

Acknowledgements

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OFFICE OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS, OCTOBER 2002

2 DAYS OF CANADA
NOVEMBER 6-7,
2002

Biography:

Keynote Speaker: Elspeth Cameron,

*author of Earle Birney: A Life, Irving Layton: A Portrait,
Hugh MacLennan: A Writer's Life and
No Previous Experience.*



Conference Organizer:

Donald Wright, Centre for Canadian Studies, Brock University



**Brock
University**

Careers begin here!

12:30-1:30

Feminism, Biography, Recovery
Chair: Maureen Connolly, Brock University
Ann Marie Guilmette, Brock University, Diane Doneff, Women's Addiction Recovery Mediation, Joanne Goodyear, Hope Place, "Joanne Goodyear and Diane Doneff: Stories of Triumph from Women in Recovery"

1:30-3:30

Women Writers, Women's Lives

Chair: Netta Gordon, Brock University

Christl Verduyn, Wilfrid Laurier University, "Journaling Toward Biography"

Robert Thacker, St. Lawrence University, "Alice Munro as Biographer"

Donez Xiques, Brooklyn College, CUNY, "The (Un)reliability of Memoir: Margaret Laurence's *Dance on Earth*"

Tracy Ware, Queen's University, "Margaret Laurence's *The Prophet's Camel Bell* and the Question of Complicity"

3:30-4:00

Reception, Pond Inlet

4:00-5:00

Keynote Speaker, Pond Inlet

Elsbeth Cameron, "Biography: the approximate art"

Thursday, November 7

8:15-9:00

Registration, coffee

Opening remarks: David Atkinson, President, Brock University

9:00-10:30

Men, Myths, Memories

Chair: Danny Samson, Brock University

Philip Girard, Dalhousie University, "Bora Laskin: Man, Myth, Memory"

Donald Wright, Brock University, "Donald Creighton: Man, Myth, Memory"

10:30-11:00

Break

11:00-12:30

Forgetting, Remembering and Constructing Canadian Writers

Chair: Jane Koustas, Brock University

Michael Peterman, Trent University, "James McCarroll: a long-neglected 19th-century Canadian writer"

Kevin McCabe, Brock University, "Avoiding Biography: How Arthur Weir (1864-1902) Was Forgotten"

Diana Lobb, University of Waterloo, "Academic Magicians and Startled Rabbits: Examining Arun Mukherjee's Construction of Absolute 'South Asian' Ethnic Identity"

12:30-1:00

Break

1:00-2:30

A Life's Multiple Meanings

Chair: Alexandra Mosquin, National Historic Sites Directorate, Parks Canada

Mary Jane Miller, Brock University, "Rewriting Joseph Brant"

Claude Denis, University of Alberta, "Will the Real Grey Owl please stand up? On the theory and practice of Canadian Biography"

Kathryn Harvey, McGill University, "Biography as Memoir: the case of David Ross McCord"

2:30-4:00

Collective and Individual Biography

Chair: Brian Power, Brock University

June Corman, Brock University, "Doing Collective Biography: Rural Teachers in Saskatchewan"

Robin Elliott, University of Toronto, "Theoretical Issues in Canadian Musical Biographies"

Lynette Plett, OISE, "The Facts and Fictions of Francis Marion Beynon, 1884-1951"

Abstracts

Margaret Banks:

What Constitutes a Good Biography?

In 1892, in the course of reviewing a biography of Canada's second prime minister, Alexander Mackenzie, John George Bourinot gave his opinion of what constitutes a good biography. His views were acceptable in the late nineteenth century, but are not in the early twenty-first. I will compare these two approaches.

Should biographers write about people they admire? Is it wise or desirable to write about a person you dislike or with whose views you disagree? I will discuss this matter, emphasizing that in the former case it is important not to overlook the person's shortcomings and in the latter to say something about his or her good points.

To write a good biography, how well do you need to know the person? How do you go about getting to know him or her? The method varies, of course, depending upon whether the person you are writing about is still alive. Concentrating on writing about a person who died some time ago and based on my own experience, I will compare Edward Blake and John George Bourinot as subjects for a biography. I never felt that I really knew Blake, whereas I believe I do know Bourinot.

June Corman:

Doing Collective Biography: Rural Teachers in Saskatchewan

From the beginning of the settlement period to the closure of rural schools tens of thousands of women taught in the rural schools that dotted the grain fields of southern Saskatchewan. Intent on capturing the experiences of these women, I

have collected interviews and hand written reminiscences from retired teachers. This paper explores concerns related to using collective biographies to examine issues facing women who taught in one-room schools during the first half of the twentieth century.

Claude Denis:

**Will the real Grey Owl please stand up?
On the theory and practice of Canadian biography**

In what way(s) was Grey Owl Canadian? In what way(s) are his biographies – academic, popular, filmed – Canadian? What is the relationship between these two questions, and their answers? What should be made of the failure on the international market of the major "biopic" made by Richard Attenborough and starring Pierce Brosnan – does it say something about Grey Owl, about Canada? These are the questions at the centre of this paper. After the biopic's failure, Grey Owl – internationally famous Canadian Indian wise man and environmentalist in the 1920s, who turned out to be né Archie Belaney in England – now seems almost famous seven decades after he was forgotten in the wake of his multifaceted biographical scandal. This paper explores, on the one hand, this "almost fame" and the ways in which Grey Owl's life story is mobilized in recent biographies, making him variously a Canadian hero, an adopted Indian, the founder of the environmental movement in Canada, a fraud, a bigamist, a sad English boy who created a fantasy life. On the other hand, the paper discusses theoretical questions surrounding the social and moral uses of biographical narratives, in the Canadian context as well as more generally.

Robin Elliott:
Theoretical issues in Canadian musical biographies

"At this time there is no history of musical biography and none of the standard musical encyclopedias has an entry under that subject." So wrote Hans Lenneberg in his book length study of musical biography, published in 1988. His

observation highlights the fact that musical biography has traditionally been an undervalued and under-theorized area within musical scholarship. Narrowing the focus to Canadian musical biography, though, we find a different story. Both editions of the *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada* (1981/1992) include an entry under "biography," giving a brief history and an annotated bibliography of the subject. Furthermore, biographies of Canadian musicians have proliferated in the past 25 years or so, and cover the entire range of musical traditions, from folk to pop, jazz to classical, and beyond. Recently this wealth of narrative accounts has been subjected to stimulating critical scrutiny. This paper is a contribution to this evaluative process, and examines issues of political positioning, dialogicism, gender, and identity in relation to recent biographies of Canadian musicians.

Philip Girard:

Bora Laskin: Man, Myth, Memory

The life of Bora Laskin (1912-1984) encapsulates many of the salient transformations of Canadian society in the 20th century: the dramatic growth of the regulatory state; the enhanced recognition of the role of labour in Canadian society; the shift from British to American cultural traditions and the emergence of a self-consciously Canadian culture; the growing influence of universities; the advancement of human rights and the embrace of cultural pluralism; and the expanding role of the Supreme Court in Canadian national life. How did the child of Russian immigrant parents from northern Ontario achieve so much? Bora Laskin achieved almost mythic status in his own lifetime but has been quickly forgotten. The making of the man and his myth are examined with reference to Laskin's Judaism, his legal philosophy, and his devotion to academic freedom.

Ann Marie Guilmette, Joanne Goodyear, and Diane Doneff:

Joanne Goodyear and Diane Doneff: Stories of Triumph from Women in Recovery

Each presenter will share her life story of recovery, and her distinctly Canadian journey through the Women's Addiction Recovery Mediation (W.A.R.M.) program. This organization is a not-for-profit, charitable, community-based agency dedicated to improving the quality of life for women and families. Winner of the Donner Foundation award in 1999 for social service agencies, W.A.R.M. is committed to addressing addiction issues in ways that lead to promoting healthy communities. W.A.R.M. operates in an under-served rural community where impoverished, vulnerable, and isolated women face many barriers to treatment. They give hope to women and their families so that the requisite skills to access alternative solutions and make healthy changes in their lifestyles can be developed.

Using photo-voice testamentary research as a feminist approach to biography, participants will enjoy a video, that showcases the lives of women who struggle with addictions, and the role of W.A.R.M. in assisting these women in achieving recovery. Joanne Goodyear's journey to recovery and Diane Doneff's extraordinary organization are featured in this video. Photo-voice research is a useful and powerful resource for enabling and empowering the voices of women with addictions to be heard. This project capably demonstrates that barriers to healing can be eliminated.

Kathryn Harvey:

Biography as Memoir: the case of David Ross McCord

I never met David Ross McCord or anyone else who knew him for that matter. He died in 1930, almost three decades before my birth. Yet during the past eight years I have spent more time with his memory than with the people I am most

intimate with. It feels strange to me that someone who occupies as much space as a lover would in my thoughts, has no physical presence in my life. So begins my doctoral dissertation on David McCord, founder of the McCord Museum of Canadian history in downtown Montreal. How do I know what I know about David McCord? This is the question I posed to myself after all the research had been done. How do I write about someone I never met and worse still, I felt a pronounced antipathy toward. How I dealt with this question is the subject of my conference presentation.

Charles Levi:

Really Dead White Men: The 'Missing' Presidents of the University of Toronto

Two of the first five presidents of the University of Toronto do not have published biographies. Why are their stories less privileged than those of Sir Daniel Wilson, Sir Robert Falconer, and Henry Cody? For John McCaul, the main stumbling block has been the absence of archival records. No such problem exists for James Loudon, whose period in office is amply documented and supported by his own memoirs, written in 1916, and prepared for publication in 1964.

It is possible that certain "dead white men" will never have their story fully told. Loudon, an early champion of scientific research in Canada, a key transitional figure in the rise of the Canadian multiversity, and the first Canadian to be a full professor at a Canadian University, is one of these missing men.

Loudon was reviled by influential Canadians such as James Flavelle and Daniel Wilson, whose biographers have amply preserved this negative image of him. He was also directly criticized by two royal commissions, in 1895 and 1904. In the context of his time in office, however, Loudon's achievements were significant. Recovering Loudon's story, as well as McCaul's, is a necessary balance to the dominant view that Wilson and Falconer were the men who truly shaped the modern University of Toronto.

Diana Lobb:

Academic Magicians and Startled Rabbits: Examining Arun Mukherjee's Construction of Absolute "South Asian" Ethnic Identity

This paper considers the use of memoirs and autobiographies in the academic production of strategic essential identities. Drawing on Paul Gilroy's critique of the pedagogical construction of categories of "authenticity" in cultural production, this paper suggests that there is a disturbing relationship between critical attempts to claim to identify the hallmarks of the "authority of experience" in cultural texts and attempts to impose the authority of the academic in the solicitation and sanction of categories of identity. Through a consideration of the particular example of the critical writings of Canadian academic Arun Mukherjee and her critique of Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*, this paper suggests that, even when undertaken by politically engaged critics, academic practice that attempts to impose categories of identity on cultural texts is imbricated with absolutist definitions of culture and is inadequate where it attempts to move too swiftly to condemn or to celebrate the "authenticity" of cultural works.

Ged Martin:

Macdonald: Rebellion, Marriage and the Bottle

As the opening speaker, I offer some challenges that colleagues may wish to take up.

BIOGRAPHICAL DIALOGUE. In attempting an interpretative biography of Sir John A Macdonald, I am of course following in the footsteps and the shadow of D. G. Creighton, whose great 2-volume biography appeared in 1953-55. *To what extent is a biographer engaged in conscious or unconscious dialogue with predecessors?*

SOURCES. We assume that the "ideal" biography will be

based upon an archival record. There are some problems about this assumption in the case of Macdonald. A Macdonald biographer needs to assess recollections and anecdotes in early biographies e.g. by Collins (1883) and Biggar (1891). *How far can we assume that an archive is a neutral and value-free source?*

NEW INFORMATION. How does a biographical construct respond to the emergence of new information, especially about the early and presumably formative period of the subject's life? Information retrieved by J. K. Johnson in 1968 showed that Macdonald had played a much larger role in the rebellion of 1837 than had been previously known. For fifty years, it seems that Macdonald himself barely referred to his part in the battle at Montgomery's Tavern. *Should Macdonald's subsequent and apparently cynical changes of front, e.g. over the clergy reserves in 1854, be reinterpreted in the light of this information?*

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC WORLDS. To what extent can or should a biographer attempt to reconcile the two? In the case of Macdonald, it is well known that he drank heavily for many years. Arguably, Canadians have inherited two entirely different Macdonalds, one a statesman and founder of their country, the other a folkloric drunk. Yet the two overlap, often to the denigration of the very existence of the country he helped to construct. *Is it the responsibility of the biographer to confront the paradox that Canadians preferred John A drunk to George Brown sober?*

MARRIAGE Perhaps we do not easily analyze our own relationships and we are often surprised to discover problems in those of the people closest to us. *Can we, are we entitled, to pry into the relationships of people who are long dead?* Macdonald was married twice. There is some reason to suspect that his first marriage, to his half-cousin Isabella Clark, had some of the elements of a disaster as well of a tragedy, and it may well be seen as part of a triangular relationship involving Macdonald's mother. Isabella was bedridden for years. The nature of her illness has aroused some suspicion among histo-

rians. In fact, she suffered from a specific and most painful complaint. It may be that gender-prejudice among (male) historians is responsible for the failure to identify the cause of her illness. Even nomenclature arouses problems for the biographer. To refer to "John A" is not only folksy. It is also endorsing one aspect, and partly constructed one at that, of Macdonald's persona. But if he is "Macdonald" and his wife is "Isabella", implicit gender prejudice is conveyed in the distinction. No correspondence survives from the marriage. *Was politics for Macdonald a form of running away from a tragic marriage?*

Can we "rescue" Isabella from the oblivion and neglect of history?

Can we re-genderise "great men" biography, to recognize that Brown, Cartier, Galt, Howe, Langevin and Thompson all drew their wives into their political activities, while Macdonald kept both of his spouses at arm's length, Cartier and Laurier "borrowed" women friends as political (and probably emotional) confidantes, but Mackenzie King and R. B. Bennett distanced themselves from all but a few "safe" women friends?

THE BOTTLE. The tragedy of Macdonald's first marriage intersects with the issue of his drinking. His engagement with alcohol was no necessary by-product of political life, nor was it a joke. It forms an important part of a largely hidden story, of the rise and fall of the middle part of his career as the "imperial factor", i.e. the politician backed by the British to run Canada, between the late 1850s and 1873. *Why did Macdonald drink so heavily? How did he survive in politics? How far is the biographer entitled to regard his second marriage as a mechanistic device, to get Macdonald off the bottle and Agnes off the shelf?*

Perhaps some of these issues will resonate with the work of subsequent speakers in the conference.

Kevin McCabe:

Avoiding Biography: How Arthur Weir (1854-1902) Was Forgotten

Writers usually try to establish a strong reputation during their own lifetime. After their death, their fame inevitably is left to the mercies of others. Some, like Archibald Lampman, have had friends (e.g., Duncan Campbell Scott) who have worked assiduously to maintain a high profile for their work. Others like Arthur Weir have been completely forgotten, partly because such assistance was lacking. But the oblivion into which Weir has fallen suggests more than ordinary forgetfulness.

In my paper I will advance some possible reasons why Weir ceased to be mentioned in Can. Lit. circles within a decade or two of his death. This will involve looking at changes in literary fashions, and in the people who set those fashions. I will examine why Weir's poetry did not fit into the mode which the Confederation Poets had established. I will also suggest that some problems in which Weir's family were notoriously involved may have resulted in the poet being a victim of guilt by association.

Literary fame also reflects the merits of one's accomplishments. I will note a few short poems by Weir to demonstrate that he is worthy of consideration. The main focus of my paper, however, will be to explain how a poet, well-regarded in one generation, could drop from critical notice in the next.

Shelley McKellar:

Cutting into Male Territory: Woman Surgeon Jessie Gray and Gender Barriers in Canadian Medicine

"The greatest obstacle to becoming a surgeon was being a woman," reflected Jessie Gray (1910-1978) after a 25-year surgical career at Toronto's Women's College Hospital.

Gray was Canada's first woman surgeon, and in her lifetime surmounted numerous professional barriers. Her entire career is an amazing record of firsts: first woman to receive a gold medal for the highest standing in the graduating class in medicine at the University of Toronto; the first woman to successfully complete the Gallie course in surgery; the first woman to earn a Master of Surgery degree; the first woman resident surgeon at The Toronto General Hospital; and the first woman to become a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada.

Using Gray as a starting point, my research studies the personal and professional difficulties faced by women who choose a career in surgery, delineating changes and continuities, and the role played by Women's College Hospital, the only general hospital staffed entirely by women in Canada until 1961, which provided the venue for many women doctors to learn and practice medicine. It attempts to identify issues that contribute to why surgery remains one of the hardest medical fields for women to penetrate in comparison with other specialties.

This paper will focus on the account of one woman's surgical career and her experiences, and explore the value of biography as a methodology through which to understand gender barriers in medical education, training and practice in Canada. Primary source materials include the Jessie Gray Personal Papers, Women's College Hospital records, and documents from the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada.

Mary Jane Miller:

Rewriting Joseph Brant

In 1990 CTV was looking for a prestige program to persuade the CRTC to renew its license to broadcast. It chose the most expensive form of television – historical drama, if the film attempts to recreate an accurate period representation. However, the producers cast a white actor from Montreal as Joseph Brant. A storm of controversy about cultural appropria-

tion ensued. The film's locations and design were costly, there was a huge publicity campaign, Yet not long before broadcast, the director told the press that he hated the edit imposed on his material and the producers returned fire. Finally, the two-hour drama special was broadcast. By general, though not universal, agreement, *Divided Loyalties* was not a good film. In fact the script was quite dreadful in many scenes. I will concentrate on both the broadcasting context outlined above and the aesthetic problems. As an example of the rewriting of known facts, to the serious detriment of the dramatic effect as well as to the history of Joseph Brant, I will concentrate on the ending of the film where "during a skirmish, Brant kills his own son."

Michael Peterman:

James McCarroll (1814?-1892): a long-neglected 19th-century Canadian writer

McCarroll, who wrote under many pseudonyms including "Terry Finnegan" was, to my reading, the most prolific and important writer in Toronto and area in the decade before Confederation, though he wrote for many newspapers and magazines around the province during his thirty-five years in Canada. Included in his travels as a customs department employee (1849-1864) was a three-year stint (1851-53) near St. Catharines at what was then Port Stanford on the Niagara River. As a creative writer he specialized in poetry, sensationalist stories and comic (Irish) letter writing, though he also published a play later in his life. His "Letters of Terry Finnegan to the Hon Thomas D'Arcy McGee" are among the most lively comic writing of the 1860's in Canada West. They appeared in various Toronto satiric weeklies and the first series came out in book form in Toronto in 1864. Praise for them in Canadian newspapers, especially of an Irish leaning, was extravagant.

McCarroll ran afoul of Canadians and many of his longstanding friends (including John A. Macdonald and McGee) when, out of desperation and poverty, he joined a Fenian newspaper

in Buffalo and became thereby a sort of traitor to British-Canadian interests. He was thereafter effectively erased from the literary memory of future generations in this country, but traces of his record are evident in many places--magazines, newspapers, various collected correspondence, and the Customs dept records among others.

My challenge, as I see it, is two-fold. First, I must bring him back as a writer, an important Upper Canadian poet and a comic writer (in the vein of Haliburton and Leacock) and I must recreate the life and understand it as best I can through the conflicting lights of contemporary praise and abuse. The challenge is a substantial one and one that has the potential to revise some of the ways in which we have traditionally thought about the writing life and its problems in 19th-century English Canada.

Lynette Plett:

The Facts and Fictions of Francis Marion Beynon (1884-1951)

Since my first encounter with her, I have been wondering, Who was Francis Beynon? I was captured by her editorial on the woman's page of *The Grain Growers' Guide*, which she edited from 1912 to 1917, after Manitoba women had won the right to vote. Beynon paid tribute to the suffrage movement's outstanding women, but gave equal credit to the person "who stands quietly in the background organizing large groups of workers into a powerful society." I assumed Nellie McClung was one of the outstanding women. I suspected Francis Beynon was a woman who stood "quietly in the background".

This paper will explore how to write a woman's life--a life that was, perhaps, lived "quietly in the background". Over the years, several writers from various disciplines have remembered Francis Beynon. This paper provides an overview of these versions of Francis Beynon and discusses the limitations and potential of biography as a genre for women's his-

torians. A discussion of women and gender historians' theories about how to write women's lives, along with insights from literature about women's autobiographies, biographies and fictional women, will assist me in developing my own framework for researching the life and works of Francis Beynon.

Robert Thacker:

Alice Munro as Biographer

One of the truisms of Munro criticism is that the fiction is primarily autobiographical: E.D. Blodgett entitled his biographical chapter in his *Alice Munro* (1988) "Signifying a Life" and, that same year, my "'So Shocking a Verdict in Real Life': Autobiography in Alice Munro's Stories" made the case in a concerted way. At the same time, such critics as John Weaver and Robert Lecker have argued that, in addition to the autobiographical emphasis, there is also a sense in which Munro's writing confirms her as social historian, a person gauging the changes in mores from the 1940s to the present.

Recognizing the efficacy of such readings, this presentation seeks to define and examine a third persona: Alice Munro as biographer. Three examples spring readily to mind: in "Dulse" (1980), Munro shapes a sharply informed cameo biography of Willa Cather. In "Meneseteung" (1988), Munro situates the protagonist, Almeda Joynt Roth, as the subject of a first-person narrator who works as biographer to make "a connection, rescuing one thing from the rubbish" (73). Second, in "A Wilderness Station" (1992), Munro drew upon accounts written by a relative, Robert B. Laidlaw, in 1907--more than that, the circumstances of her paternal ancestors' settling of Huron County inform that story.

Recognizing Munro's use of the biographical impulse as a feature in her fiction generally, this presentation will construct Munro as biographer through an analysis of what is arguably her central biographical text: the uncollected

"Working for a Living" (1981). This little-remarked and uncollected memoir began as a story but eventually became a biography of Munro's parents, most especially her father, Robert E. Laidlaw (1901-1976). In it, Munro writes biography as affecting as any, and that biography proceeds from the same impulses as does her fiction—the recreation of lives lived on the printed page.

Gerald Tulchinsky:

Joseph Baruch Salsberg, a life on the Toronto Left, 1928 - 1956

This paper will treat some of the highlights in the career of Joseph Baruch Salsberg, the best known and most beloved Jewish political figure of his day in Toronto. Himself a worker in that city's burgeoning clothing sector, which was heavily Jewish in the early twentieth century, Salsberg devoted much of his time and effort to organizing radical unions in the clothing, electrical, mining and auto industries after he joined the Communist Party of Canada in 1928. He was one of the Party's key political figures, contesting for municipal, provincial and federal office. After a brief career as a Toronto alderman in the 1930's and early 40's, he sat for the Ontario riding of St. Andrew in the provincial legislature between 1943 and 1955. His eloquent speeches and seemingly tireless devotion to the welfare of the people - strongly encouraged and influenced by his devoted wife Dora Wilensky, herself a noted social worker - attracted wide admiration. Increasingly attuned to the rise of antisemitism in the Soviet Union since the 1930's Salsberg quit the Communist Party in 1956 following the Stalinist persecutions, and devoted himself to various Jewish cultural causes until his death in 1998.

Christl Verduyn:

Journaling Toward Biography

This paper will consider the links and lines between biogra-

phy and life writing. In particular, it will reflect on my work editing Marian Engel's writing journals or *cahiers* and Edna Staebler's diaries.

I will discuss the biographical elements of my work on life writing and what it offers beyond biography. A key figure on the Canadian literary scene from the mid 1960s to the mid 1980s, Marian Engel (1933-1985) published seven novels, two collections of short stories, and numerous newspaper and magazine articles and essays. Among literary honours and prizes, Engel won the Governor General Award in 1976 for her novel *Bear*. A literary activist, Engel was the first chair of the Writers' Union of Canada, and a leading lobbyist for Public Lending Rights. Her notebooks or *cahiers*, which she wrote throughout her life, illuminate both her writing and her life.

Edna Staebler (born 1906) is widely known as the author of a unique style of cookbook writing whose insights into cultural communities qualify them as folk literature or social history. Staebler was also an award-winning literary journalist and author as well as an indefatigable and prolific diarist. The Edna Staebler Archive contains 80 years of voluminous material, representing a major life long writing project and a significant example of life writing.

Peter Waite:

The Canadian Squire of Mickleham, Surrey: R.B. Bennett in Britain, 1938-1947

R.B. Bennett (1870-1947) was endowed with ambition, brains, temper and vast reserves of energy; from humble beginnings he had become rich. As Prime Minister of Canada 1930-1935, the worst years of the Depression, he had driven himself hard, had taken on much of the weight of decisions and solutions, sometimes dragging a reluctant Conservative party with him. Bennett and party suffered badly in the election of 1935. The Conservatives went from a 1930 standing of 137 seats in the 245-seat House of Commons to a mere 40

in October 1935. An informed and perceptive Leader of the Opposition, Bennett carried on until 1938, when he resigned the leadership and departed Canada to live in Britain.

That decision was something that for thirty years had never been far from his mind. He had gone overseas first about 1905, then in 1910 to help Max Aitken get elected to the British House of Commons. He was in Britain on several visits during the war on behalf of the Canadian Government, and in the 1920s he was overseas every year, sometimes twice, on business legal or financial.

It is a long way from Calgary to London; Bennett seems to have thought nothing of it. He liked trains, he loved the sea; his father and grandfather had been shipbuilders in Hopewell Cape, New Brunswick and his brother Ronald was a sea captain. Those 6-day voyages on the Atlantic--he was rarely seasick-- were Bennett's dolce far niente.

In 1938 he bought a run-down 93-acre estate, Juniper Hill, near Box Hill in Surrey and proceeded to restore it. He became a J.P., sat regularly on the Bench of Surrey Magistrates in Dorking, and was soon an integral part of the community of Mickleham, liked and respected. In 1941 at Beaverbrook's urging Churchill recommended him for a Viscounty; he was appreciated in the Lords, for he brought a great store of information about the Commonwealth.

In 1936 he visited New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa. His contacts in Britain were vast; he was on boards of organizations and charities innumerable. He was in London three to five days a week. Beaverbrook in *Friends* gives the impression that Bennett's life in Britain was lonely and rather sad; the evidence in the voluminous Bennett Papers suggests the opposite: that Bennett enjoyed his British life, war work and all, loved his gardens and his walks at Juniper Hill.

Bennett is the only Canadian prime minister buried abroad, in St. Michael's churchyard, Mickleham. That is where he wanted to be.

Tracy Ware:

Margaret Laurence's *The Prophet's Camel Bell* and the Question of Complicity

Margaret Laurence immediately establishes that *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963) will concern two kinds of journey: a material one from London to Somalia, and a spiritual one from innocence to this painful insight: "in your excitement at the trip, the last thing in the world that would occur to you is that the strangest glimpses you may have of any creature in the distant lands will be those you catch of yourself" (10). The insight is painful because it leads Laurence from simply attacking imperialism to admitting her complicity in it. The summary chapter on "The Imperialists" contains this remarkable admission: "This was something of an irony for me, to have started out in righteous disapproval of the empire-builders, and to have been forced at last to recognize that I, too, had been of that company" (251). Writing just before separating from her husband, she could have played down her complicity by emphasizing her husband's agency in taking her to Africa in the first place. Such is the tactic of James King, Laurence's biographer. But one of Laurence's main points about the psychology of imperialism, which she understands in the terms of O. Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban*, is that Africa is attractive precisely because it is unfamiliar. Margaret Laurence also feels that attraction, and *The Prophet's Camel Bell* becomes a less interesting book if we turn the division within her into a difference between her and her husband.

Donez Xiques:

The (Un)reliability of Memoir: Laurence's *Dance on the Earth*

For a biographer of Margaret Laurence, there is much of interest in her memoirs *Dance on the Earth*. Although that book is not as compelling as Laurence's best fiction or some of her collected essays in *Heart of a Stranger*, nevertheless it is an

important autobiographical document, albeit a tantalizing one. It is also one which raises questions about the (un)reliability of memoir in general, as well as questions about Margaret Laurence's own memoirs; for example: selectivity, omission, chronology, emphases, and interpretation.

Since Margaret Laurence was revered and respected by so many Canadians, there is, moreover, a tendency to accept her memoirs as accurate. This paper, which is based on research that I have done over the past ten years for a new literary study focused on her early years, *Margaret Laurence: The Making of a Writer*, endeavors to draw out the broader implication of these challenging issues for a biographer.

Biographical Notes

Margaret Banks attended Bishop's University and the University of Toronto where she obtained her PhD. She is currently Professor Emeritus (Law) at the University of Western Ontario. In addition to numerous articles and books in Canadian legal and constitutional history, she is the author of *Edward Blake, Irish Nationalist: A Canadian Statesman in Irish Politics, 1892-1907* and *Sir John George Bourinot, Victorian Canadian: His Life, Times, and Legacy*.

Elsbeth Cameron taught English and Canadian Studies at Concordia University from 1970-1977 and at the University of Toronto from 1977-1999. She directed Canadian Studies programmes at both institutions. She is the author of three major award-winning biographies: *Hugh MacLennan: A Writer's Life* (1981); *Irving Layton: A Portrait* (1985); *Earle Birney: A Life* (1994). She has also published several award-winning profiles of Canadian cultural figures, such as Veronica Tennant, Anne Murray, Pierre Berton, Timothy Findley and Peter Newman. Her memoir *No Previous Experience* appeared in 1997.

June Corman teaches at Brock University and is currently finishing an SSHRC funded research project on women who taught in the prairies during World War II and in the immedi-

ate post-war period. She recently published a book with co-author Meg Luxton entitled *Getting By in Hard Times* (University of Toronto Press, 2001).

Claude Denis is Associate Professor, Faculté Saint-Jean, University of Alberta and Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Ottawa. He is the author of *We are not you: First Nations and Canadian modernity* (Broadview, 1997).

Diane Doneff is Executive Director and Founder of Women's Addiction Recovery Mediation (W.A.R.M.) in Fort Erie, Ontario. W.A.R.M. is a not-for-profit, community based, multi-dimensional addiction related service provider for women and their families. Diane is a certified chemical dependency counselor who works to improve the quality of women's lives by delivering programs, counseling, education, and support that leads to social and behavioral change. In addition to sharing her life as a recovering alcoholic and addict, Diane delivers a powerful message of hope, and offers strategies for making a difference in her community.

After spending six years as a lecturer in the Department of Music at University College Dublin, **Robin Elliott** returned to Canada this year to become the Jean A. Chalmers Professor of Canadian Music at the University of Toronto. He co-edited and contributed two biographical chapters to the book *Istvan Anhalt: Pathways and Memory* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

Philip Girard is Associate Dean (Graduate Studies and Research) in the Faculty of Law at Dalhousie University, where he is cross-appointed in History and Canadian Studies. Prior to embarking on a biography of Bora Laskin his work centred on the legal history of **Atlantic Canada and on Canadian legal culture**.

Joanne Goodyear is a nurse consultant at Hope Place, which is a residential Women's Treatment Centre in Milton Ontario. The programs at Hope Place are designed to improve the

lives of women who seek freedom from alcohol, drug dependencies, and other addictions. Joanne is the Program Director for the Early Childhood Development Project working with pregnant addicts and their children. In addition to her own remarkable story of recovery, Joanne delivers presentations and workshops on Time Management and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Ann Marie Guilmette is an Associate Professor in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, and Women's Studies Program at Brock University. She earned her Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of Windsor in 1980. She offers courses in leisure education, play and culture, therapeutic benefits of humour, leisure research, and leisure studies. She is past-President of The Association for the Study of Play (TASP), and the International Society for Humor Studies (ISHS). She recently received the Rosalind Blauer Award from Brock University for her research on women's issues. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre. She is the editor of three books on sport, play, and recreation, as well as numerous other publications.

Kathryn Harvey is a recovering academic who will deposit her doctoral thesis this month at McGill University. She has a particular passion for people's stories and is now trying to start up a history/conservation group in the neighbourhood of Mile End where she lives in Montreal. She is also working on another project: doctors as urban planners. The influence of doctors on the built environment in Montreal especially during the years of the tuberculosis epidemic.

Charles Levi was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but has spent most of his life in Toronto. A graduate of both the University of Toronto and York University, he was the Senior Researcher on the University of Toronto History Project, which culminated in Martin Friedland's *The University of Toronto: A History*, published in 2002. Dr. Levi's own book, *Comings and Goings*, will be published by McGill-Queen's

University Press in 2002. Dr. Levi's other research credits include Elspeth Cameron's *Earl Birney: A Life*, and Michiel Horn's *Academic Freedom in Canada*. Dr. Levi is currently an independent scholar in Toronto seeking a full-time academic posting.

Diana Lobb recently completed her Masters degree at the University of Guelph with the submission of her thesis "Human Being: An Analysis of Paul Gilroy's *Against Race* as a Challenge to Postcolonial Research." Taking up her Doctoral studies at the University of Waterloo, she will continue her research into the construction of notions of community at the sub-, supra- and national levels.

Ged Martin was educated during the vacations from Cambridge University where he took First Class Honours in History in 1967, followed by a doctorate in 1972. He was a Fellow of Magdalene College Cambridge 1970-72, and Research Fellow in History at the Australian National University in Canberra from 1972 to 1977. From 1977 to 1983 he taught at University College Cork, before becoming Director of the Centre of Canadian Studies at Edinburgh. He held the Chair of Canadian Studies at Edinburgh University from 1996 until his retirement in 2001. He now lives in County Waterford. His books include *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation 1837-1867* (1995); *The Cambridge Union and Ireland 1815-1914* (2000); *Australia, New Zealand and Federation 1883-1901* (2001). He is a contributor to the forthcoming *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* in the UK, and has written biographical essays on Sir Francis Bond Head, Parnell and Asquith.

Kevin McCabe's work on Canadian Literature includes editing two books on Lucy Maud Montgomery, as well as editing and publishing a collection of Victorian-Edwardian verse about places in the Niagara Peninsula. He has also done research on other Late Romantic Canadian poets and novelists, including Archibald Lampman and Marian Keith.

Shelley McKellar is an historian of medicine and technology, interested in the interaction and dynamics of medicine, technology and society, particularly the processes of innovation and change. Her current research projects include: the history of the iron lung; artificial hearts and the body as machine; women surgeons and gender barriers in medical education and practice; as well as the role of the media in shaping and reflecting public understanding of science, medicine and technology. Her first book, *Surgical Limits: The Life of Gordon Murray*, is forthcoming from the University of Toronto Press in early 2003. She currently teaches at McMaster University.

Mary Jane Miller turned from publishing articles in the 60s and 70s on Canadian plays and theatres to television in 1979. Her first book *Turn up the Contrast: CBC television drama since 1952* (1987) mapped the accomplishments and failures of the CBC's series and anthologies and specials. The second *Rewind and Search: makers and decision makers of CBC television drama* interwove interviews with 40 people, commentary and analysis of the policy and ethos of the CBC. The next three with an overall title of *Outside Looking In: the Representation of First Nations in Canadian television drama*, from which her paper comes, analyses what the dominant society has told itself about Aboriginal and Metis issues and culture - a mixed record - from 1952 to 2003. The first book on television series has been submitted to McGill-Queens University Press. The second is on historical representations. The third is an overview of four decades of the representation of First Nations and Metis by Canadian television.

Michael Peterman teaches English and Canadian Studies at Trent University where he is currently Principal of Catharine Parr Traill College. He has written and edited books on Willa Cather, Susanna Moodie, Catharine Parr Traill, Robertson Davies and Timothy Findley. His current work involves research into the work and lives of two 19th-century Anglo-Irish-Canadian writers, Isabella Valancy Crawford and James McCarroll.

Lynette Plett is entering her 3rd year of doctoral studies in the History of Education program at OISE/UT. In her Master of Education thesis she examined the Manitoba woman suffrage movement for its adult education components. For her doctoral dissertation, Lynette is researching and writing the life and works of Francis Marion Beynon, one of the lesser known leaders in Manitoba's woman suffrage and other social reform movements.

Robert Thacker is Professor of Canadian Studies and English at St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York. He compiled the Munro bibliography published in *The Annotated Bibliography of Canada's Major Authors* (1984) and most recently, he edited *The Rest of the Story: Critical Essays on Alice Munro* (1999). His current project is *Alice Munro: A Critical Biography*, for which he has secured Ms. Munro's cooperation. From 1994-2002, Thacker was the Editor of *The American Review of Canadian Studies*.

Gerald Tulchinsky is Professor Emeritus at Queen's University. He is the author of *The River Barons, Taking Root: The Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community* and *Branching Out: the Transformation of the Canadian Jewish Community*. His current project is a SSHRC-supported biography of J.B. Salsberg.

Christl Verduyn teaches Canadian literature, Canadian Studies, and Women's Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo. Her research interests include Canadian and Québécois women's writing and criticism, multiculturalism and minority writing, life writing and interdisciplinary approaches to literature. Her books include *Margaret Laurence: An Appreciation* (1988); *Dear Marian, Dear Hugh: The MacLennan-Engel Correspondence* (1995); *Lifelines: Marian Engel's Writing* (1995), awarded the Gabrielle Roy Book Prize; *Literary Pluralities* (1998); *Marian Engel's Notebooks* (1999); *Essays on Aritha van Herk* (2001); and with D. Schaub, *Identity, Community and Nation: Essays on Canadian Literature* (2002). Before joining the faculty at Laurier in 2000, Christl Verduyn taught at Trent University, where

