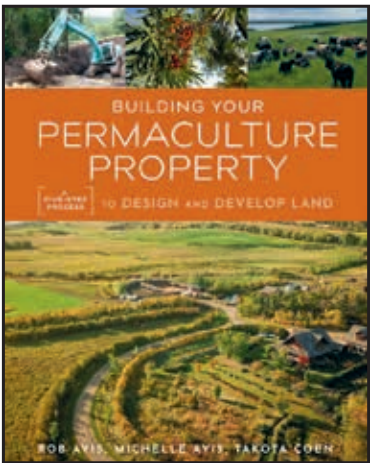
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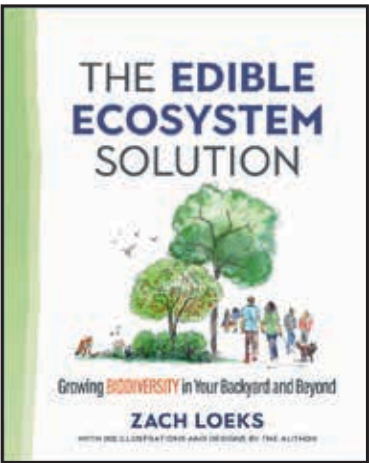
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FISHING REVIEW

A GILLY WHO AIN'T GIRLY

David Giblin introduces a woman into the 1980s bastion of male fishing guides that populate his fictionalized tales.

Gilly the Ghillie:
More Chronicles of a West Coast Fishing Guide by David Giblin
(Heritage \$19.95)

BY MARK FORSYTHE

The customer is always right, but in **David Giblin's** case, the fishing guide gets the last word. The author of *The Codfish Dream: Chronicles of a West Coast Fishing Guide* (Heritage, 2018), Giblin began guiding in the summer of 1978 at Stuart Island, one of the Discovery Islands between northern Vancouver Island and the mainland, about 40 miles east of Campbell River.

Giblin worked fifteen summers as a freelance guide for area lodges; some of his high-rolling clients arrived aboard luxury yachts with helicopters on the back deck.

Many clients didn't know what they were in for, as Stuart Island is surrounded by some of B.C.'s most dangerous tidal rapids, whirlpools and currents. In 1972, four Americans attempted to run the Arran Rapids in an outrigger canoe and write about it for *Life* magazine.

They didn't survive.

It requires great skill to stay afloat, hook salmon and keep clients smiling. "It was quite useful to know how to change bait with one hand while you steered the boat with the other," writes Giblin.

The Codfish Dream distilled all those years into one memorable summer—names, dates and places were changed to protect the guilty. Various people can reside in one character, or as Giblin says, all can be "treated with a certain artistic license."

A self-described 'world class' fisherman ignores Giblin's advice about local fishing methods, only to watch his wife (who was paying attention) haul in a boatload of salmon.

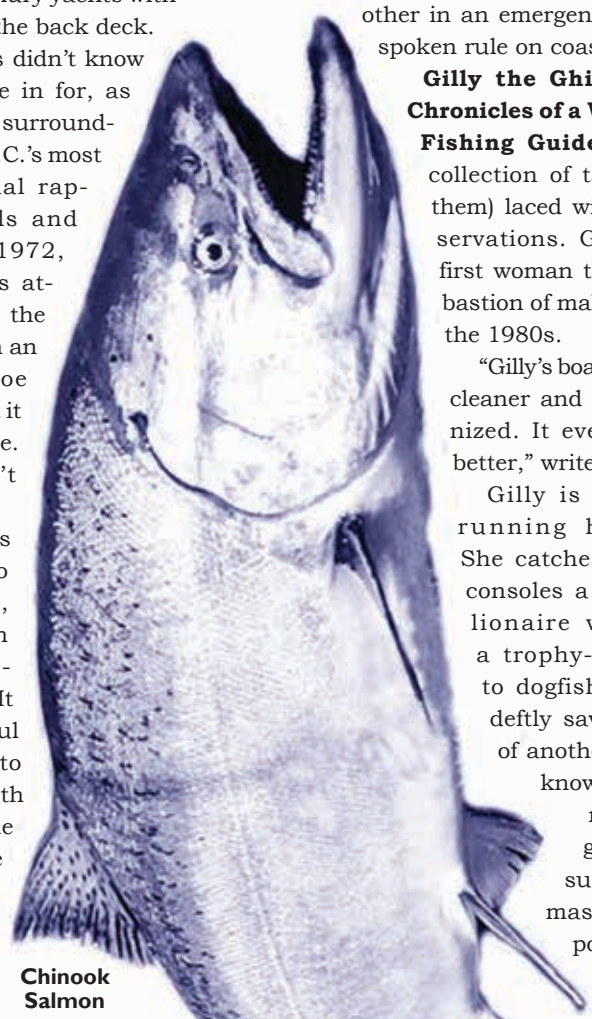
We meet Americans enthralled with the emblem of their nation perched on nearby branches. American eagles...in Canadian trees?

Meanwhile, an enterprising dockhand named **Troutbreath** finds clever ways to separate cash, caviar and exotic wines from hotshot clients. Fellow guides include **Wet Lenny**, **Big Jake** and **Vop** who compete for clients and tips, but each is quick to assist the other in an emergency—an unspoken rule on coastal waters.

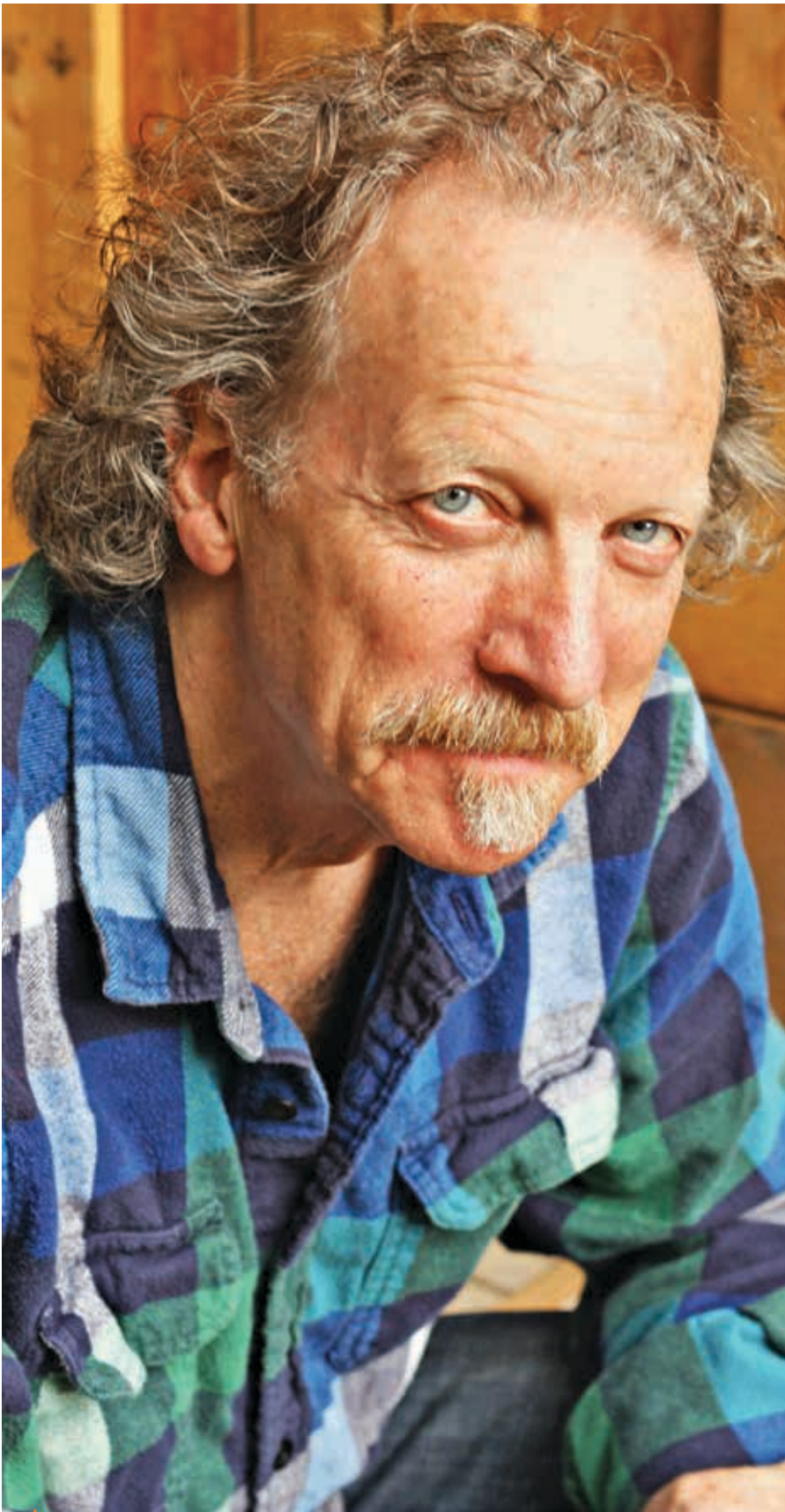
Gilly the Ghillie: More Chronicles of a West Coast Fishing Guide is a new collection of tales (42 of them) laced with wry observations. Gilly is the first woman to enter the bastion of male guides in the 1980s.

"Gilly's boat was much cleaner and more organized. It even smelled better," writes Giblin.

Gilly is a whiz at running her boat. She catches fish; she consoles a multi-millionaire who loses a trophy-sized tye to dogfish; and she deftly saves the life of another arrogant know-it-all who manages to get his boat sucked into a massive whirlpool.



Chinook Salmon



David Giblin worked for 15 years as a salmon fishing guide — a fertile environment for the incubation of good fishing stories.

By summer’s end almost everyone wants to be aboard Gilly’s boat. The other guides are wising up, hosing down their blood-stained boats. Troutbreath returns with a snorkel and mask to retrieve high-end fishing gear, expensive watches and designer sunglasses that have vanished overboard from boats and docks. After cleaning them, he sells them back to clients. Resourcefulness personified.

Placing himself in the story as narrator, Giblin is an experienced guide who is often paired with the most difficult and demanding clients. But he wisely holds his tongue. Better to be tipped, than not.

Then again, some folks do pose odd questions, like: “What’s the altitude here, anyways?” After being told they’re actually floating on the ocean, a cigar-chomping blowhard (nicknamed Heck) says it looks more like a lake.

“I knew from experience that guys like Heck never really cared about the answers once they had their minds made up,” writes Giblin. It also explains why some people piloted yachts using gas station road maps and wondered why the “river” flowed in both directions.

Giblin also dabbles in dreams and

a little time travel. One episode sees Troutbreath encounter **Captain Vancouver**’s Royal Navy crew. “The man stood there with his hands on his hips. He was used to issuing orders to people. Troutbreath understood this guy at once. He had just spent the summer dealing with people like him.”

Giblin’s second chronicle is less about chasing fish and more about colourful characters who inhabit the islands or work at the lodges. They include friends that live aboard a float home who ask visitors to wear gumboots because their home is slowly sinking. An elaborate plan is hatched to lift and reposition the house on a new float. A hair-raising finale has neighbours coming to the rescue.

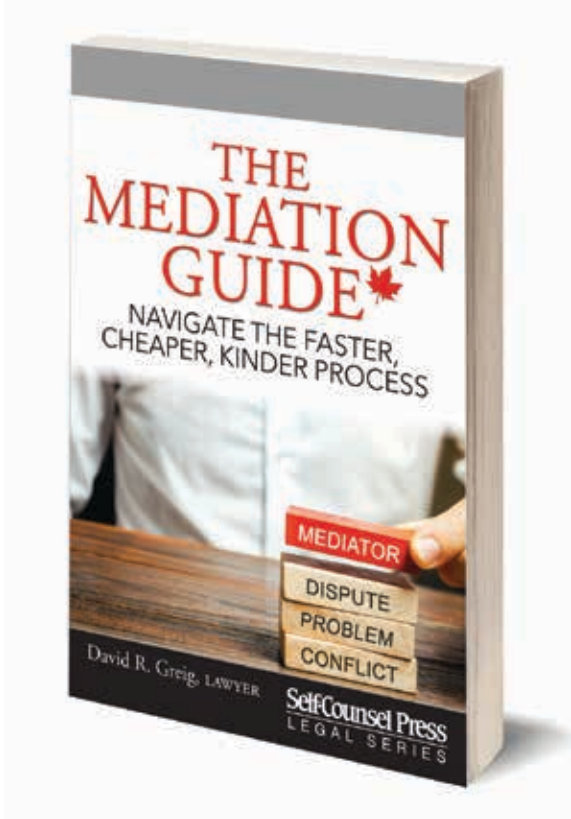
Indeed, these sparsely populated islands do have an abiding sense of community, which is clearly at the heart of many of Giblin’s stories.

Ultimately though, any attempts to sift truth from these tales or uncover identities would be a waste of good fishing time.

Mark Forsythe is co-author with Greg Dickson of From the West Coast to the Western Front (Harbour, 2014).

9781772033359

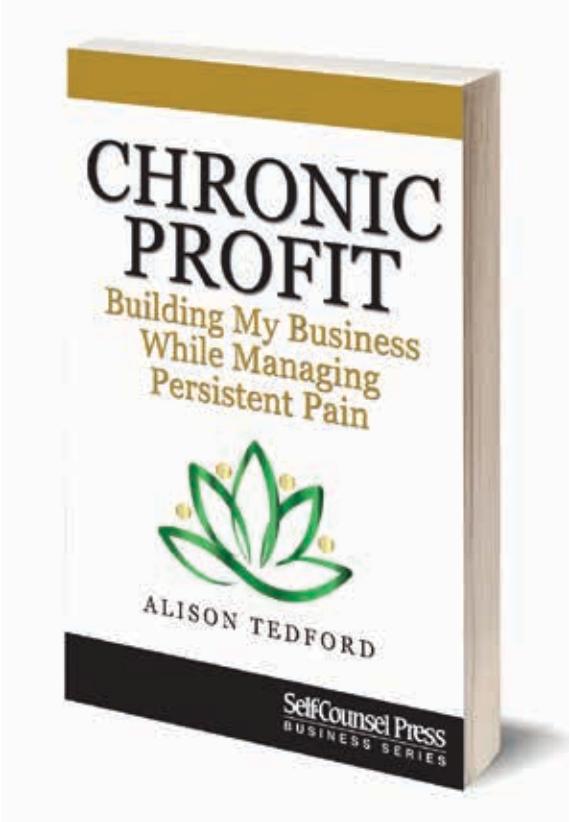
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TURN OF THE POTTER'S WHEEL

Mary Fox uses a needle tool to slowly angle cut through the clay to the wheelhead. Before removing this excess clay, she runs her cut wire under the bottom of the piece to release it.



Mary Fox examines her latest pieces as she removes them from the kiln.



Chalice, 1998. Lithium compound, raku, by Mary Fox

Surviving chronic fatigue syndrome, **Mary Fox** triumphs with a life of art and a memoir.

My Life as a Potter: Stories and Techniques
by Mary Fox (Harbour \$44.95)

BY PORTIA PRIEGERT

Vancouver Island potter **Mary Fox** is known for her textured glazes and the elegant chalices and vases she has made for decades in her Ladysmith studio. The full-page photographs of her exquisite creations are a highlight of her memoir,

My Life as a Potter: Stories and Techniques.

Another strength is her frank, matter-of-fact voice as she recounts her story—discovering clay in 1973 as a 13-year-old student in Victoria and finding the love of her life, **Heather Vaughan**, only to be felled in 1989 by myalgic encephalomyelitis, a mysterious illness that can cause severe chronic fatigue.

Fortunately, Fox recovered enough after five years to continue her work at a reduced and carefully managed pace. Vaughan, a social worker, had more virulent symptoms. Bedridden for years, she relied on Fox as her main caregiver until her death in 2007 ended their 25-year relationship.

The couple's 1991 relocation from Vancouver to an old coal miner's cabin in Ladysmith, an hour's drive north of Victoria, was a survival strategy—it provided an affordable place to live and, eventually, a way for Fox to resume work in her own studio and pottery shop.



Mary Fox (with her dog Amy) uses the pugmill to mix fresh clay.

My Life as a Potter allows Fox to pass on her hard-won wisdom. She discusses things she wishes she had known when she was starting out, offers a list of “disciplines” she follows in her studio, and sets out some of the techniques she developed over the years.

In the book’s foreword, **Carol E. Mayer**, head of the curatorial department at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, notes the dwindling number of senior potters in British Columbia, many of whom have not left written records.

“There is a dearth of autobiographies by potters that cover the scope reached in this book,” says Mayer. “Some do provide useful technical information, but the pickings are slim.”

In recent years, Fox has turned her mind to mentoring a new generation of potters. She has launched what she calls her “legacy project”—a residency program in her home that helps emerging potters develop practical skills as studio potters. A charitable society has been established to oversee the house after her death, along with an endowment fund that welcomes donations through the Vancouver Foundation and the Craft Council of British Columbia.

“I have been a potter all my working life, earning my living from what I create with my hands,” Fox writes. “Although I have never regretted my career choice and all the challenges that came with it, I would like to make it a bit easier for future young potters if I can. It is so hard to get started in this field without help: there is the costly equipment needed to do the work, and it is increasingly difficult to find a living space that can accommodate a studio, never mind a landlord willing to let you install a kiln.”

My Life as a Potter does much to demystify the challenges that face creative people of all casts. While it brings together many elements, it hangs together because of its structure—multiple chapters with bite-sized sidebars—as well as effective design and imagery. In many ways, it reflects a potter’s practical mentality—it’s a serial production that comes together as a greater whole, just as individual cups, plates and bowls are laid out to create a welcoming, homespun table setting.

9781550179385

Victoria-based Portia Priegert is the editor for Galleries West and a former reporter for the Ottawa bureau of the Canadian Press.



Glass Bottle Vase, 2016 (above) by Mary Fox; Chalice, 2016 (at left), layered glazes, oxidation, mounted in rock, by Mary Fox.



Mary Fox, circa 1996, trims a torn edge, and works to protect the delicate edge of a tall bottle vase.

Studio Disciplines of Mary Fox

- **Change positions:** Get up and move every 20 minutes or so to minimize body fatigue.
- **Break Things Up:** Do heavy work for only part of the day, then turn to other lighter tasks.
- **Keep studio notes:** Tracking helps you remember what you did last time.
- **Clean daily:** You will feel better when you start work the next day.
- **Take your time:** Life is not a race. Enjoy the moment.
- **There is joy in repetition:** Growth can happen by refining serial work.

“Beauty is everywhere in the act of creation, and it is humbling to be embraced by it. It fills me with surges of joy and delight.” **MARY FOX**

Ng, Amos, Kluckner



Meichi Ng created the comic, *Barely Functional Adult*, which she began posting on Instagram from her Vancouver apartment in 2015. The comic caught on and Ng built a following of 130,000 fans. Now she has released a collection of short stories for a graphic novel of the same name, **Barely Functional Adult: It’ll All Make Sense** (Harper Collins \$35).

“I had never identified as an adult, despite having an ID that proved otherwise,” Ng writes. “The notion of being an adult just seemed like such a dreary badge to slap on. It also carried this connotation of being someone immutably stuffy and incapable of having fun, neither of which I was inclined to relate to.”

Ng’s newly-published stories are about exes, murder, friendship, therapy, anxiety, sucking at things, freaking out about things, calming down momentarily, wrinkles, pettiness and other topics that speak to a wide audience.

9780062945594



Watercolour by Michael Kluckner

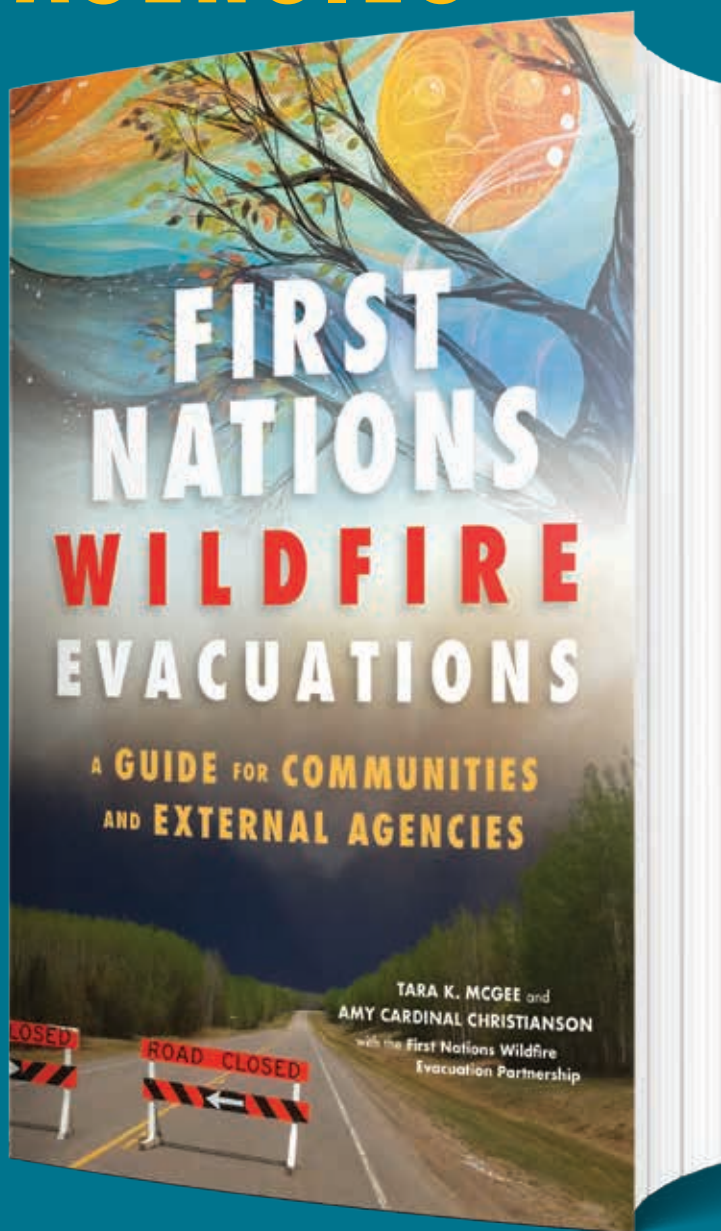
BEST KNOWN FOR *VANISHING VANCOUVER* (Whitecap 1990, 2012), **Michael Kluckner** has published his first set of new watercolours and drawings in nine years, **Here & Gone** (Midtown \$19.95), along with musings about the images of the people and places he has captured. “Why am I still painting and drawing the city after 35 years?” Kluckner asks. “I see myself as a witness, certainly not an activist anymore or a serious historian... but I am still a moth drawn to a candle flame when I see a place about to disappear.” Some of the locales in the “Here” section, are already gone. The “Gone” section includes paintings from places Kluckner travelled to in Europe, Australia and Japan.

9781988242385

CONTINUING WITH A SERIES OF BOOKS about one of B.C.’s quintessential painters, Victoria’s **Robert Amos’** latest is **The E. J. Hughes Book of Boats** (TouchWood \$22). If the work of **Emily Carr** summons to mind images of B.C.’s lush forests, Hughes does the same for maritime scenes. Not surprising then, boats were frequently featured in Hughes’s work. Although not much of a sailor himself (he couldn’t swim and often got seasick), Hughes was aware that these pictures were well-liked, writing to his sister in 1966, “Perhaps I am being noted for my boats.”

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INTERVIEW

AMANDA WATSON

A MOTHER'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

Despite decades of fighting for equality, women continue to be expected to handle the bulk of unpaid work at home while striving in the workplace.

**The Juggling Mother:
Coming Undone in the Age of Anxiety**
by Amanda Watson
(UBC Press \$27.95)

SFU lecturer, **Amanda Watson's** **The Juggling Mother: Coming Undone in the Age of Anxiety** is a deep dive into the mythology of the contemporary "respectable" mother in Western media. *BC BookWorld* interviewed Watson about the central ideas of her book.

BC BookWorld: In simple terms, what do you mean by 'the juggling mother'?
Amanda Watson: By the juggling mother, I mean the mother who is busy keeping up with her many responsibilities. She is also busy with good deeds that demonstrate both her service as a productive and efficient paid worker and her respectable devotion to her family. She is striving in both realms: her job as a professional or entrepreneur seeking to climb the ladder and break glass ceilings, and doing everything possible to set her kids up for financial success and happiness.

So, I'm arguing that there's a performative element to the juggling mother as she keeps herself and her family together. She may be unfairly burdened with work, and she may even be burnt out and depressed as a result, but she is also *complicit* in how labour is organized. She is willing to be overworked and she is unwilling to disrupt the way work and family life are organized unfairly. The juggling mother is not an activist.

Mothers also have the emotional responsibility to keep their families feeling good in the face of highly uncertain futures. I argue that the responsibility to make things feel all better

when things clearly aren't (with respect to climate change, the economy, global conflict, racism, Covid-19) is the sort of glue that sticks women to all of this work.

BCBW: Do we take it for granted that mothers not only take on responsibility for most of the chores in the household, they can also do paid work on top of everything?

AW: That's a helpful way to think about it. We take for granted the fact that women will pivot to fill whatever gaps in labour emerge, paid or unpaid. Even though most women work for pay in Western societies, it is still the default expectation of women and girls to provide for the needs of family and community with their unwaged labour. While we now take many of our care needs to market, relying on low-waged workers who are disproportionately women of colour and immigrant women, we still hold gendered expectations of family and household management.

When Covid-19 hit, women made themselves economically vulnerable when they left the paid workforce to care for and educate children. We take for granted that women and girls will comport themselves in such a way that families and communities thrive, even if they themselves are feeling overwhelmed or sad.

Amanda
Watson





Amanda Watson working at home with her children.

BCBW: What does this mean for women who want to have children and have a professional life? And is this related to the second part of your book title: *Coming Undone in the Age of Anxiety*?

AW: This means that most women will be taking on an enormous load of work. We expect so much of mothers. While women can of course resist their distribution of unpaid work if they are partnered, they have little power to resist pressures like workplace stigma and pay inequity. I think it is sadness that I am describing in the second part of the title. How sad that we have designed family life to be impossible, especially in the midst of widespread popular feminism.

BCBW: Ultimately, is it really possible for women to ‘have it all’? Does having a family come at the sacrifice of a career for women?

AW: We have organized society in such a way that career and family come at the sacrifice of each other, one way or another. As I say in the book, I don’t think we want to have it all anymore. It’s too much! Certainly, a balance of both is more accessible to families with financial privilege, but even affluent professional women, and women of colour in particular, face extra demands on their work and behaviour in order to be valued as competent. Rather than aiming to have it all, we might consider fighting for shorter workweeks, accessible childcare and pay equity.

BCBW: Certain high-earning women with families (e.g., Facebook CEO, Sheryl Sandberg) put the onus on individuals to “lean in” to be successful. Is this a reasonable approach?

AW: This approach is to be expected in a society that puts ultimate value on individuals pulling themselves up by working hard and making good, responsible choices. In that sense, it is reasonable, but it is unhelpful. I encourage my students to understand that this is what it looks like when individualism has its claws in feminism. We have made gender equality about

individual choices and individual striving. This approach only causes harm. It creates the conditions for women’s work and family decisions to be scrutinized, no matter what they do.

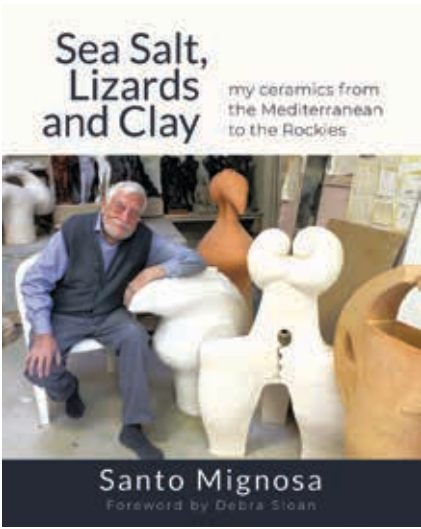
BCBW: What about the divide between high-earning mothers and blue-collar mothers? Being able to pay for childcare makes it easier to focus on a career but not everyone has that luxury.

AW: The fact that childcare is a luxury good is what is holding us back. It is that simple. Childcare needs to be high-quality, accessible, affordable, and inclusive of the needs of diverse communities, children, and families. Not only does accessible childcare narrow the class gap between mothers, it narrows all kinds of social hierarchies between children and families. It is so simple, and so poorly understood in our society. I think we are getting there by making the economic case that childcare is a good investment. I really hope feminist social scientists can turn our attention to making another case at some point in the near future!

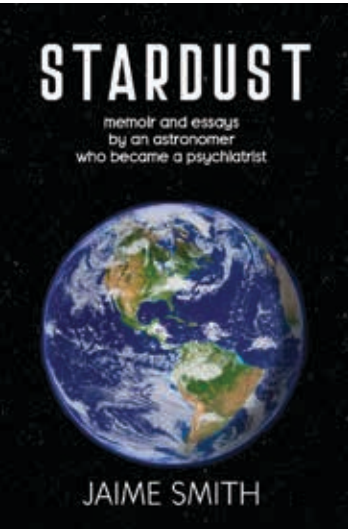
BCBW: Where do you look for answers and what gives you hope?

AW: Even though I’m critical of the systemic barriers that mothers face, I’m optimistic when I am talking to other mothers and parents. Instead of the competitiveness between mothers and families that we see satirized in media, I see solidarity and empathy. Witnessing that sense of allyship gives me hope. I really feel that women are thirsty for a collective break from shouldering so much work and worry, and I am hopeful that with enough solidarity and allyship across genders and races, this will translate to changes in how we organize work. I am also heartened when I see what an impact small policy changes can make on redistributing work and resources. The task of shifting labour across genders and classes seems infinite, but there is a lot we can do.

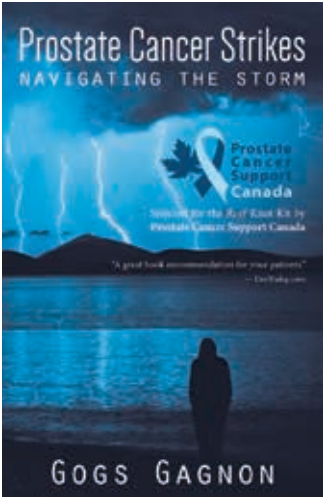
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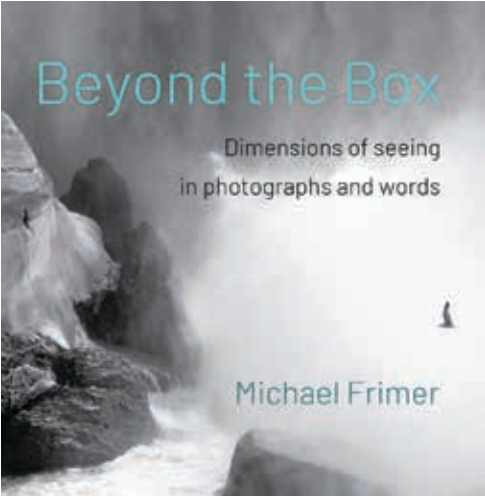
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Fontainebleau:
Stories by Madeline Sonik
(Anvil Press \$20)

BY HEIDI GRECO

Fontainebleau should come with a warning—not the one we so often see at the start of a TV show, though violence and coarse language certainly play a part in these stories.

The warning should be a caution that you won't be able to put this book down, because these characters and their complicated lives will get into your head and won't go away.

We've become familiar with volumes of linked stories, though it's rare to find one where the links are as unconventional as these. And it's worth noting that this book works best by reading it from front to back, something that isn't always the case with such collections. Dropping in on a story in the middle of the book could leave you gasping, or at least confused, though some will likely leave you gasping anyway.

Victoria-based **Madeline Sonik** has a raft of degrees: an MFA in Creative Writing, a PhD in Education, and no less than two distinct MAs. But that doesn't keep her from writing characters who speak in a down-home vernacular, like Hal, in *Transition*.

"Yeah," Hal says... 'It was real fun 'til this dip-stick got on my case for jumping the line at Space Mountain.' 'Y'all know where the end of the line is?' he asked. 'Sure do,' I said and showed him.

"Everyone knew Hal had a spur-of-the-moment temper. He never let on what he might do next. Even way back in grade school, he scared all the teachers."

Hal isn't the only character in the fictional town of Fontainebleau who can get hot under the collar. Violence and abuse seem to be the standard way of life there.

Sonik offers a disclaimer at the beginning of the book, explaining that this creation is not the subdivision in Windsor where she grew up, even though like that place, it's situated on the banks of Detroit River not far from the Ambassador Bridge with the city of Detroit just across the water.

Even the river plays a role in these stories, carrying some of the town's

dirty secrets in its swirling brown currents. "Margaret waded out from the rainy shore and set the boat afloat. The water was sticky and opaque with effluent, and although Margaret attempted to scrutinize its depths, her feet inevitably scraped against sharp metal and other vestiges of life's wreckage, deposited in the river's bed."

Like so many subdivisions that sprang up in the mid-twentieth century, this one seems to have been built in a hurry, with projects and houses popping up helter-skelter. Fields and wild spots still prevail—hiding places for frightened girls, dreamers, deviants or rogues.

Fontainebleau is a town where itinerant carnivals stop, their ill-tended

rides an attractive distraction. When children experience the death of a peer, the pain and confusion long endure, leaving a distinctive scar.

The people in these stories bear such scars, left by their experience with the hardships of the world. There's a woman who takes refuge in a metal cup filled with booze—a talisman, her link with small possibilities. These are people who argue about crop circles and UFOs—men who hide in darkness, or hoot at topless dancers. Crows with shining wings abound and are often the only witnesses to crimes.

Characters we've met in one story will show up in another, disjointed as broken Barbie dolls, yet recognizable—and above all, interconnected.

FRIGHTENED GIRLS, DEVIANTS & ROGUES

Madeline Sonik's new collection of short stories is peopled with a raft of troubled characters in the fictional city of Fontainebleau on the banks of the Detroit River.

★
MADELINE SONIK'S WRITING IS TEXTURED as nubbed corduroy, with visuals that sparkle: "A stoplight beats through his frenzied wipers, a simple streak of red." Sounds also reverberate throughout these pages: a metal trolley clatters, trains rattle past; these are echoed by a girl dragging herself along with a walker. Voices of the dead intrude, offering advice or a scolding or sometimes even love.

This book has much in common with *Winesburg, Ohio*, the classic collection of short stories by **Sherwood Anderson** in 1919. Both are non-linear in nature and offer a raft of troubled characters. Those in *Fontainebleau* experience problems that are magnified and more brutal, often complicated by stolen cars and steaming wrecks.

Anderson's book was considered an early example of Modernist writing when it came out. It's hard not to think of Sonik's book as a kind of homage to his. Even the style of the map on the inside of the book's covers looks to be patterned after the one in the *Winesburg* stories. As at least one character in *Fontainebleau* points out, "Nothing ever really disappears." I suspect that the characters in these stories are much like that, in that they too will never disappear.

978-1-77214-148-1

Heidi Greco lives and writes in Surrey.

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WHEN ISTANBUL WAS Constantinople

A witch time-travels with her midwife niece and their two cats to solve a mystery

Sailing to Byzantium
by **Maureen Thorpe**
(Ekstasis \$25.95)

BY CAROLINE WOODWARD

Contemporary Yorkshire lass, Annie Thornton suddenly finds herself in the middle of a stinking garbage heap with her cat in her lap. It's not Annie's home, not even her century. Her great-great (many times great) Aunt Meg from eons ago is running toward her, apologizing for the odiferous botched landing.

Turns out, Meg has summoned Annie back in time to help her solve a terrible crime which has just happened in Jorvik. (It's so far back in time that the Vikings are in charge, so York is called by its Norse name.)

Meg and Annie's mission to solve the crime takes them on a time-travelling adventure in **Maureen Thorpe's Sailing to Byzantium**, the second title in her planned trilogy with the same characters.

Thorpe, herself born in Yorkshire, trained as a nurse, worked on two continents, travelled the world and now lives in a log house near Invermere.

She does talks with slide-shows about medieval life and writes with authority about her characters: time-travelling Aunt Meg, a respected witch or wise-woman in 15th century Yorkshire; and her 21st century niece, a trained midwife. Plus, their two cats.

Time-travel fans of **Diana Gabaldon's** mega-selling *Outlander* series and historical mystery readers devoted to the 16th century perils of the **Henry VIII**-era lawyer Matthew Shardlake, by **C.J. Sansom**, will enjoy Thorpe's novel set in Yorkshire en route to the great kingdom known as Byzantium, with its grand city of Constantinople, now Istanbul.

Sailing to Byzantium follows the first book in Thorpe's trilogy, *Tangle of Time* (Ekstasis, 2018). A third title, *Coventina's Well* set in Roman Britain, is planned for release in 2021.



THE CRIME INVOLVES TWIN GIRLS, PLATINUM blonde seven-year-olds who have been kidnapped while playing right outside the door of their own home.

Their father is a Viking fisherman still out at sea and their English mother and grandmother were inside the house weaving wool cloth at the time of the abduction. The elderly



Witch Riding Backwards On A Goat by Albrecht Dürer , circa 1500

grandfather was outside with the twins but, in one of many deft examples of Thorpe's storytelling combined with her medical background, he was caught short with what the modern reader can tell is a troublesome prostate and had bolted for the outdoor toilet. The three supervising adults are wracked with grief and guilt at letting the girls out of their sight at exactly the wrong moment. They dread the arrival of the father, who doted on his little girls.

Aunt Meg is fully capable of magic, of shapeshifting and time travelling as well as having an extensive knowledge of using herbs and other healing practices of the Middle Ages. She also knows that Annie has inherited her maternal line of 'witchy' abilities in addition to having modern-day medical training.

Annie is quickly dressed in appropriate linen and wool clothing and footwear and her T-shirt, jeans and slippers are left behind to baffle the archaeologists of the future.

Thorpe includes a useful glossary of Yorkshire dialect and a map of the route the two women, the father of the

abducted girls and other trustworthy companions took to follow the kidnappers. She also provides an interesting list of the main characters that pinpoints which ones were actual historical figures and those Thorpe invented but some of whom just might be real, as there are traces of those names and



identities in Norse sagas and other documents. It's fascinating stuff.

The bereft family, with the two wise-woman and their cats (which, of course, also have certain magical abilities), petition the local Viking King **Eiric BloodAxe** and his two wives for help.

There is a wealth of authentic detail about the rigours of the sea and river voyage which takes the group of would-be rescuers from York, England to Birka, an island near Sweden, with its busy trading town and active slave market. Then the group carries on across the Baltic Sea and then down major rivers in shallow lightweight river boats to get to Kiev and finally across the Black Sea to Byzantium. There, an eccentric and very wealthy man is rumoured to have bought the exotic blonde twins for his collection.



Maureen Thorpe: "Yorkshire grit has allowed me to stay sane."

The description of the running of rapids or portaging around them, the constraints of campfire cooking and cautious dealings or bloody skirmishes with other tribes in the lands they are passing through all make for a gripping page-turner.

This 'day-in-the-life' of sheer survival on the dangerous waterway journey is later enriched when we meet Princess Olga who supports their efforts and mentions her wish to bring Christianity to Russia, which she eventually does in 'real life.' We also go to the great bazaars of Constantinople and practically touch the fabrics and soft leather shoes and smell the spices and delicious foods there.

The action ramps up even more as Annie must work a major feat of magic in front of a crowd of thousands and the rulers... and two hungry lions.

So, if you'd love to escape the woes of the present day and enjoy historical mysteries and archeological detective work, you'll have come to the right place and time with *Sailing to Byzantium*.

978-1-77171-384-9

Caroline Woodward is the author of nine books in five genres for adults and children. She writes from the Lennard Island Lightstation.

Artist's rendering of Constantinople, the capital city of Byzantium, circa 11th century.

Fake It So Real
by Susan Sanford Blades
(Nightwood Editions \$21.95)

BY ALEXANDER VARTY



Although most of its action takes place in a downbeat world of dingy clubs, cramped apartments, and squalid camper vans, **Susan Sanford Blades's *Fake It So Real***, ends on a strangely upbeat note.

At a wake.

A wake, more specifically, for former punk-rock singer Damian Costello, whose disembodied foot has washed up on a beach somewhere in the Salish Sea.

And at this wake the mother of Costello's children, Gwen, has uncharacteristically taken control. Snapping out of her book-long trance of agoraphobia, alcoholism and need, she's climbed to the stage where her late partner's band has been shambling through its pre-show rituals and corals the microphone.

"I am punk rock," she declares—and so she is, in this glorious but long-delayed moment of sonic self-affirmation.

And although Gwen's creator downplays her own instrumental talents—"I tried to play bass, or I did play bass for a bit in high school, but I don't think I'm a very musical person," says Sanford Blades in a telephone interview from her Victoria home—music certainly played a major role in her own creative awakening.

"For me," Sanford Blades explains, "it's been about *listening* to music, and about feeling, and about the broader social messages with music. I came of age in the '90s, so for me it was riot grrrl. That was my big thing, and it meant a lot to me, especially as a teenage girl—just how these women who were just screaming about everything, all these things that you encounter and you don't know how to react to. Like older men staring at you in the street... All these things that are just starting to happen now that you're becoming a woman. So, to have all of these women older than me who'd dealt with it and were screaming about it, that was really empowering for me.

"For me, music is definitely a way of connecting with the world, and of feeling your own power," she adds. "Like reading books, too: it's a way of feeling a connection with somebody else who's going through the same thing as you, or connecting with a character that you can see yourself in."

Although the power of music to both liberate and seduce animates *Fake It So Real*, which takes its title from grunge icon **Courtney Love's** song *Doll Parts*, it would be a mistake to consider it a "punk rock novel." It's more a novel of family dysfunction centred around the always contentious mother-daughter relationship, and it also touches on the psychologically crippling effects of economic precarity and addiction.

Gwen, who's trying to raise her daughters Sara and Meg on a coffee-



A coffee shop waitress raises two daughters after being abandoned by her punk rock partner.

No future?

Susan Sanford Blades's debut book is not a punk rock novel, rather it's a story about family dysfunction.

shop waitress's income, self-medicates with vodka while the kids find their own means of escape: Sara by splitting town without looking back, and Meg through education, as she pursues a degree in gender studies. Both repeat their mother's romantic mistakes by hooking up with feckless men—but for them, at least, there is *some* future. Gwen, however, takes the "no future" ethos of punk rock literally—not as a call to shape one's own life outside society's lines, but as an excuse for surrender.

Sanford Blades's unflinching treatment of her older protagonist might suggest that she's working out some of her own mother-daughter issues in her fiction, but the author says that's not entirely the case.

"People always ask if it's 100 percent my real life, and no," says the mother of three. "But yes, for sure, I started writing this book after I separated from my husband, which was almost ten years ago, so a lot of that went into these sto-

ries for sure. What I like to say is that the actual events that take place in the book are not real, but all the feelings in the book come from real feelings that I was experiencing or working through."

She allows, too, that she's had to clarify that point with her own parents. "A lot of these chapters were published first as short stories, and I remember [my mother] thinking that Gwen was inspired by her, and I was like 'How can you think that?'" Sanford Blades says, laughing. "Like, my mother is completely the opposite; she's very conservative, the opposite of Gwen. And I think my dad was kind of offended by the fact that the whole book is about an absent father. So, um... There's nothing of my mother in this book."

There may be more of Sanford Blades and her family in her next book, which takes place in her hometown of Edmonton, Alberta, during the very years that she was coming of age, listening to the riot grrrl sounds of Bikini

Kill, and following the shocking revelations about sex killers **Paul Bernardo** and **Karla Homolka**.

"I want it to be about female friendship, so it's about these two girls who are 18," she says, noting that she's already finished a first draft but will likely discard most of it. "As I was writing it," she continues, "I wanted the main character's mother to be absent in some way, and I thought 'Oh, she'll be adopted.' And now, as I write the second draft, it's becoming a novel about a girl trying to find her birth mother."

Zine culture, toxic masculinity, sexual awakening and the cult TV show *My So-Called Life* also figure in the as-yet-untitled book, Sanford Blades reveals, suggesting that even if there really is no future, the past can still be mined for fresh revelations. 978-0889713888

Alexander Varty is a musician and writer living on unceded Snuneymuxw territory.

Verses for a departed mother

Linda Gane wrote poems out of necessity, an integral part of grieving a parent's death.

Arc of Light by Lorraine Gane
(Raven Chapbooks \$20)

They say I don't have long to live," **Lorraine Gane's** mother tells her in the poem *Death Dream*.

"What can you say to the voice of death," Gane wonders, which is answered with "*I love you and a hug*," before her mother "sits down to cereal, milk, and her seven morning pills."

Gane's collection of poems, **Arc of Light**, an elegy to her mother, are bound together in an exquisitely produced chapbook by Salt Spring Island-based Raven Chapbooks. At times emotive, Gane's writing is elegantly minimal and brutally honest.

We learn that Gane's mother came to Canada as a poor émigré from Eastern Europe in *The Girl from Poland*. "Despite the strangeness of it all, you were happy," writes Gane. When her mother comes of age, she marries at 23 and hides the "little girl" inside her heart along with "all her hopes that blossomed and withered there."

Often, end-of-life stories include bad health—in this case a stroke. While visiting her mother in the hospital, Gane is alarmed when Mary points at the window and says, "Look at that reindeer." At first Gane doesn't see the reindeer. Then, Gane bends down so that her face is next to her mother's and sees etched in the glass, "a small figure with antlers flying into the light



Mary Gane (nee Kurylo) age 17 in 1941

blue sky." Her mother is relieved that Gane can also see the figure. "*I'm glad, you say. I didn't want you to think I was seeing things*," writes Gane of her mother's response.

Back and forth between home and the hospital, Gane engages with her mother. Some of these moments are set against metaphors of animals as in *The White Heron* in which Gane watches a heron and its hatchling "lift off together" and "vanish into the blue air."

Gane describes her mother's last breath: "a final wisp of air that disappears into the silence she becomes."

The last poem, which gives the book its title, is about a photo of her dead mother's body in a bed over which Gane sees a white arc floating above. "Yesterday I looked at the photo again five years after her death," writes Gane. "The arc was still floating above her—all softness and light." 978-0-9734408-4-3



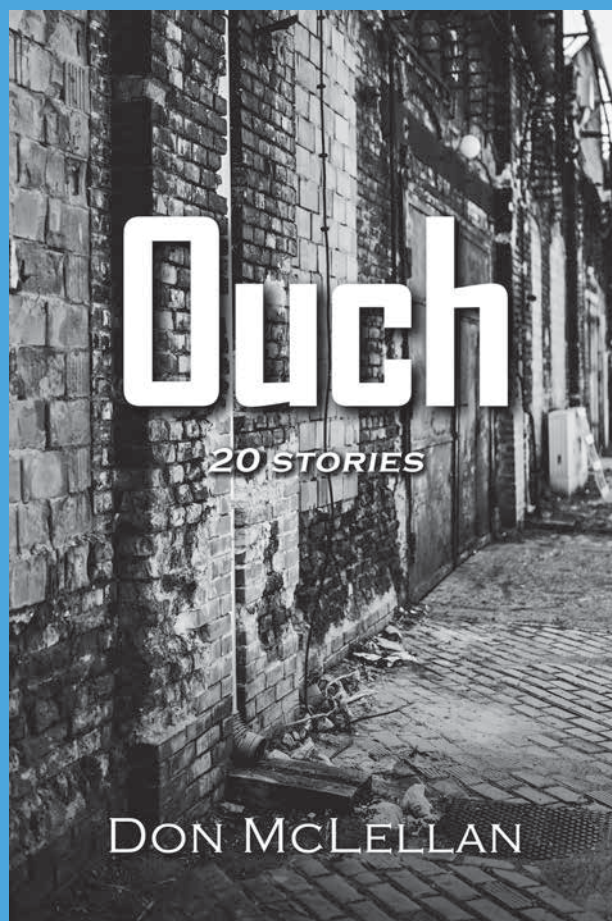
Linda Thompson

Where the piano has mildew

Linda Thompson grew up on a farm in the Pemberton Valley, later moving to Vancouver Island where she still lives on a farm. Her writing has been published widely in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. and now her debut poetry collection, **Black Bears in the Carrot Field** (Mother Tongue \$19.95) celebrating small town characters, will be released this July.

There's Eddie, who rolled his skidder in '68, Kirk buying a house on a Visa credit card, Verna who sneaks back from the dead and Ethyl Peach hammering out tunes on a mildewed piano. There's plenty of farm imagery with cows, horses and old cars, and dreaming about black bears in the carrot field. There's even Jesus, come to town driving a Chevy Chevelle (or was it a Dodge Dart?) later spotted at the Stawamus Chief looking way up. Described as country songs crossed with dark lyricism and wit, Thompson's poems humorously tell of people full of imperfection and guts. 978-1-896949-84-0

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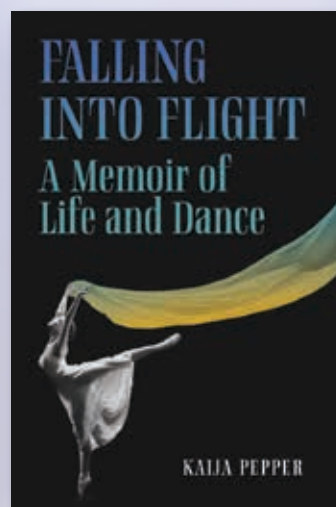
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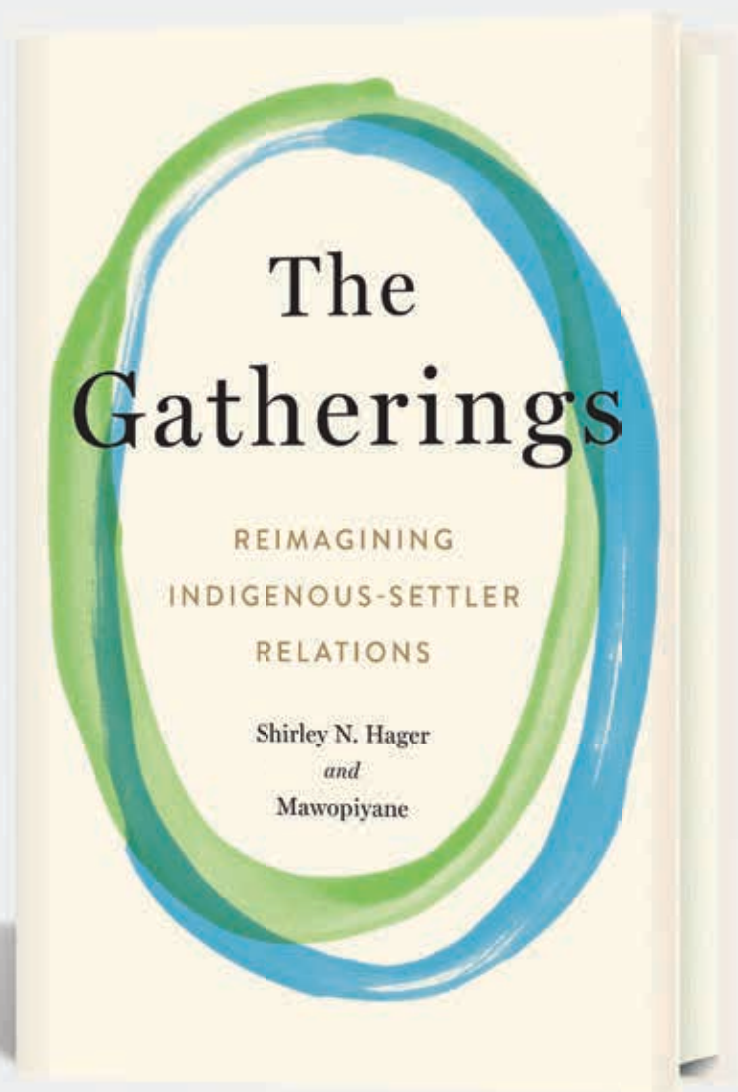


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POETRY REVIEW

Junie Désil

A CURE FOR THE HAITIAN ZOMBIE

Junie Désil explores what it means to be a descendant of enslaved people.

eat salt | gaze at the ocean
by Junie Désil
(Talon \$17.95)

Born in Montreal and raised in Winnipeg by parents who immigrated from Haiti, **Junie Désil** came to Vancouver at the age of nineteen to attend the University of British Columbia. As a student, she says she was “unused to a thirty-two-thousand-plus student body, isolated, and one of the few Black students.”

She struggled and a fellow student in an African American history class who, “noticing my struggle (sobbing openly in class, etc.),” facilitated a connection with their professor. That led to Désil being hired as a research assistant and sparked her interest in “examining and following the ‘colonial trace.’”

While still at UBC, Désil became involved with a group called Colour Connected Against Racism UBC. It was through this association that she was encouraged to publish a poem in a special race issue in *The Ubyyssey* and started “what looks to be a lifelong passion for writing angry and impassioned poetry,” says Désil.

It all culminated in a debut collection of poems, **eat salt | gaze at the ocean** exploring Désil’s experiences growing up “Black on stolen Indigenous lands” combined with her personal narrative about slavery, Black sovereignty and contemporary Black lives.

Désil probes the meaning of a zombie, often used as a metaphor for the treatment of Black bodies. Indeed, the book’s title is a reference to a supposed cure for zombification.

“feel but not too much / don’t look up” writes Désil in the poem, *zom-bie* | / ‘zambi’ /. “don’t feel [because] we can’t feel [ourselves] / hearts eyes / dulled do/what/we’re/told/to so we do / what we’re told.”

Désil weaves in historical documents, newspaper articles and other ephemera as she probes the lives of Black slaves in Haiti and their fight for freedom, including a newspaper report of a slave revolt on March 13, 1792. She writes of America’s occupation of Haiti from 1915–1934 and links it to an American company that exploits Haitian workers.

“bring bodies / more / bodies / harvest bitter / sugar” she writes in *gon-zo* | / ‘ganzou’ /. “those dead folks working the sugar-cane fields like it’s 1820.”

Désil continues up to the present times and the Black Lives Matter movement. In one extended poem she writes, using lower case letters: “i took a snapshot of 2016. i counted, over two hundred deaths in one year. if we’re being comprehensive, this right here does not include the dead from the transatlantic slave voyage, those who leapt to their deaths, who died beneath the cargo hold, once stolen from their ancestral lands. those who died in violent capitalist servitude, who died in violent encounters with white holders of enslaved **Black** people... **Black** trans folks. they will need another page... this list is a list of names of **Black** people who have died south of this ‘border,’ so you might almost want to say *this list is not Canada* – i dare you... this is a piece that will go on for a while till you feel as paralyzed as i continue to be.”

Her last verse is poignant: “i look at the ocean / it breathes loudly / i stare at the ocean and wonder / when will i feel alive”

9781772012651

When Meg met Greg

How two sisters came together to write a series of books for children with reading difficulties.

Meg and Greg:
Frank and the Skunk
by Elspeth Rae and Rowena Rae;
illustrated by Elisa Gutiérrez
(Orca \$14.95)

AGES 6-8

Rowena and Elspeth Rae grew up in a house that was full of books. It was Rowena and their mother who were

the strong readers, as they always had books on the go. “Going on holiday for two weeks usually meant bringing along a separate suitcase dedicated to books!” says Rowena.

While Elspeth and their father loved books and stories too, they found reading more challenging. Elspeth enjoyed being read to, and used to lug cassette-taped books around before the days of Audible.com.

Eventually, at the age of eight, Elspeth was diagnosed with dyslexia, which led to her receiving Orton-Gillingham instruction during her school years, an approach developed by **Samuel Torrey Orton** (1879–1948) and **Anna Gill-ingham** (1878–1963) for teaching literacy to those for whom reading, writing and spelling does not come easily.

“Our father was never diagnosed, probably because testing wasn’t prevalent in the 1930s when he was a child,” says Rowena. “But I remember him saying that his mother read his medical textbooks out loud to him in university.”

But their father did eventually become a confident reader and he went on to write for his job. “He always had reading material in his back pocket, usually a news magazine,” says Rowena. “Both of our parents wrote extensively in their healthcare careers and our father continued to write articles and stories throughout his retirement, virtually until the day he died.”

Elspeth went on to earn a B.Ed. from Simon Fraser University and become a certified Orton-Gillingham teacher for children with dyslexia and other language-learning difficulties in Vancouver.

Rowena worked as a biologist in Canada and New Zealand before becoming a Victoria-based freelance writer, editor and children’s author of

both fiction and non-fiction.

It was Elspeth who had the idea to write books for struggling readers after she became frustrated with the books available for her students. She decided that writing her own stories was the best solution for meeting her students’ needs.

As Rowena already had experience writing books, Elspeth approached her



Elspeth Rae and Rowena Rae on Pender Island in 2019 (above) and in 1980 (top right).

with the idea to work collaboratively on books for special needs children. They spent nearly three years developing their concept, writing stories, testing them with students, and revising the concept, guiding principles, text and design. The final result was a book with graphic stories featuring the characters Meg and Greg, two ten-year-old best friends.

The stories begin at the stage where a child reader recognizes the individual letters of the alphabet and knows their most common sounds (all the basic consonant sounds, including consonant blends, and the short vowel sounds). The plan was for a series of books such that each story introduces one letter combination or phonogram (like th or ck) in a particular sequence derived from Orton-Gillingham.

“We initially submitted a book proposal to half a dozen Canadian and U.S. publishers,” says Rowena. “We received rejections across the board, but several of the publishers replied to us with encouraging comments about our book concept. We then decided to



make a mess in the lodge with a fresh batch of fudge. These words were chosen as they focus on the phonograms: nk, ng, tch and dge.

More books are already being planned in the *Meg and Greg* series. All are for shared reading between a child who is learning to read and a more experienced reader. The latter could be a teacher, tutor, reading volunteer, parent, grandparent, buddy reader or even a sibling. Shared reading means the stories have text at different levels of difficulty and this allows the stories to be more complex and more likely to interest an older child, while still giving a learning reader a chance to read part of the story.

Other “dyslexia-friendly” design elements in the *Meg and Greg* books include shaded paper to cut down on contrast, a font that mimics printed letters, extra spacing between words and lines, and illustration labels printed mainly in lowercase letters.

The stories have graphic novel/comic book elements as such features are popular with children. Book three in the series is in production and will be available in fall 2021. Rowena and Elspeth are currently writing book four.

“We have ideas about future books both in the Meg and Greg series and possibly for a “prequel” series for readers who are at the stage of learning the basic sounds of the individual letters of the alphabet,” says Elspeth.

“Apart from the gratification of creating books that are making a real difference for many kids and their families, the best thing about the two of us working together is how much closer it’s brought us. We’ve always been close as friends and sisters but now we’re business partners and co-authors as well, and this has been truly phenomenal.”

978-1-4598249-3-5



by **Sara de Waal**
art by **Erika Medina**

A little girl uses imagination and inventiveness to spread friendship through her community.

"De Waal's rhythmic prose and cyclical storytelling are delightful, and Medina's energetic characters and warm palette are charming.... A cute meet-cute."

—Kirkus Reviews



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KIDLIT

REVIEW

Look up, way up

Robert Heidbreder turns his gaze to the sky and what's up there

Catch the Sky by Robert Heidbreder
with illustrations by Emily Dove
(Greystone Kids \$22.95)

AGES 3-8

Dragonflies, butterflies and bees. Kites, balloons and helicopters. Stars and fireworks in the night sky. These are the wonders that children's poet **Robert Heidbreder** finds when he looks upwards. His picture book **Catch the Sky** is full of pocket poems to these delights. It's his way of celebrating nature with children around the world.

Heidbreder's morning starts with the poem, *Sunrise*: Rosy, red arms / caress the sky, / smiling sun / waving HI!

He carries on through the seasons, starting with autumn when the wind blows and leaves fall; then winter when the snow flies and northern lights swirl; to summer when hot air balloons float; and spring when rain sprinkles, drizzles and downpours.

Heidbreder covers many topics for many countries, from the cold north to the hot equator. He rejoices in the earth's creatures—fireflies, bats,

squirrels, crows, trees and leaves, and elephants as imagined in clouds.

This diverse book ends with an invitation for good dreams in *Good Night, Sky*: Draw the curtains. / Into warm beds. / Sky's treasures we shared / will dance in our head.

Heidbreder taught school for thirty years in Vancouver where he developed his love of wordplay. In 2002, he was awarded the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence. His books have won many prizes including *I Wished for a Unicorn* (Kids Can, 2000) and *Crocodiles Play* (Tradewind, 2008).

9781771646314



TED HAYES PHOTO

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"To glimpse this diversity is to feel some of the meaning of being Canadian."

—R. Yorke Edwards

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BILL PECHET ILLUSTRATION

Harry the hare & her beastly guest

Hare B&B
by Bill Richardson
with illustrations by Bill Pechet
(Running the Goat \$22.95)

AGES 6-8

Imagine being an only child and then your mom has septuplets? Easy to do if you are a hare — and a character in one of **Bill Richardson's** books for kids.

Richardson's new heroine, Harriet, nicknamed Harry, is pleasantly surprised with the arrival of seven new brothers and sisters. But it's not all fun and games and one day when Harry takes her younger siblings for an outing, back home the parent hares are killed and eaten by a coyote marauding as an encyclopedia salesman.

Left on their own, the orphaned hare children must now learn to earn a living. They decide to run a bed & breakfast in Richardson's **Hare B&B**. Of course, they advertise by twitter and their good bird friends are soon partaking in the hospitality. Other guests arrive, including a skunk and a squirrel.

Then an odd-looking, rather uncomely rabbit books a night at the Hare B&B. Harry is suspicious. Peeking through the unseemly guest's keyhole, the smelly "rabbit" is revealed to be the coyote up to his old tricks by hiding in costume so that he can launch a surprise attack on them too.

Harry rallies her siblings and together they make a plan to save themselves. Will it work?

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WHO'S WHO

BRITISH COLUMBIA

“Speak against the coloniality of the world, against the route of despair it causes, in an always-loud-ening chant. Please keep loving.”

Billy-Ray Belcourt, *A History of My Brief Body*

TENILLE CAMPBELL PHOTO

A IS FOR ALEC

Elaine Alec's *Calling My Spirit Back* (Tellwell \$22.99) addresses her views on the current period of Canadian history during which she says “conversations about systemic racism and abuse of women and the historical and ongoing trauma of First Nations are finally resonating beyond their typical boundaries.”

978-0228830696

B IS FOR BELCOURT

UBC prof of Indigenous creative writing, **Billy-Ray Belcourt's** debut memoir ***A History of My Brief Body*** (Hamish Hamilton \$25) starts with memories of his early life in a small hamlet and expands into a wider, broken world around him. It includes his experience of colonialism's legacy, joys in life, sexual exploration and intimacy, and the act of writing as a survival instinct and way of grieving.

9780735237780

C IS FOR CHANG

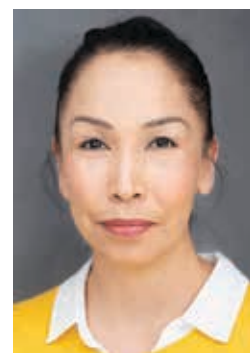
The Library of Legends (Harper Collins \$18.99), is SFU Writer's Studio graduate, **Janie Chang's** third novel. Set in 1937 China, as Japan begins bombing Nanking, nineteen-year-old Hu Lian flees with fellow students and faculty on a thousand-mile walk to safety. At stake is not only their lives, but a priceless five-hundred-year-old collection of myths and folklore known as the Library of Legends.

D IS FOR DITRICH

Failed musician, Tony Vicar saves a car accident victim and is suddenly rocketed from complete unknown to a legend in mere months in **Vince R. Ditrich's** dark farce, ***The Liquor Vicar*** (Dundurn \$18.99), due out this summer. But Vicar finds out fame isn't always positive. Ditrich, the drummer and manager of the band Spirit of the West has earned more than a dozen



Clockwise: Vince R. Ditrich, Vanessa Farnsworth, Michelle Good, Janie Chang, Elaine Alec, Francesca Ekwuyasi.



gold and platinum albums, and been enshrined in several Halls of Fame.

978145974725-8

E IS FOR EKWUYASI

Francesca Ekwuyasi's debut novel ***Butter Honey Pig Bread*** (Arsenal \$23.95) about a multi-continental family of Nigerian women dealing with unspeakable tragedy, was longlisted for the 2020 Scotiabank Giller Prize. It also made this year's CBC Canada Reads list of finalists.

9781551528236

F IS FOR FARNSWORTH

Having written a memoir about being the first confirmed case of a B.C. resident with Lyme's Disease, **Vanessa Farnsworth** has produced two more titles, including the recently

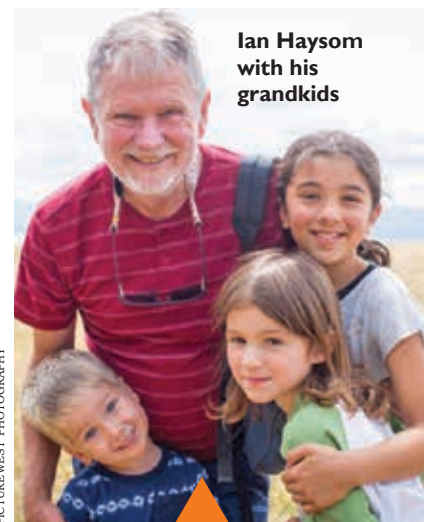
released ***The Haweaters*** (Signature Editions \$18.95) about a real-life double murder in Ontario that pitted a wealthy landowner against his impoverished neighbour, generating gossip, innuendo and scandal.

9781773240695

G IS FOR GOOD

A writer of Cree ancestry, **Michelle Good** has written ***Five Little Indians*** (Harper Perennial \$22.99), a novel about a group of residential school survivors released from their “detention,” barely out of childhood. With no money or support, the five end up in the seedy world of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside where their paths cross and re-cross over decades as they help each other reinvent their lives.

9781443459181



Ian Haysom with his grandkids

PICTUREWEST PHOTOGRAPHY

H IS FOR HAYSON

Grandfathered: Dispatches from the Trenches of Modern Grandparenthood (Heritage \$22.95) chronicles retired newsman, **Ian Haysom's** adventures with his grandkids. Through funny anecdotes, Haysom explores the unexpected lessons they have taught him (and those he has attempted to teach them). Haysom also investigates the changing role of grandparents in the 21st century.

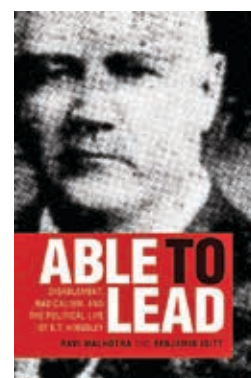
9781772033335

I IS FOR ISITT

Benjamin Isitt co-authored with **Ravi Malhotra**, ***Able to Lead: Disablement, Radicalism, and the Political Life of E.T. Kingsley*** (UBC Press \$89.95) due out in May. New York-born, double am-

putee **E.T. Kingsley** brought his radical socialism across the border when he founded the Socialist Party of Canada. Kingsley went on to shape a generation of Canadian leftists during a time when it was rare for disabled men to lead.

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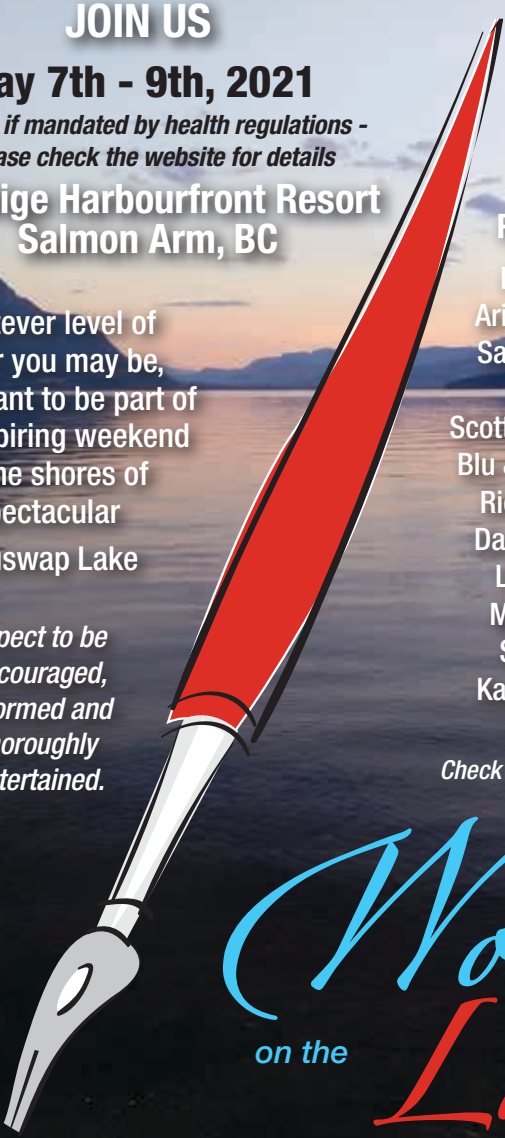
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WHO’S WHO

BC



Mark Jarman

J IS FOR JARMAN

In **Czech Techno & Other Stories of Music** (Anvil \$18) **Mark Jarman**’s five tales are built around music and travel. His subjects range from a tour through Napoli to a walk on Victoria’s inner harbor; music from ‘gentle Tunisian techno’ to tunes from Steppenwolf or The Youngbloods wafting from a car radio. Woven into each story are ever-present matters of the human heart.

9781772141382

K IS FOR KAWATSKI

Deanna Kawatski’s eighth book, **Magda’s Odyssey** (Gracesprings Collective \$21.95) is a YA novel about a 14-year-old girl who sets off across



Deanna Kawatski

Canada to find the twin sister she was separated from at birth. Magda hitchhikes, treks through mountains, eludes the law and even murderous thugs as she heads east with her faithful dog, Sky. Kawatski’s *Clara and Me, The Story of an Unexpected Friendship* (Whitecap, 1996) was nominated for a Hubert Evan’s award for non-fiction in 1997 and her first book, *Wilderness Mother* (Whitecap, 1994) became a Book of the Month selection in 1994.

9781777085803

L IS FOR LEBLANC

Poet **Curtis LeBlanc** is unusual in that he not only writes for artsy journals, he is an occasional hockey columnist for *NHL Numbers*. His second poetry collection **Birding in the Glass Age of Isolation** (Nightwood \$18.95) explores



Curtis LeBlanc

the implications of social illness and asks questions about the effects of anxiety on behaviour. 9780889713680

M IS FOR McILWRAITHS

The McIlwraiths of Scotland emigrated to North America and Australia in the 1850s, becoming politicians, entrepreneurs and scholars. Now UBC professor emerita, **Eva-Marie Kröller** has combed through their letters, diaries and other sources to find how generations of McIlwraiths described being subjects of the British Empire and how that changed over time, in **Writing the Empire: The McIlwraiths, 1853 – 1948** (UTP \$82.50) with illustrations and a map.

9781487507572



Rahela Nayeibzadah

N IS FOR NAYEBZADAH

Monster Child (Wolsak & Wynn \$20), a novel by **Rahela Nayeibzadah** introduces three children of Afghan immigrants trying to find their way in a mostly uncaring society. A sexual assault causes tragedy and mayhem for the family. Nayeibzadah’s first title *Jeegareh Ma* was an autobiographical novel based on her family’s migration to Canada from Afghanistan.

9781989496305

O IS FOR O'BRIAN

Through Post-Atomic Eyes (MQUP \$44.95) co-edited by UBC professor emeritus of art history, **John O'Brian** and **Claudette Lauzon**, assistant professor of contemporary art history, deals with the answers that photography and contemporary art offer to the question of what it means to live in a post-atomic world.

978022801393



Claudette Lauzon

WHO'S WHO

BRITISH COLUMBIA

P IS FOR PERRIN



Benjamin Perrin

UBC law professor, **Benjamin Perrin** takes a penetrating look at opioid drug addiction in **Overdose: Heartbreak and Hope in Canada's Opioid Crisis** (Viking \$32). He interviews those working on the frontlines such as undercover police officers, healthcare professionals and drug users. His findings challenge many assumptions about the crisis.

9780735237872

Q IS FOR QUALICUM

From Qualicum to Campbell River, never-before-seen historical photos showcase the wilderness areas of Vancouver Island's Comox Valley as it was hiked, skied and enjoyed by new settlers in the early 1900s in **Step into Wilderness: A Pictorial History of Outdoor Exploration in and around the Comox Valley** (Harbour \$39.95). Included is a photo of two men wearing nothing but kelp, cavorting at the beach.

9781550178937

R IS FOR RUSS WILLMS

Russ Willms has written and illustrated the picture book **Elephants Do Not Belong in Trees** (Orca \$19.95) about an elephant who wants to live in a big bushy tree despite objections from the current residents: Bird, Squirrel and Monkey. For children aged 3-5, the story is ultimately about acceptance, making friends and being different.

9781459825994

S IS FOR SCHAUCH



Michael Schauch

After 20 years working in global investment, mountaineer **Michael Schauch** turned his attention to international mentorship and girls' education in Nepal, which he describes in **A Story of Karma: Finding Love and Truth in the Lost Valley of the Himalaya** (RMB \$25), due out in September. Schauch calls Squamish his "base camp."

9781771604673

T IS FOR THOMAS-PETER



B.A. Thomas-Peter

B.A. Thomas-Peter's debut novel, **The Kissing Fence** (Caitlin \$24.95) begins with two separate stories about Doukhobors dealing with their faith: two Russian children who rely on their Doukhobor teachings to get them through a cruel 1950s residential school; and a corrupt businessman who rejects his Doukhobor heritage until a cycling accident sends his life into turmoil.

9781773860237



Illustration by Russ Willms for his children's book, *Elephants Do Not Belong in Trees*



Frolicking at Qualicum Beach with kelp



Linda J. Eversole

U IS FOR UNBUTTONED

Following her biography of Victoria bordello owner **Stella Carroll**, *Stella: Unrepentant Madam* (TouchWood, 2005), **Linda J. Eversole** has produced a broader history of the city's prostitution as told through newly found stories of the women who lived it, **Unbuttoned Victoria: A Red-Light History of BC's Capital City** (TouchWood \$20).

9781771513388

V IS FOR VARNEY

Long a fervent promoter of Canadian poets and artists working from outside established and academic venues, **Edwin Varney** has co-edited with **Daniel J. Kirk**, **Drift: Poems and Poets from the Comox Valley** (The Poem Factory \$19.95) with poetry by 38 disparate poets who all have one thing in common: they live and work in the Comox Valley.

9781895593563

W IS FOR WIGMORE



Gillian Wigmore

In **Night Watch: The Vet Suite** (Invisible Publishing \$19.95), Prince George-based **Gillian Wigmore** explores the lives of rural veterinarians in three novellas. Described as a cross between **James Herriot** and a "Canadian gothic sensibility," Wigmore writes of the lives and loves of people in places as varied as small-town B.C., southern France and Fiji.

9781988784588

X IS FOR XI

Exporting Virtue? China's International Human Rights Activism in the Age of Xi Jinping (UBC Press \$89.95) by UBC law professor, **Pitman B. Potter** explores the efforts by China to export its human rights standards that, although couched in terms of virtue, are in practice authoritarian and oppressive.

9780774865555

Y IS FOR YU



Henry Yu

UBC history professor, **Henry Yu** has compiled the coffee table book **Journeys of Hope: Challenging Discrimination & Building on Vancouver Chinatown's Legacies** (UBC Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies \$50) that tells the story of Vancouver's early Chinese immigrants and their fight for justice against the City of Vancouver, which historically supported, and legislated for, white supremacy. Yu also outlines steps for reconciliation.

9780993659317

Z IS FOR ZARANKIN

The surprising bestseller **Field Notes from an Unintentional Birder** (D&M \$24.95) by **Julia Zarankin** is her story of finding meaning through birds when she turned to birdwatching after a divorce at the age of 35. Zarankin's writing has appeared in *Audubon*, *Canadian Geographic*, *The Walrus*, *Prism International*, *Antioch Review*, *Birding Magazine*, and *The Globe and Mail*. She was shortlisted for the CBC Short Story Prize (2020).

9781771622486



Julia Zarankin

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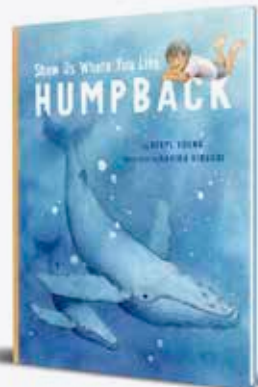
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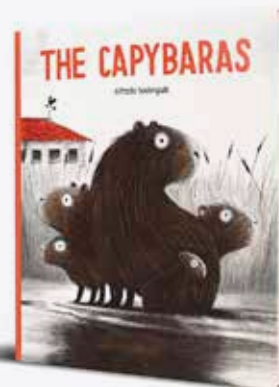
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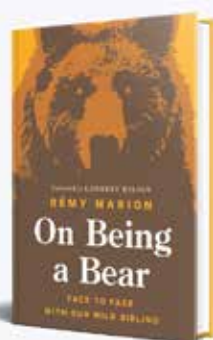
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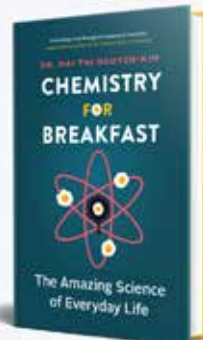
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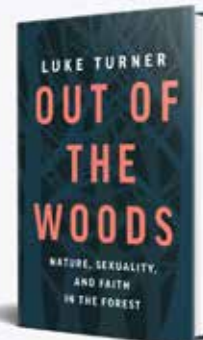
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David Robinson

January 5, 1947–
November 24, 2020

With the encouragement of an exceptional English teacher named **Harry Locke** (also a formative influence on several B.C.

authors) the precocious **David Robinson** co-founded a literary magazine called *Talon* in 1963 while he was a student at Magee High School in Vancouver. It operated from his parents' garage. By 1967, he had published *Talon's* first book, *fireweed*, by **Ken Belford**, while attending the University of British Columbia. In the same year, the first issue of *The Georgia Straight* was produced by a collective. Similarly, Talonbooks emerged in conjunction with **bill bissett's** blewointmentpress and **Jim Brown's** Very Stone House.

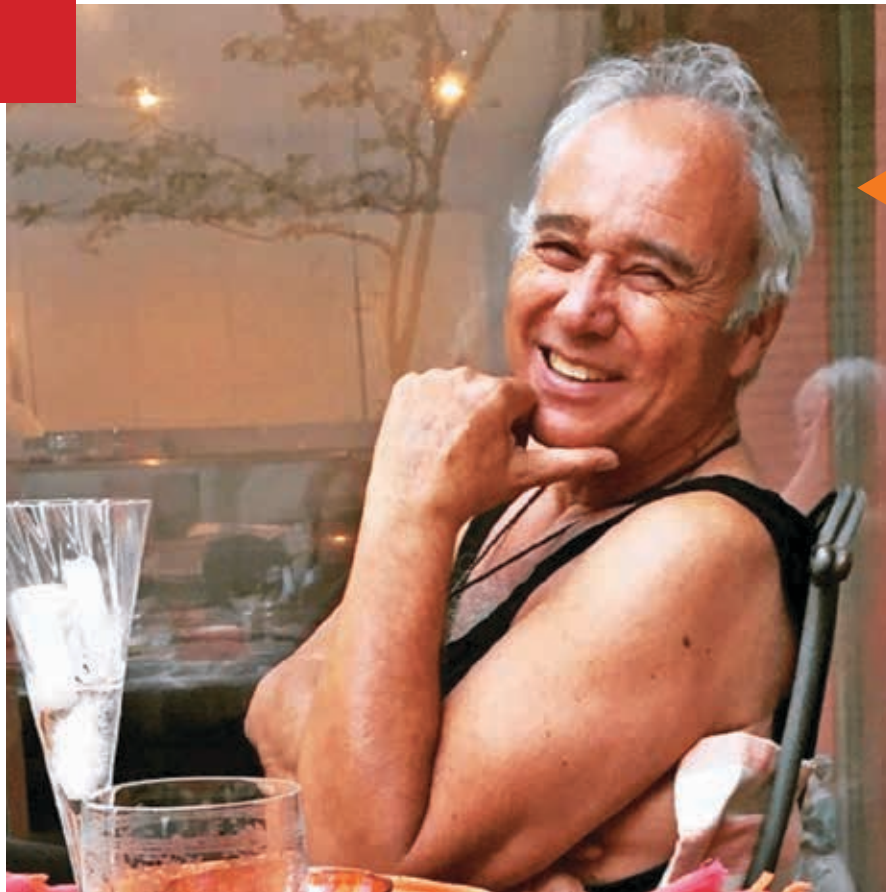
Although he was the son of **J. Lewis Robinson**, head of UBC's geography department (1953-1968), David was motivated by his contacts within the fields of literature and theatre. More importantly, he not only esteemed and respected artists, stroking their egos to gain their allegiance to his imprint, he was a sublime adjudicator of talent. He prided himself on his judgments as a literary impresario—and he proceeded to excel at publishing the country's foremost playwrights, taking particular care with the design of their books. For this activity alone, he merits a place in Canada's Publishing Hall of Fame, should there ever be one, although it was actually colleague **Peter Hay** who conceived of a series of Canadian plays in 1969 after Hay had published **Beverley Simons' Crabdance**.

By the time the Association of Book Publishers of B.C. was founded in 1973, David was already figuring out the new lay of the cultural land.

It is seldom cited that David had business partners almost from the get-go: most importantly Peter Hay (Talon's mostly unpaid drama editor until 1980) and **Gordon Fidler** (a printer, until 1976) who was a co-owner/proprietor with David. It was Hay who approached David and Fidler about publishing **James Reaney** (*Colours in the Dark*) and **George Ryga** (*The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*). Soon Talon started receiving orders for hundreds of copies, mainly for drama courses at universities. Fidler was keen to continue operating a capricious old press that worked well for a few hundred poetry books. David became very enthused when Hay also brought **Michel Tremblay** into the fold.

Peter Hay's crucial role was downplayed when he left to work in Los Angeles.

"During my years with Talon from the late 60s to the early 80s," Hay recalls, "David Robinson was the beating heart of this small regional enterprise that grew into a nationally recognized



David Robinson

laudable to attack the arts bureaucrats as part of the problem, not part of the solution. Siegler, among his many accomplishments, co-founded the Literary Press Group in 1975. The 'sensitive' David Robinson and the 'aggressive' Siegler were seemingly an ideal yin/yang duo until power-sharing within Talon became problematic and a lawsuit ensued as to company ownership, leaving Hay as an outsider.

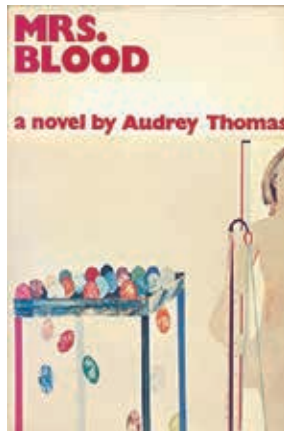
Having nurtured the career of caterer-turned-cookbook author **Susan Mendelson** and having masterminded bestsellers by restaurateur **Umberto Menghi**—David Robinson married **Zonda Nellis**, whose career as a fashion designer had already taken off before they joined forces. He became the saviour/guide for her business in much the same way that Siegler had offered his managerial chutzpah to him after he was already a success.

David turned a cold shoulder to book publishing and he became a devoted family man, although he remained a silent partner in Talonbooks from 1984 until 1992. With the integral assistance of **Mary Schendlinger**, **Karl** and **Christy Siegler** expanded the mandate of Talonbooks for several decades, before retiring to Powell River whereupon Talonbooks underwent a reincarnation under the direction of **Kevin Williams**, formerly of Raincoast Books, who took over majority ownership in 2008 with his wife **Vicki Williams**. Siegler remained with Talon until 2011.

Simply put, David Robinson was integral as one of the province's first professional book publishers, in terms of cultural impact. The publishing company he founded now has more than 500 titles in print. Among the other authors he personally published were **Marie-Claire Blais**, **George Bowering**, **Frank Davey**, **Roy Kiyooka**, **Mary Meigs**, **bpNichol**, **Jane Rule** and **Audrey Thomas**. In various ways, he was close to all of them. "I am so glad to have been in his world and to have had his stylish figure in mine," says George Bowering.

"David's star burned brightly but briefly in publishing," says veteran B.C. publisher and author **Howard White**. "I met David at UBC in 1965 before either of us published a book and remember him as a theatrical type always gushing about his latest passion. He was very conscious of literary fashion and eager to be part of the in-crowd, or what he perceived as the in-crowd. I think it was only when he teamed up with a local poet named Jim Brown that he got seriously into books. David turned out to be very good at convincing established writers like Jane Rule and Audrey Thomas to take a chance on a fledgling West Coast press but unfortunately lacked the skill or interest to create a viable business. Ultimately, he had to be rescued by Karl Siegler and Mary Schendlinger, who put Talonbooks on course to become what it is today. But he was there in the early days of the West Coast scene and rates being remembered as a cultural pioneer."

David Robinson is survived by his wife, Zonda Nellis; his daughter **Alexandra Robinson** and son-in-law **Madhavan Sridhar**, and his two granddaughters **Maya** and **Veda**.



TALONBOOKS: *Theme for Diverse Instruments* by Jane Rule (1975); *Mrs. Blood* by Audrey Thomas (1970); *The Vision Tree: Selected Poems* by Phyllis Webb (1982).

publishing house. While many small presses reflect the personality of the printer, in the case of Talonbooks it was design that dominated. Every book expressed an exquisite aesthetic that came from David, who designed the cover, chose the paper, did the layout, wrote the press release, and individually wrapped review copies with meticulous attention. His creativity propelled everything at Talon, and yet he gladly ceded the limelight to others, and especially to authors he loved. When I look on my shelves at the dozens of books from Talon's early period, I still feel in each one a sensibility that came uniquely from David's soul."

When the pressures of managing a growing, national imprint became too

much for him, David consented to allow himself to be rescued by a more assertive force, **Karl Siegler**, age 26, who had attended and taught at the cauldron of new-fangled radicalism known as Simon Fraser University. Siegler first worked at Talonbooks in 1974. He became president and CEO when Talon Books Ltd. incorporated in 1975, though still operating as Talonbooks.

As Siegler took over the business side, leaving David to handle creative matters, Siegler became a very forthright and sometimes even intimidating force in cultural politics, not afraid to criticize and berate the powers-that-be. Cultural bureaucrats of today would never tolerate such braggadocio, but in those days, it was permissible and even

Cecil Paul (1931–2020) Also known by his Xenaksiala name, Wa'xaid, Cecil Paul is credited with spearheading successful efforts to save much of the Kitlope, an area of rainforest declared off-limits to logging in 1994. He co-authored two books with **Briony Penn**, *Stories from the Magic Canoe of Wa'xaid* (RMB, 2019) and *Following the Good River: The Life and Times of Wa'xaid* (RMB, 2020).

Anton Kolstee (1949–2020) Musician, academic, mentor and teacher who had a deep respect for Indigenous culture. He wrote *To Impersonate the Supernatural: Music, Ceremony and Culture of the Bella Bella* (Granville Island, 2019).

Gary Steeves (1950–2020) A social and environmental activist, he wrote *Tranquility Lost: The Occupation of Tranquille & Battle for Community Care in B.C.* (Nightwood, 2020). The occupation of the Tranquille residential complex in 1983 marked the beginning of a groundswell of activism uniting community groups and labour groups that came to be known as Operation Solidarity.

Wolfgang George Jilek (1930–2021) Born in Bohemia, Jilek moved to the Vancouver area in 1966. With degrees in Medicine, Social Psychiatry and Anthropology, he wrote *Salish Indian Mental Health and Culture Change: Psychohygienic and Therapeutic Aspects of the Guardian Spirit Ceremonial* (1974) and *Indian Healing: Shamanic Ceremonialism in the Pacific Northwest Today* (1982).

Jill Wade (1942–2020) Jill Wade, a history instructor for the Open Learning Agency, published *Houses For All: The Struggle for Social Housing in Vancouver, 1919-1950* (UBC Press, 1994) for which she received an award from the City of Vancouver. The book's title became a rallying cry for a new generation of housing activists. She died at Vancouver General Hospital.

Beyond public view, behind his 5,000-square-foot bookstore at Fourth avenue and Dunbar in Vancouver, there's a zen garden with a tiny waterfall that owner **Kolin Lymworth** can look at whenever his task of choosing more new volumes for the 300 subject areas in Banyen Books gets to be burdensome after his fifty consecutive years as an independent bookseller.

"I'm really more of a librarian," he muses. His voice tapers off. This is not a man who likes to sound off. He's rarely found in the front of the store, chatting up the clientele. A far cry from a business mogul, this is someone who sent his kids to Waldorf School and got into the book business during the heydays of counter-culturalism, beginning as a books-and-natural-foods-corner in the Golden Lotus Restaurant at Fourth and Bayswater in 1969.

Then he split. He did the India thing. He was interested in meditation. Learning. Healing. He started keeping a list of important books about spiritual enlightenment. At age 21, upon his return to Kitsilano, he opened the first Banyen Bookshop with \$1,500 and 10 boxes of books, most of which were acquired from Bookpeople, a co-operatively-owned wholesaler in Berkeley, California. It was the tail end of the Peace and Love era. In early 1971, he took a leap of faith and ordered 150 copies of *Be Here Now*, a still-popular New Age bible by Western spirituality teacher and yogi **Ram Dass**, who became a friend and mentor.

The rest is post-hippie history: fifty years of five store locations and enviable stability in a notoriously difficult trade. Owning his own premises since 2003, Lymworth outlasted the Duthie Books empire and remains impervious to the Toronto-based behemoth Chapters.

Along with antiquarian generalist and genius **Don Stewart** of Macleod's Books, who is also nearing the 50-year mark as a bookseller, Lymworth can be now viewed—by anyone who wants to



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"We are stoked to help (in our bookstore way) all us humans to upgrade our nature-and-heart-based operating systems."—**Kolin Lymworth**

stop and think about such things—as a cultural hero. As Covid-19 pushes us back into the Dark Ages and further forward into the Digital Ages, the twin outposts of sanity and learning that

are Macleod's Books on West Pender and Banyen Books on West Fourth are like public monasteries that preserve wisdom and civilization.

To mark his 50 years in "the biz," Lymworth hopes to compile and "glorify" a complete list of the hundreds of people who have worked at Banyen Books since 1970. The future is not gloom 'n' doom.

"In the midst of this extended pandemic moment in human evolution," he says, "more people are avidly reading

and really studying.

"I'm gratified and excited to help more and more folks widen, deepen and brighten their horizons through reading-reflection, and now through our online author and teaching events, as well.

"While outer travel is largely gone for most of us, inner exploration and embodied learning is alive and flourishing—and important—as we gear up for the hard work ahead.

"We at Banyen are stoked to help (in our bookstore way) all us humans to upgrade our nature-and-heart-based operating systems. We and the books are still here."

[It's the independent bookstores in the U.S. and Canada that have kept the book industry alive during the pandemic. Banyen is representative of a prevailing spirit of community service that motivates a vibrant network of indie outlets around B.C. We know who they are—and we are grateful for their perseverance.—Ed.]



2008: 3608 West 4th Avenue

Antiquaria: a guide

For those wishing to tour Metro Vancouver's book culture through secondhand and antiquarian bookstores, there's an updated guide, **Secondhand and Antiquarian Bookstores of Metro Vancouver**.

One of the people behind the project, **Kim Koch**, co-owner of The Paper Hound Bookshop says that a similar brochure had circulated in the past but hadn't been updated for a dozen years. "**Patricia Massy** [Massy Books] got the idea to revive the brochure and myself and a few others thought it was a good idea," says Koch who became a major force behind getting the project completed. **Hilary Atleo** of Iron

Kim Koch holds the updated bookstore guide, available free from The Paper Hound Bookshop, 344 West Pender St., Vancouver or any of the other 36 bookstores listed.

Dog Books and **Tamara Gorin** of Western Sky Books were other cohorts.

"It was a group effort," continues Koch adding that funding for the graphic design was contributed by the Association of Book Publishers of B.C.

The guide gives details for 17 bookstores in Metro Vancouver and another 20 shops and book dealers in the Lower Mainland and further afield on Bowen Island and in Gibsons on the Sunshine Coast. Many, like The Paper Hound, also sell new books in addition to secondhand and antiquarian books. Several specialize in specific genres, like People's Co-op Bookstore with its focus on politics, activism and local presses and Spartacus Books describes its titles as 'Tools for Social Change.'

The prize for most original book description goes to pulpfiction books and its 'weird fiction' collection. Contact: paperhound.ca



BEVERLY CRAMP PHOTO

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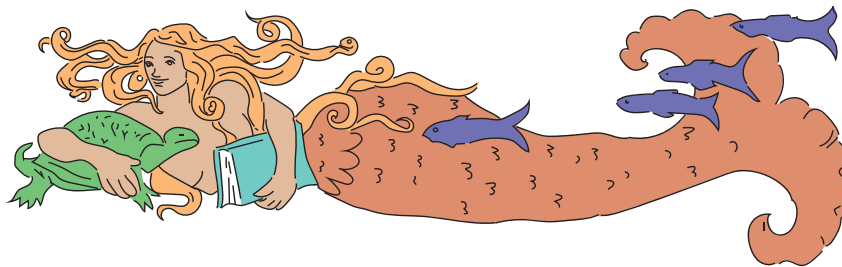


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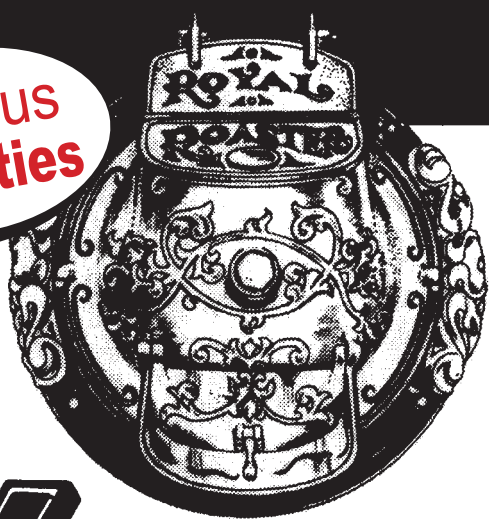
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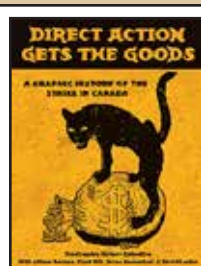
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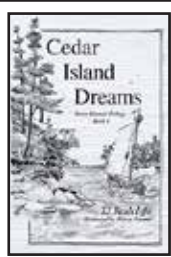


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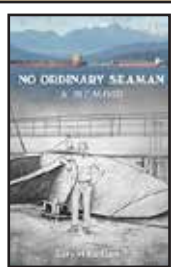
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SEAFARING MEMOIR

LETTERS

Dukesang Wong is all right

Thank you for the compelling review of *The Diary of Dukesang Wong* (as in I will now buy the book). I clipped it from *BC BookWorld* [Winter 2020] and put it inside my copy of *Tales from Gold Mountain*. I read this book aloud, along with *Ghost Train*, to the Grade 7 class at our school almost every year.

According to historical notes I stuffed inside *Ghost Train*, more than four men died for every mile of track laid on the CPR's western section. Over 600 men died in total, working for less than half the salary of non-Chinese workers. Makes for good discussion in a class of 12 and 13 year-old students.

With sincere thanks for all you do to promote B.C. literature and provoke interest in our culture and history.

Susan Yates

Gabriola Island

Town Fool adventures

I was a friend of Kim Foikis [*The Fool's Journey*, *BC BookWorld* winter, 2020] and his wife Wendy from 1968 – 69. With Wendy as secretary, we formed the Save the Beach committee that organized a “Nude-in.” We stopped the dumping of landfill on the beach, which resulted in Canada's first and largest optional clothing or nude beach. I also drove my Volkswagen camper with all The Fool's company to recreate the Battle of Hastings by dancing, and giving out oranges and joints at Hastings and Carrall. Together, we organized many other 1960s “happenings”.

David Boehm

Gabriola Island

The good bookseller

In *BC BookWorld's* Spring 2020 issue, I saw the obit regarding David Kerfoot. Thanks to him (and Bill Duthie) in 1979, I was able to get the books needed for our new, little Pemberton Public Library. In the early 80s I travelled down to Duthie Books [where David worked] with some cash and David helped me so much! For sure, he deserved “Bookseller of the Year.”

Having grown up in Vancouver, I was very familiar with the downtown public library and Duthie Books. After moving to Pemberton, I couldn't live without a library. We were fortunate to



SARAH HOLMES/GABRIOLA SOUNDER PHOTOS

Susan Yates reading outdoors (due to Covid) to grades 2 and 3 students at Gabriola Elementary School, Gabriola Island.

get one going and also, with the help of Duthie Books and David Kerfoot, managed to obtain the books people enjoyed reading.

Jan Naylor

Pemberton

Grateful authors

Once again, thanks for taking an interest in my work and giving *Notice* a strong review in the winter issue of *BC BookWorld*. Including Hunter S. Thompson, George Orwell, Kafka in your review—not bad, not bad at all.

Dustin Cole

Vancouver



Thank you for the review of *Harking* in the winter issue of *BC BookWorld*. As always, I love the newspaper and read it from cover to cover. I also learn tons of new information with every issue.

George Mercer

North Saanich

Bliss and icing

I always look forward to reading the latest issue of *BC BookWorld*. It's like receiving a Christmas present each time your magazine is published. Following a move from the Lower Mainland, now more than ever, I look forward to picking up a copy of your newspaper to keep me apprised of what is happening in the literary

world. I retired to a smaller, friendly community and nobody knows me, which is the icing on the cake at this stage in life. I have literally stepped out of the limelight, become an anonymous entity doing all the things I love to do without distractions. It is bliss stepping out of your yesterdays to discover yourself without a career or its reminders.

Pat Christie

Kamloops

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Cathy Converse

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Letters may be edited for clarity & length.

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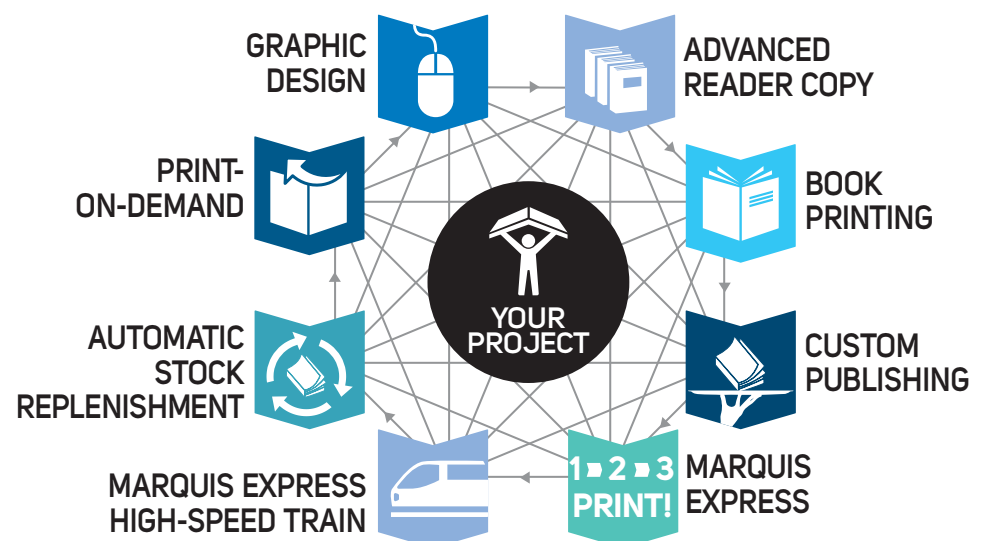
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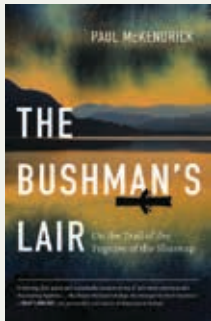


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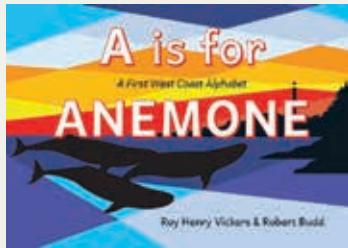


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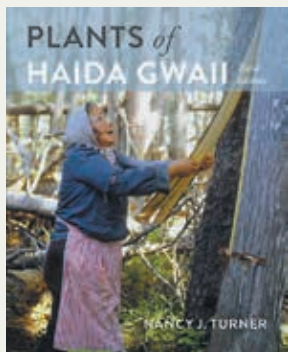


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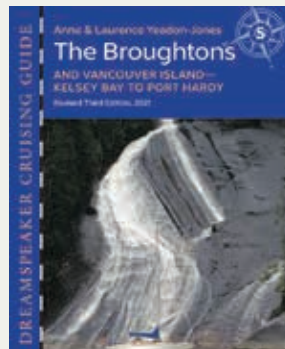


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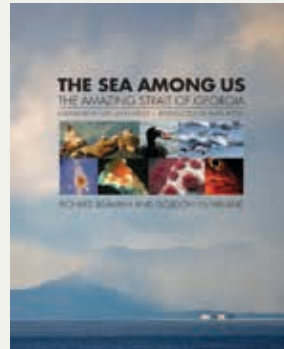


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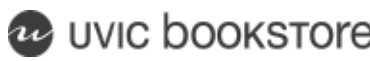
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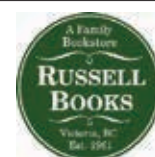
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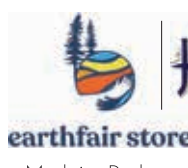
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