Illustration
Reid, George Agnew/ARCHIVES NATIONALES DU CANADA/C-011016

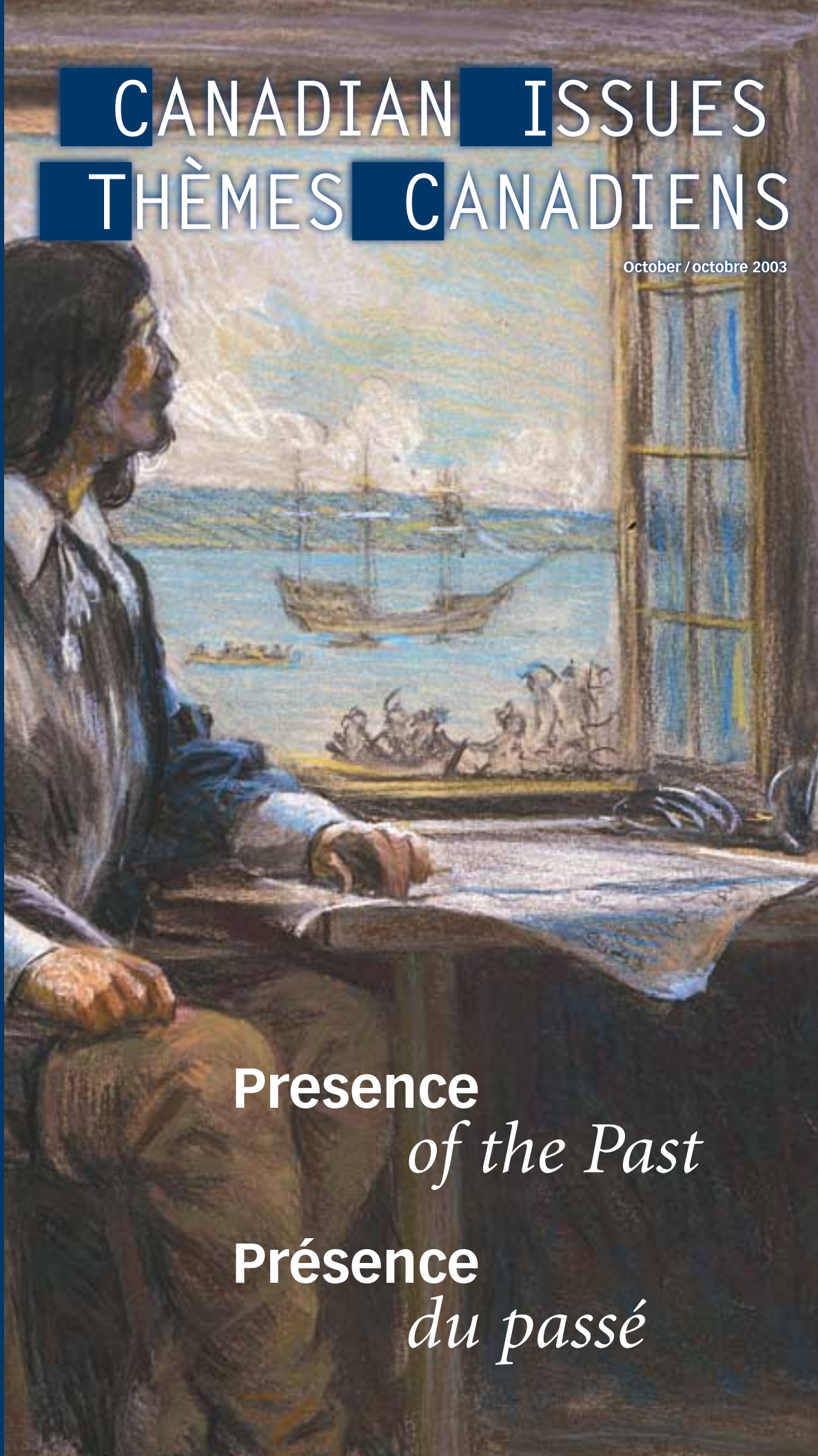
$5.95

0 61399 70412 2 10

on display until November 1st, 2003
disponible jusqu'au 1er novembre 2003

CANADIAN ISSUES
THÈMES CANADIENS

October / octobre 2003



Presence *of the Past*

Présence *du passé*

Canadian Heritage | Patrimoine canadien

Our Culture
Our Heritage
Our Stories

Our culture and heritage are the reflection of our dreams, our values and our way of life. That's how we see ourselves, and how we want the world to see us. They connect us with our past, with our future — and with one another.

Our culture, our heritage.
That's who we are.

For more information on Canadian Heritage programs and services
www.canadianheritage.gc.ca

Notre culture
Notre patrimoine
Nos histoires

Notre patrimoine et notre culture sont le reflet de ce que nous avons été, de ce que nous sommes et de ce que nous voulons devenir. Ils sont le miroir de nos valeurs, de nos rêves et
de nos aspirations. Ils créent des liens qui nous unissent et qui célèbrent nos différences.

Notre culture, notre patrimoine.
Le reflet de ce que nous sommes.

Pour plus de renseignements sur les programmes et services de Patrimoine canadien
www.patrimoinecanadien.gc.ca

Canada

CANADIAN ISSUES
THÈMES CANADIENS

October 2003 Octobre

Canadian Issues is published by
Thèmes canadiens est publié par

ACS • AEC
Association for Canadian Studies • Association d'études canadiennes

CANADIAN ISSUES
THÈMES CANADIENS

EDITOR / RÉDACTEUR EN CHEF
Lorraine Ouimet

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS / ASSISTANTES ÉDITORIAUX
Natalie Ouimet, Catherine Lachance

DESIGN / GRAPHISME
Bang! Marketing (514) 849-2264 – 1-888-942-BANG
info@bang-marketing.com

ADVERTISING / PUBLICITÉ
lorraine.ouimet@acs-aec.ca
514-987-7784

DISTRIBUTION
Gordon and Gotch Periodicals Inc.
110 Jardin Drive, Unit 11
Concord Ontario L4K 4R4

CITC/ACS STREET ADDRESS / ADRESSE CIVIQUE CITC/AEC
209 St. Catherine E., V-5140, UQAM, Montréal (Que) H3C 3P8
Tel/Tél: (514) 987-7784 – Fax: (514) 987-3481
E-mail/Courriel: general@acs-aec.ca

CANADIAN ISSUES / THÈMES CANADIENS (CITC) – ISSN 0318-8442
CONVENTION POSTE PUBLICATION, 1470485

CITC is a bimonthly publication of the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS). It is distributed free of charge to individual and institutional members of the Association. CITC is a bilingual publication. All material prepared by the ACS is published in both French and English. All other articles are published in the language in which they are written. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ACS. The Association for Canadian Studies is a voluntary non-profit organization. It seeks to expand and disseminate knowledge about Canada through teaching, research and publications. The ACS is a scholarly society and a member of the Humanities and Social Science Federation of Canada. The ACS is also a founding member of the International Council for Canadian Studies.

CITC est une publication bi-mensuelle de l'Association d'études canadiennes (AEC). It est distribué gratuitement aux membres de l'Association. CITC est une publication bilingue. Tous les textes émanant de l'Association sont publiés en français et en anglais. Tous les autres textes sont publiés dans la langue d'origine. Les collaborateurs et collaboratrices de CITC sont entièrement responsables des idées et opinions exprimées dans leurs articles. L'Association d'études canadiennes est un organisme pan-canadien à but non lucratif dont l'objectif est de promouvoir l'enseignement, la recherche et les publications sur le Canada. L'AEC est une société savante, membre de la Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines et sociales. Elle est également membre fondateur du Conseil international d'études canadiennes.

CITC acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canadian Studies Programme of the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Magazine Fund for this project.

CITC bénéficie de l'appui financier du Gouvernement du Canada par le biais du Programme d'études canadiennes du ministère du Patrimoine canadien et Le Fonds du Canada pour les magazines pour ce projet.

LETTERS/LETTRES

Comments on this edition of Canadian Issues?
We want to hear from you.

Write to Canadian Issues – Letters, ACS, a/s UQAM, V-5140, P.O. Box 8888, succ. Centre-ville, Montreal (Quebec) Canada, H3C 3P8. Or e-mail us at <robert.israel@acs-aec.ca> Your letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Des commentaires sur ce numéro ?
Écrivez-nous à Thèmes canadiens

Lettres, AEC, a/s UQAM, V-5140, C.P. 8888, succ. Centre-ville, Montréal (Québec) Canada, H3C 3P8. Ou par courriel au <robert.israel@acs-aec.ca> Vos lettres peuvent êtres modifiées pour des raisons éditoriales.

Ever since Jack Granatstein asked *Who Killed Canadian History?* the corpse has complicated the homicide investigation by showing troublesome signs of life. Consequently, the alleged perpetrators of the evil deed may get off with lesser charges, or possibly a hung jury.

Undaunted, the Dominion Institute regularly pronounces Canadians woefully ignorant of our past, as evident from an inability to answer simple questions posed in their quizzes. Our national newspapers, as well as those that serve fragments of the nation that apparently exist beyond Toronto, and our media conglomerates, public and private, vie with one another to report the grisly results of our woeful neglect of our history, as well as to tend the wounds with help from distinguished experts. We are frequently reminded of what we do not know, with the implication that this lacuna will ultimately lead to our demise as a nation, if not some personal calamity. Without necessarily substituting Pollyanna for Clio as inspiration for what follows, me thinks these folk doth protest too much.

On the eve of another national conference on the teaching of history, it may be appropriate to consider some signs of life, as well as lingering afflictions. At the local, regional and national level, Canadians appear to be interested in history, whether this interest is expressed by television viewership for specials and series, sales of books, attendance at museums and events, research in genealogy, or responses to opinion polls. The government of Canada has responded to this popular mood with an "initiative" that has thus far yielded a national portrait gallery and a "Canada History Centre." Meanwhile, an expanded Canadian War Museum is under construction and a redefined Library and Archives of Canada is being elaborated. Projects associated with the preservation and celebration of diverse aspects of our past are underway across the country, often sustained by enthusiastic volunteers.

Another consistent finding in surveys is that Canadians apparently favour more teaching of Canadian history in our schools. These results are encouraging, though such polls rarely ask respondents to choose what would be dropped from the curriculum to make way for additional hours of historical education or what funds would be allocated to provide the resources necessary to sustain this remedial effort. There is also a blithe tendency to ignore provincial responsibility for education, particularly when suggestions for national standards for the teaching of history and civics are contemplated.

Beyond these complications in the process of translating good intentions into good deeds, there remain the multiple problems associated with the definition of "history" and consequently with the question of how it should be taught and learned, whether in the classroom or elsewhere.

For some commentators and policy-makers, "history" may be equated with wonderfully nebulous concepts such as individual or collective memory, heritage and commemoration – or simply with an understanding of the past so as to provide "lessons" for the present or future. For teachers and students of history, challenges and skills associated with methodology, including identification, investigation and evaluation of sources, likely are more vital features of historical knowledge than familiarity with key facts. In other words, there are differences about the desired outcome, which may not be verifiable in a national opinion poll.

As the contributors to this magazine attest, motivation and purpose for contemplating our past vary considerably with background and circumstances. What would make sense as a focus or pedagogical tool in one setting in this diverse country would be nonsensical in another.

In fact, the varied subjects that are investigated and taught as "history" may be the best evidence that the victim may have survived those numerous assaults.

Hector Mackenzie
President, ACS

BIOGRAPHIES IN THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

ABSTRACT

Jean Barman makes a case for using biography as a way to teach history to the young, because the genre emphasizes aspects of contemporary culture that youth respond to, such as our culture's infatuation with "personality." She outlines a variety of other advantages that the biographical genre possesses in terms of its utility and validity as a valuable source of historical knowledge.

"Why study the past?" she says. "It's dead and gone. Or, at least, it's old." Old is not good. As a society, we have come to value the young, the hip, the fashionable. We focus on personality, but want our personalities to conform to a fairly narrow set of values. Today's students cannot be faulted for accepting the images all around them as the way to think about their education. We are all complicit.

The dilemma is very real. We cannot pretend it does not exist. Over the past several years, Canadians have reached a consensus on the need for the young to be made more aware of their history and heritage, but we have yet to agree on how to bring this about. We will gain nothing, except for a disgruntled generation of young people, by forcing our view of Canada's history onto students through required courses and texts that respond to our criteria.

If we are to effect change, we must treat the young with respect rather than to impose our preferences on them. We need to explore ways to give meaning to the past that meet students on their own terms. One of these ways is through biographies.

The genre of biography has changed dramatically over the past several decades. Traditionally, biography was a print media recounting the lives of persons the dominant society considered to be important politically or socially. The genre has expanded in three directions. The first seeks to retrieving lives previously unrecognized or undervalued, as with women, persons of colour, and just plain folk. The second considers persons still alive with exploits of interest to others, being biographies-in-process, so to speak. The third disseminates these lives through a greater variety of forms. No longer only published texts, biographies turn up on television, often at a high quality. Almost all of us have watched CBC 'Life and Times' and A&E's 'Biography.' Biographies are also texts in process, as with family histories and genealogies on the web.

Biographies possess several kinds of utility for the teaching of history. First, they take advantage of the general interest in personality. Precisely because biographies are about individuals, they give credibility to the past. At the same time, biographies offer an entryway into larger issues of time and place. Every person's life occurs within a context. Third, because biographies are about life cycles, they permit us to broaden our interpretations of the past to encompass the young on the way to growing old. Fourth and very importantly, biographies possess the potential to return the past to the young.

Biographies As Giving Credibility to the Past

All of us, old and young, have lives. However distinctive our personalities may be, our lives possess an inherent similarity. We are born, we live, we die. Our students may be convinced they will be forever young, but that does not diminish their awareness of middle and old age through observing their parents, grandparents, and–dare I add?–teachers.

Because biographies speak to individual lives, they possess a certain credibility. Be it a present – day celebrity whose rise to fame is chronicled on television or a prime minister whose career extends to hundreds of pages, their stories are joined by attention to the life cycle. We can relate to the sequence of events. We can identify with the elements of pathos and triumph that mark these lives, just as they do our own.

The conviction that biographies can give credibility to the past has been responsible for an impressive new series of books that do precisely that. When 'The Quest Library' was conceived half a dozen years ago, no one could have predicted its success. The premise was that, for all of the

JEAN BARMAN

Jean Barman teaches in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia and writes about British Columbian and Canadian history. She has just completed a trio of biographies: Constance Lindsay Skinner: Writing on the Frontier (University of Toronto Press, 2002), Sojourning Sisters: The Lives and Letters of Jessie and Annie McQueen (University of Toronto Press, 2003), and The Worth of an Everyday Woman: Maria Mahoi of the Islands (New Star, 2004).

interest in multimedia, the young still like to sit down with a good book (and this before the Harry Potter phenomenon). XYZ Publishing of Montreal got it right.

The goal was to publish 24 biographies for young people, each in English and French, of Canadians whose lives have made a difference. Authors were to pay particular attention to giving their subject personality that extends across the life span. Subjects of the volumes appearing so far have combined key politicians like Wilfrid Laurier, William Lyon Mackenzie King, Tommy Douglas, and John Diefenbaker with such agents of change as Frederick Banting, Agnes McPhail, Nellie McClung, and Norman Bethune; public intellectuals like George Grant and Marshall McLuhan; and artists such as Pauline Johnson and Emily Carr. There's also been room for contentious coal mining magnate Robert Dunsmuir, explorers John Franklin and George Mercer Dawson, mountaineer Phyllis Munday, and hockey hero Jacques Plante. As uniformly positive reviews attest, biographies directed toward the young can be a powerful vehicle for giving credibility to the past.

Biographies do not just speak to individual lives, they raise larger issues. Among historians, it is very often the case that our interest in abstract themes and topics becomes so overgeneralized and overtheorized that the average reader, especially the young, simply tunes us out. Integration of the human element gives us a means to achieve our goals that also attracts readers to our texts. Where a person is at the centre, not only do concepts become more accessible, but the course of a human life may well lead into the byways of society, thought, and culture, and thereby to the identification of new themes and issues, which, if viewed in the abstract, might have been overlooked or dismissed as unimportant.

A biographical approach makes sense, not just because of the individual but for the light that person's character and life throws on the larger themes and issues of human existence and on the dynamics and structures of the society at the time. The temptation has been, in some traditional writing at least, to view persons deemed especially important, the Churchills and the Hitlers of the day, as transcending their settings. Structure and agency always interact. This interplay between them is acknowledged in the title of the CBC's 'Life and Times,' entering its eighth session in 2003.

One of the consequences of the turn toward social history has been to draw ordinary people into Canada's past. The emphasis heightens our understanding that all persons, however unimportant they might at first thought appear, reflect and affect larger contexts. I learned this lesson first hand from Jessie and Annie McQueen, daughters in an everyday Maritimes family, whose extensive correspondence will soon be made available on the web by the History Atlantica Project at the University of New Brunswick. Shortly after the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1886, the McQueen sisters took the train west to British Columbia to teach. They brought with them not just their belongings, but a Scot Presbyterian rural upbringing consistent with the concept of Canada being expounded in the public domain by the leading men of the day.

Jessie and Annie McQueen were as powerful as their male counterparts, I argue in *Sojourning Sisters* (University of Toronto Press, 2003), in promoting a Canadian identity. Perhaps more so because their acts of kindness and gentle persuasion went largely unchallenged by those around them, Jessie and Annie's story is as much about the making of Canada and about British Columbia becoming part of a nation to which it had previously only nominally belonged, as it is about two individuals. Biographies, be they of persons considered important or not, can open up important themes in Canada's history.

When 'The Quest Library' was conceived half a dozen years ago, no one could have predicted its success. The premise was that, for all of the interest in multimedia, the young still like to sit down with a good book (and this before the Harry Potter phenomenon).

Biographies As Returning the Young to the Past

Biographies offer, thirdly, an opportunity to return the young to the past. We tend to forget that many of the feats we celebrate in Canada's history were accomplished in youth and young adulthood. Life cycles played themselves out differently in past times. Not only did most persons enter the work world much earlier, but they didn't live as long.

One way to return the young to the past it to treat the life cycle as a whole rather than to concentrate on a person's most senior accomplishments. It was not just men with their greater freedom of action historically, but women who often determined from a young age to make life on their own terms. Pauline Johnson was still in her early 20's when she began to perform across Ontario in the mid-1880s, Emily Carr 18 when she headed off from Victoria to art school in San Francisco in 1890. Agnes McPhail was only 31 when, in 1922, she got herself elected to Parliament from Manitoba.

Another way to return the young to the past is through focusing explicitly on that stage in the life cycle. In working with future teachers, I've very successfully

constructed an assignment around three British Columbia classics: Sing Lim, *West Coast Chinese Boy* (Tundra, 1979), Shizuye Takashima, *A Child in Prison Camp* (Tundra, 1971), and Shirley Sterling, *My Name is Seepeetza* (Groundwood, 1992). The books introduce three important aspects of Canada's history–racism toward immigrants from China, the detention of persons of Japanese descent during World War II, and the uses and abuses of residential schools–through the eyes of a child. Each of these books is a semi-fictionalized biography intended for children and young people that my students can take into their own classrooms as entryways to teaching about the past.

Biographies As Returning the Past to the Young

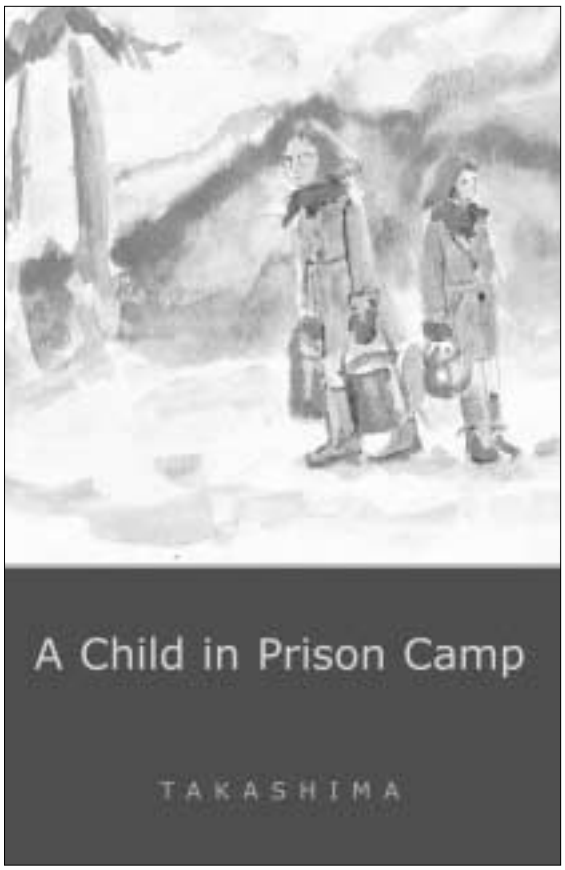
It is not sufficient to return the young to the past; we also need to return the past to the young. Just as we each have stories to tell, so do our students, both about themselves and their families and about persons of interest they have never met.

The expansion of biography as a genre makes it particularly accessible to students. They can interview family members on tape, a well-described strategy (see, for instance, Glenn Whitman, "Teaching Students How to Be Historians: An Oral History Project for the Secondary School Classroom," *History Teacher* 33, 4 [2000]: 469-81). Students can delve into context through historical and genealogical materials available on the web. Canada's Digital Collections Program funded by Industry Canada contains a wealth of excellent sites directed toward the young.

End products can be diverse. I recently had a student produce an excellent mini-video interrogating the meaning that the military service held for her father. With his permission, she filmed him attending a memorial service and talked to him at length about his experiences. She read extensively about the actions in which he participated. The end result incorporated photos and documents into a powerful interpretation of one segment of one man's life.

The process of returning the past to the young can be rewarding to them on several levels. As well as coming to understand the interplay of structure and agency in a person's life, they acquire basic research skills. Historian E.H. Carr perceptively observed four decades ago how facts "are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean, and what the historian catches will depend, partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use – these two facts being, of course, determined by what kind of fish he wants to catch." Carr rightly concluded that, "by and large, the historian will get the kinds of facts he wants" (*What is History?*, 1961, p. 23). The choices that have to be made in retrieving a life, be it of a family member or celebrity, provide an excellent means for students to understand the full extent to which the past, as is the present, is continuously being constructed by all of us, themselves included.

Teaching and learning is a complex, subjective interaction. For all of biographies' strengths, they are not a panacea to teaching about the past. They have to be assessed by the same criteria we apply to all other materials. As we do so, we want to reflect on biographies' utility for giving credibility to the past, raising larger issues, returning the young to the past, and the past to the young.



Canadian Studies Youth Forum

Forum de la Jeunesse en Études Canadiennes

University College, University of Toronto
November 28-30 novembre 2003

The Association for Canadian Studies, in partnership with the Canadian Studies Program at University College, University of Toronto, is hosting a National Forum for Canadian Studies students from across Canada. The Youth Forum will address the challenges & strengths of the interdisciplinary fields of Canadian Studies. It will give students the opportunity to network with each other and also to hear from Canadian Studies graduate students and alumnus about post-graduation options.

Themes

- Interdisciplinary Nature of Canadian Studies
- Issues on the Future of Canadian Studies
- New Directions / New Curriculum
- Upcoming Issues / Trends in Canadian Studies Research
- Local/Regional/National Canadian Studies
- Demographics of Canadian Studies Students
- Presentation of Current Research
- Student Panel - needs, interests, concerns...
- Canadian Studies Network
- Alumnus Panel
- Career Speakers (government, media/journalism, academia, polling firm, private industry and cultural industry)

Registration	
ACS Student Member	15$
ACS Regular Member	40$
Non-member	75$

Please visit the ACS web site at
www.acs-aec.ca
to fill out the registration form or contact Natalie Ouimet at natalie.ouimet@acs-aec.ca or (514) 987-7784, etx. 5.

A C S • A E C
Association for Canadian Studies • Association d'études canadiennes

L'Association d'études canadiennes, en partenariat avec le programme d'études canadiennes du University College, Université de Toronto, est fière d'organiser un forum national pour les étudiants des programmes d'études canadiennes à travers le Canada. Le forum de la jeunesse se propose d'explorer les gains et défis des champs interdisciplinaires des études canadiennes. Il donnera l'occasion aux étudiants et étudiantes du premier cycle de se rencontrer et d'entrer en relation avec des individus du deuxième et troisième cycle, de même qu'avec des bacheliers. Les étudiants pourront ainsi explorer les avenues possibles après l'obtention de leur diplôme.

Thèmes

- Le caractère interdisciplinaire des études canadiennes
- Sujets concernant l'avenir des études canadiennes
- Nouvelles directions / Nouveaux programmes
- Thèmes à venir / Tendances de recherche en études canadiennes
- Études canadiennes au niveau local, régional et national
- Étude démographique des étudiants et étudiantes en études canadiennes
- Présentation des recherches en cours
- Séance plénière avec des étudiants : besoins, intérêts, préoccupations...
- Réseau d'études canadiennes
- Séance plénière avec des bacheliers
- Séance plénière avec des professionnels (gouvernement, média/journalisme, académie, firme de sondage, secteur privé et secteur public)

Frais d'inscription	
Membre étudiant de l'AEC	15$
Membre régulier de l'AEC	40$
Non-membre	75$

Veuillez visiter le site web de l'AEC à
www.acs-aec.ca
afin de remplir le formulaire d'inscription ou encore, veuillez communiquer avec Natalie Ouimet à natalie.ouimet@acs-aec.ca ou au (514) 987-7784, poste 5.

BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY: REFLECTIONS OF A BIOGRAPHER-HISTORIAN

ABSTRACT

"Biography, claims Peter Waite, is at the core of history." In this essay, the author demonstrates – and this through the sharing of some of his personal experiences as a biographer – that the personal is indeed thoroughly intertwined with the social and the political. Any historical account of great men and women must consider those moments and events in human life which induce the sometimes harsh, sometimes subtle changes in character, changes which then go on to alter the course of history. Waite convinces us that "one's preoccupation with the private man or woman" may be "an insidious delight," but it very well may justify the "invasion of privacy by flaunting the banner of historical truth."

PETER B. WAITE
Peter Waite is Professor Emeritus in the Department of History at Dalhousie University.

Much history is written and taught as if it were a set of abstractions, movements, forces, trends, conflicts. The epitome is the *Annales* school in France which likes computer studies of micro-biography, a kind of double helix, programming analyses vertically through two or three generations, or horizontally across a census. These are legitimate enough; the problem with them is their dehumanization of history, a surfeit of method for a minimum of life. Recent French critics have called it "l'émiettement de l'histoire," the crumbling away of history into separate, discrete bits, devoid of holistic meaning.

For there are no movements, no forces, no trends, none that is apart from men and women. They make the movements, the forces, the trends. They are society. They may behave differently as individuals, or pairs, or groups, or crowds; psychology and sociology try to answer such questions and history must take account of them. But there can be no history without men and women. Mostly they leave no records; the great challenge to the historian is to chronicle honestly those who do, with all the evidence one can gather, all the skill one can bring to bear. It's a great enterprise to try to recover something of the past, its charm, its brutality, certainly its character, long or newly gone.

Biographies make the very stuff and texture of history. Sometimes writing a biography is thought to be easy; there are no rules; biography is whatever those who do it think it is. It is much easier than writing fiction; it requires no invention, artistic or any other kind. The plot is made to order: the subject was born, educated, married, worked and died. Anyone can do biography.

In the English-speaking world there is probably a consensus of what a good biography ought to be. It ought to make sense of its subject. It ought to be written with Emerson's principle, that "words, when cut, should bleed." Most important of all, it ought to be a metamorphosis of the evidence, all the evidence. The private man or woman informs the public one. They explain each other. As to what evidence may be used, there is really no option: one must use all of it. Presiding over that use has to be historical discipline. You don't cook the evidence; you don't twist it; you don't invent it. Lytton Strachey has a delicious story in *Eminent Victorians* about General Gordon going into his tent with a Bible and a bottle of brandy, emerging visibly inspired by the latter. A very doubtful yarn that; Strachey thought it too good to omit. On the other hand, Strachey's description of the genre of biography he was trying to supplant has relevance:

> Those two fat volumes, with which it is our custom to commemorate the dead–who does not know them, with their ill-digested masses of material, their slipshod style, their tone of tedious panegyric, their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment, of design ? They are as familiar as the cortege of the undertaker, and wear the same air of slow, funereal barbarism.[1]

Selection of evidence will tend to colour the result. J.A. Froude wrote a masterly life of Thomas Carlyle whom he knew well. In it Jane Carlyle is portrayed as a sensitive, misunderstood wife, dominated by an unfeeling husband. Elizabeth Drew, writing 40 years later, found Jane rather shrewish; Thomas Carlyle, the hard genius of the Froude portrait, was gentle and long-suffering under a good

deal of domestic provocation. Both authors had used genuine letters, none had cooked the quotations. What happened was selection, dictated in Froude's case by his being half in love with Jane Carlyle; Elizabeth Drew, 40 years distant from all that, was more attracted to Thomas.

The discovery of new evidence has its own delights. One of the great Fathers of Confederation was George Brown, a tall, raw-boned Free Kirk Scot, who in 1844 founded the *Toronto Globe*. He came to us graduate students of the early 1950s as an unlovely covenanter, whose vast energy was given mainly to querulousness and anti-Catholicism. His constructive role in the Confederation seemed best explained as aberration. Then in 1955 came the discovery in Scotland of the Brown Papers. Brown had long been a bachelor, but in 1862 when he was 41 he met and married Anne Nelson of the Edinburgh publishing house. Head over heels in love with her, Brown wrote his new wife constantly and from those marvellous letters emerged not just a more complete Brown, but because more complete, different: loving, cheerful, even friendly. Indeed one Canadian historian suggested that the famous portrait of the Fathers of Confederation should be improved to include the "Mother" of Confederation, Anne Nelson Brown, so much had George Brown's marriage done for his amiability, personal *and* political.[2]

Analogous questions arise with Mackenzie King's diary, which surfaced after his death in 1950. Written through the years 1893-1950, there are a million words of it. What should one do with some parts of it? Does the biographer belong in bedrooms? With diaries and letters one can get there. MacGregor Dawson, King's first official biographer, faced that problem. What should he do with King's night adventures in Toronto with late and accessible ladies? Or King's agonizing afterward? Dawson simply omitted any reference to such episodes. Anyone who knew Dawson knew he was not prudish; one has to recall the context of the late 1950s when a frank disclosure of King's nocturnal affairs would have been shocking. The times can determine not only what one *can* say, but what one can *want* to say. Honest as he was, Dawson therefore called his 1959 volume of Mackenzie King "a political biography." C.P. Stacey, 14 years later in *A Very Double Life*, was less prudish and was also writing with a fairly well-developed animus.[3]

Does the biographer belong in bedrooms? With diaries and letters one can get there. MacGregor Dawson, King's first official biographer, faced that problem. What should he do with King's night adventures in Toronto with late and accessible ladies? Or King's agonizing afterward?

The problem is more serious when one is dealing with someone who has died recently, whose friends, relations, especially wives or husbands, are still around to judge or be deeply offended by the truth. William Allen White's advice to biographers was, "First, kill the widow !" That one ought not to seriously harm the living is a proposition right to assert. But what is harm ? Families do not always like to see family truth in cold print. The choice may be between keeping on good terms with the friends and relations of the subject and so failing one's duty, or taking the more ruthless position, risking anger and anguish in the belief that the honesty of the portrait is in the long run its own reward.

Perhaps one might illustrate from experience. The University of British Columbia wanted a biography of its famous President Larry MacKenzie (1944-1962). He was born in Nova Scotia in 1894 and died in Vancouver in 1986. He was very much alive in 1976 when the biography was being considered. When we met I said to him, "If UBC and you want hagiography, you won't get it from me. There are people who can do it but I'm not one. I would have to write you as I see the evidence." Larry was cheerful and irreverent. "I don't give a damn what you write."[4]

He had a huge run of papers, 200 feet of shelf space in the UBC Archives, and they comprehended both the public and the private man. Among them was a fat bundle of letters in an attractive square-cut hand, from a young woman whom he met when he was in Geneva in 1925-6. She was Mary Alice ("Polly") Duggan of New York, her father a professor of International Law. She was abroad perfecting her French and German. Polly was 22 years old, beautiful, brilliant. Her mind came at one like ringing steel. Larry was 31 years old, an age when love, like measles, starts to hit harder. Larry kept everything from her pen, even delicious late night notes. "I'm free tomorrow evening Friday, and you can have it all if you want. I *hope* you do." Or, "Larry dear–It's such a lovely night–Come & walk with me...whistle in the road next to the garden...My light will be off. Love P."[5] Ere long Larry offered marriage; to that Polly hesitated for an agonizing year, then said no. In 1928 she married someone else. As soon as he knew of her marriage, Larry, now a young professor of International Law at the University of Toronto, married Margaret Thomas. Larry and Polly each married others. Within a year Polly was regretting it. Perhaps they both were. It was not easy for Margaret Thomas either. One day, a year after they were married when Margaret was pregnant with their first child, she came across that bundle of Polly letters. Her letter chiding Larry is noble, in some ways devastating. "Why didn't you tell me about Polly?" she asked, "Now I know why you have not really loved me." *That* letter too is in Larry's unique archives.[6]

Larry and Polly continued corresponding for years and met from time to time. It was kept respectable but nothing could alter what they had had between them, an elegiac sense of Geneva, of *temps perdu*, of what might have been. Margaret had once read all Polly's letters; she knew they were in the UBC Archives. She did not like it. She did not much like me either. Larry didn't care. He was determined that his love for Polly would be remembered. For her part Polly was surprised and pained when she discovered she was to be mixed up in Larry's biography. She had

destroyed his letters to her; she thought Larry had destroyed hers. But he hadn't; he simply couldn't do it.

I needed her permission to publish any of her letters. She was adamant. "The truth of that love affair between Larry and me was, and is, my business and Larry's, not yours, and certainly not the public's. It is private and should stay private." I got around Polly's refusal in an odd way. Larry vividly remembered a late night meeting with Polly at a hotel in Dijon. She was distraught and in tears over the failure of some earlier love affair and he spent the night consoling her. It was an incident that said much about Larry's fundamental decency to say nothing of his self-control. I wanted that incident and had Larry's permission. Polly was revolted by the idea. She and I came to a *modus vivendi*: she would allow me to publish extracts from her notes and letters on one condition: that nothing be said of the Dijon story.[7]

But what is the biographer's duty? As I see it, it was to tell the truth, *coute que coute*. But how much of the truth? Did I have the right to cut into confidences, tenderness, sadness, for the sake of history or, to put another slant on it, to gratify some prurient taste of the public ? One answer could have been that Larry's private life had nothing to do with his career, with his professional work in International Law or his presidencies of University of New Brunswick or of UBC. By this argument biography need deal with personal life only insofar as essential to explain public actions. Is one's preoccupation with the private man or woman an insidious delight, justifying invasion of privacy by flaunting the banner of historical truth ? Was Polly right after all ?

There may be no final answer. It might depend on the man or woman. Larry was thought by some UBC colleagues to be largely devoid of emotion. Polly's opinion was quite different. Was it possible that the failed 1925-1927 love affair had numbed Larry emotionally? And how to get to the bottom of *that* ? One afternoon in Vancouver we'd been at his home talking; the house was quiet; Margaret was out. If ever I were to broach a truly awkward question it was now. "Look," I said to him, "tell me to go to hell and you won't answer this. But let me put it anyway. The result of the 1927 break-up between you and Polly was that, sturdy Pictou County Scot that you were, you took yourself in hand, battened down the hatches and drove your ship onward into the future, knowing you never could, never would, feel the same way about any other woman. Polly was everything. Isn't that what happened?"

Larry stared at me as if stunned. I had got well past his guard. The question had hit where it hurt. And it was such a splendid, such a glorious hurt! He didn't answer at once. Almost shyly in a low, husky voice, he said, "That's about it." The sadness of it caught one's breath.

I needed her permission to publish any of her letters. She was adamant. "The truth of that love affair between Larry and me was, and is, my business and Larry's, not yours, and certainly not the public's. It is private and should stay private."

One of the more difficult things to discern in history, in biography, is this juxtaposition of appearance and reality. R.B. Bennett was a confident, clever, capable, tough prime minister. But in 1932 at age 62 he writes to Hazel Colville, the lady he had fallen in love with, "I really am just a poor weak emotional man, hungry for a sight of you." Was he so? A man in love at age 62 can be full of illusions. The world is full of illusions. Appearances are the most fertile source of any. And "the play of the contingent and the unforeseen" makes history into poker with deuces wild.[8]

Change is exceedingly awkward, whether induced by chance or design. We all change; on the outside we know we do; on the inside we may think we don't; that if our lives are multifarious, our perception of ourselves may seem roughly consistent. But we change all the time. Some know it. After the death of his Halifax-born wife in 1913, W.J. Alexander (1855-1944), Professor of English at Dalhousie and Toronto, wrote a memoir of Laura Morrow Alexander for their nine children:

> Our children are growing out of her knowledge; if she could come back she would feel the shock of change; we should have to explain things to her. All this is very sad to me. I read her letters & that old life seems so remote; I feel as if I were then another person. Memory is a terribly poor substitute for the actual...I do not care how much we value what we have, we have no measure to tell how much it means to us until it is lost.[9]

Henry James used to say that biography was nothing unless it portrayed the subject's growth and change, "since it was by these things they themselves lived."[10]

I had a dramatic illustration of change working on Larry MacKenzie. I had written a chapter describing the mature Larry MacKenzie, the UBC President 1944-1962. It was based on many interviews with him and with colleagues at UBC who had known him. I was pleased; so were the UBC people whom I'd asked to read it.Then, greatly daring, I sent it to Polly then in Ireland. "Who is it ?" she wrote, "I don't recognize him. It isn't the man I knew in Geneva in 1925 and 1926. *He* was quite different. He was diffident, uncertain, a man going places in the world perhaps, but without the guile and the vanity you have given him in this chapter." She was right. My portrait of Larry was drawn from the later years of his presidency and my own interviews with him 15 years further on. I may have portrayed UBC's MacKenzie of the 1940s and 1950s, but not Polly's of the 1920s.

Historical documents, letters, diaries, do not usually give any sense of this. A great biography should try to show

the evolving and lambent lights of memory, regret, joy, a sense perhaps elegiac of life passing. It is not easy. Evidence is found in little corners, in the interstices of other seemingly more important things. For example, Sir John Thompson's father left Waterford, Ireland in 1827 for North America, ending up in Halifax. He never returned to Ireland. He lived in Halifax for the rest of his life and died there in 1867. There is no evidence that he was not content and some that indeed he was. The answer turned up in a letter of Sir John Thompson's 22 years later. "I envy you, " wrote Sir John to James Gowan, "your visit to Waterford– a place which has a strong hold on my heart because of all the sadness I used to see in my father's face when he spoke of it."[11]

We have no option but to try to understand a man's or a woman's inner life. We can't of course and so must wear garments of uncertainty and humility, but we have to try. Mark Twain thinks we are fools. We can't know:

His real life is led in his head...His acts and his words are merely the visible thin crust of his world...The mass of him is hidden–it and its volcanic fires that toss and boil, and never rest, night nor day. These are his life, and they are not written, and cannot be written...Biographies are but the clothes and buttons of the man.[12]

Biographies are mere constructions, he said, like the 50-foot brontosaurus in the museum, put together from 600 barrels of plaster and nine old bones. But the nine old bones may be all we have got. We have to cherish them and make what we can of them. Desmond McCarthy in a perceptive sketch of Henry James shows what can be done with a remembered conversation:

> It occurred after a luncheon party of which he [Henry James] had been, as they say, "the life." We happened to be drinking our coffee together, when the rest of the party had moved on to the verandah. "What a charming picture they make," he said, with his great head aslant, "the women there with their embroidery, the..." There was nothing in his words, anybody might have spoken them; but in his attitude, in his voice, in his whole being at that moment, I divined such complete detachment, that I was startled into speaking out of myself. "I can't bear to look at life like that," I blurted out, "I want to be in everything. Perhaps that is why I cannot write, it makes me feel absolutely alone..." The effect of this confession upon him was instantaneous and surprising. He leant forward and grasped my arm excitedly. "Yes, it is solitude. If it runs after you and catches you, well and good. But for heaven's sake don't run after it... It is absolute solitude." And he got up hurriedly and joined the others.[13]

Great biography, Carlyle wrote of Boswell's *Johnson*, is a revocation of destiny; those who were dead are alive; they who were silent speak. Dr. Johnson talks, though the Mitre Tavern was blown up in 1940 and the wine glasses of his dining gone long before that.[14]

Biography is not on the periphery of history. It is in the very middle of it, in the midst of a multifarious, multitudinous, complex past. Biography is men and women in process of being. In German there is a phrase, perhaps Heidegger's, *das Gewordene als Werdendes*, "the having become toward becoming", as I clumsily render it. Biography is at the core of history, indeed a template of the way history happens. It also illustrates, be it asserted despite Tolstoy, the way that individuals make history.

Notes

[1] Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians* (London 1934), viii.

[2] J.M.S. Careless, *Brown of the Globe* 2 vols. (Toronto 1959, 1963). Frank Underhill of the University of Toronto made the observation after the appearance of Careless' second volume on Brown.

[3] R. MacGregor Dawson, *William Lyon Mackenzie King 1874-1923, A Political Biography* (Toronto 1958); C.P. Stacey, *A Very Double Life* (Toronto 1976).

[4] The references to N.A.M. "Larry" MacKenzie are in PBW, *Lord of Point Grey* (Vancouver, 1987), passim.

[5] Ibid. 49; U.B.C. Archives, Norman Archibald MacRae MacKenzie (hereafter NAMM) Papers, 91/7, Polly to NAMM n.d., perhaps Jan. 1926.

[6] Ibid. 74/4, Margaret Thomas MacKenzie to NAMM, Mon. afternoon n.d. [May 1929], printed in *Lord of Point Grey* 67-68. I have here paraphrased the gist of Margaret's letter.

[7] PBW Archive, Halifax. I have compressed the substance of Polly's and my correspondence 1985-1988.

[8] McCord Museum Archives, McGill University, Hazel Colville Papers, R.B. Bennett to Hazel Colville, Sat. [27 Aug. 1932] quoted in PBW *The Loner: Three Sketches of the Personal Life and Ideas of R.B. Bennett 1870-1947* (Toronto 1992), 75. I owe these Bennett letters to the perceptiveness of Pamela Miller and her husband, Dean Carman Miller, of McGill.

The "play of the contingent.." is a famous phrase of H.A.L. Fisher, in the introduction to his History of Europe.

[9] University of Toronto Archives, W.J. Alexander Papers, "Reminiscences", 55.

[10] Leon Edel *Henry James, The Untried Years 1841-1870* (Philadelphia 1953) epigraph.

[11] National Archives, Sir James Gowan Papers, Thompson to Gowan, 30 May 1889.

[12] A.B. Paine, ed., *The Writings of Mark Twain* Vol. XXXVI, *Mark Twain's Autobiography* (New York, 1929), 2.

[13] Desmond McCarthy, "Henry James" in *Portraits* (London 1949), 154.

[14] Thomas Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson" in *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays* (London, n.d.), IV, 82.

TEXTBOOK WARS: CANADIAN STYLE

ABSTRACT

"How far could historians go in revealing the warts on our national past without compromising national unity?" Relatively far, assert Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel in this essay, which exposes and tackles the terms of the debate surrounding the publication(s) of their textbook, History of the Canadian Peoples. Conrad and Finkel's book presents students with a complex view of the past, and encourages them to develop a critical approach to evaluating claims made in the name of history. Other more conservative scholars denounce this approach to teaching history – they view it as a destructive blow dealt to the worn-out fabric of the discipline. The fact that teachers of history can't agree on the content and approaches of history textbook is a good thing. Indeed, the authors believe that it is the adoption of a definitive text that would finally signal "the end of history."

According to historian David Lowenthal, "No publisher tries to sell a textbook with the claim that it is more accurate than its competitors" (Lowenthal, 1996: 169). They do, however, claim that their text is more comprehensive, more relevant, more affordable, and more accessible to students. In 1993-94 professors of Canadian history had the luxury of choosing from among several new or recently revised two-volume survey texts on Canadian history (see bibliography). They also found themselves unwittingly at the centre of a debate about what "basic" knowledge students should glean from an introductory university survey text. As co-authors of one of the new textbooks, *History of the Canadian Peoples*, we found ourselves caught up in this debate whose paper trail, now approaching an impressive weight, has become required reading in many graduate courses on Canadian historiography.

The history of *History of the Canadian Peoples* is almost as interesting as the history of Canada itself. Although the first edition did not appear until 1993, Margaret Conrad signed a contract to write it in 1987. She had been asked in 1986 by Brian Henderson, then an editor with Copp Clark, to write single-handedly a one-volume survey of Canadian history. This task she wisely refused to take on – but then began the long process of finding co-authors. (Textbooks, unfortunately, are not rated highly by members of university tenure and promotion committees.) Finally, a team, that included Michael Behiels, Cornelius Jaenen, Veronica Strong-Boag as well as Margaret was assembled and flown to Ottawa for a planning meeting. Michael subsequently withdrew from the team; Nikki did two chapters and then dropped out. Rebecca Coulter joined briefly and then also resigned. Margaret finished her chapters in 1988; Cornelius completed his chapters as well but they were deemed to require substantial revision for an introductory survey; Alvin Finkel appeared on the scene in 1989, upon a suggestion from Rebecca Coulter. Alvin and Margaret ended up doing most of the writing and rewriting, communicating by e-mail as they fit their writing around busy schedules. For subsequent editions, Conrad and Finkel became the primary authors.

We make a good team. Our research areas – gender, labour, region, and politics, broadly defined – means that we understand each other, even if we do not always agree on interpretations. From the beginning, the goal for the text was to integrate the findings of the new social history relating to class, culture, gender, race, and region into the national narrative and we embarked on our mission with enthusiasm. To ensure that we achieved what we set out to do, the text was organized thematically, with separate chapters for political, economic, and social topics for each of the time periods that had been defined at the initial planning meeting in 1987.

Unfortunately, the second volume of the first edition was done in indecent haste, which meant that we had no chance to get real feedback on the manuscript. The decision to produce a two-volume rather than a one-volume text came before Alvin joined the team but the structure of the post-Confederation volume, including its peculiar time periods, was not revisited, despite our grave misgivings. What saved us from total failure was the fact that Barb Tessman is a gifted historian as well as a fine editor. She helped to make the text both more accurate and more readable than it would have been otherwise. We also had a leg up on our competition because we approached

MARGARET CONRAD

Margaret Conrad: A member of the History Department, Acadia University, from 1969 to 2002, Professor Conrad was awarded a Canada Research Chair at the University of New Brunswick in 2002. She has published widely in the fields of Atlantic Canada and Women's History and is co-author with Alvin Finkel of the widely-used textbook History of the Canadian Peoples.

ALVIN FINKEL

Alvin Finkel is professor of History at Athabasca University, and the author or co-author of a variety of texts, monographs, and articles. He is currently book review editor for Labour/Le Travail and a member of the editorial board of Canadian Historical Review.

history as a discipline requiring critical skills rather than as a narrative of received truths that students needed to ingest. In our texts we acknowledged sources in footnotes, included selected readings that informed our thinking, and flagged areas where historians disagreed. We also included illustrations and inserts that focused on events and people, making our text look visually attractive.

Copp Clark did a major advertising blitz for the text, producing promotional mugs to flog to professors and getting us a spot on CBC's *Morningside*. Although initial reaction was positive, a groundswell of anger erupted from scholars fighting a rearguard action in the so-called "culture wars" over history texts that swept North America in the 1990s (Nash et al. 1997). These wars were really little more than a tempest in a teapot – *a cri de coeur* from those who saw history primarily as a discipline focused on political and military themes rather than one that embraced a growing number of sub-fields. Within a decade, most thinking people had come to recognize that it was not an either/or issue. But in the meantime there was a lot of blood on the floor in history department common rooms.

The rallying cry for the political historians was produced by Michael Bliss, a prominent historian at the University of Toronto. In a provocative piece published in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* in the winter of 1991-92 ("Privatizing the Mind: The Sundering of Canadian History, the Sundering of Canada"), he claimed that the enthusiasm for social history had implications well beyond the history departments in which it had gained ascendancy. Confusing the cause with the effect, he argued that by focusing on "limited identities," social historians were contributing to the "sundering" of the nation. His comments brought a sharp response from a group of feminist historians (Linda Kealey et al. 1992) and touched off discussions in history departments across the country. The appearance of our text and one produced by Jack Bumsted with a title remarkably similar to ours – *The Peoples of Canada* – fed into the growing frenzy about the role of Canadian history in shoring up a badly divided nation.

We also had a leg up on our competition because we approached history as a discipline requiring critical skills rather than as a narrative of received truths that students needed to ingest.

That many scholars were eager to incorporate the new social history into their teaching became clear when in the first year we grabbed nearly a third of the Canadian survey textbook market. If it is true that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, we realized that we had hit the mark when our major competition – Douglas Francis, Richard Jones, and Donald Smith, *Origins and Destinies* – subsequently came out with a new edition that mimicked our text in nearly every respect: illustrations, footnotes, selected readings, and historiographical debates, as well as more regional and social history. Suddenly, we found ourselves in a race for textbook dominance.

Over the past decade there has been some convergence among the two main competitors for the Canadian history survey market about what issues should be covered in an introductory text, but they each present rather different narratives on the nation's history. While our view of "limited identities" emphasizes structural oppression and popular struggles, Francis et al. focus more attention on consensual changes, and on powerful individuals and groups. Because of our approach to the past, it was our text that inevitably became the epicentre of a firestorm regarding the role of historians in national life. How far could historians go in revealing the warts on our national past without compromising national unity? Should they worry about such unity in the first place? Did they have the right to suggest that the so-called "losers" in the human struggle for power and dominance deserved equal time with the "winners?"

In 1998, Jack Granatstein in *Who Killed Canadian History* (1998) committed to print what our detractors had been saying. Chapter 3 of Granatstein's book, entitled "Professing Trivia: The Academic Historians," argued that textbooks such as ours ignored or simply denounced John A. Macdonald, Wilfrid Laurier, and others of their stature, a statement that was patently untrue and leads us to believe that he had not bothered to read the text which had competed so successfully with his own. Lamenting that there was not enough Canadian history taught in universities and what was taught was misguided, Granatstein concluded that "university graduates, like those who enter the labour force directly from high school, emerge into the market place culturally illiterate, ignorant of the basic details about their nation and their society that every thinking citizen requires" (65-66). Granatstein's view that history's major role is to support national citizenship is embraced by many people, past and present. What is unclear to us is why he and others would want to shield the young citizens in our classrooms from acquiring a complex view of the past and a critical eye regarding claims made in the name of history.

By the time that Granatstein's book was released, the second edition of our text, which addressed many of the problems in the first, had been published. Nevertheless, the first edition still gets trotted out by anyone looking for a straw man or woman to flog. In our second edition, we restructured the text – using political history to drive the narrative, expanding the coverage of the First and Second World Wars, focusing more on cultural and environmental history, and correcting the egregious errors that are likely to bedevil any first edition. Our flexible response to criticism meant that we were not nearly as hidebound as our detractors claimed, but there are few people involved in the textbook wars who will admit this. In the most

recent round of revisions, one of our reviewers claimed that the chapter on the Second World War was totally inadequate, most likely because the reviewer thought that Margaret wrote it. The truth is that we had help from a very accomplished military and diplomatic historian. Had his name been attached to the text, it might well have elicited a different response from the hyper-critical reviewer.

What many reviewers perhaps do not realize is that textbooks get more critical evaluation than most academic endeavours. Before making revisions – we are currently preparing for our fourth edition under our most recent publisher, Addison-Wesley Longman – our editors solicit reviews from eight or more critics, most of them professors who teach introductory Canadian history. Then the first set of revisions for each edition gets a once-over from another set of critics, leading to revisions of revisions. If nothing else, the extensive review process makes us firm subscribers to reader-response theory. While one reviewer finds too much material on the North, another claims that there is not enough on the region. One reviewer finds a particular section well done, another thinks it should be scrapped. After more than a decade in the textbook business, it is clear to us that there is no perfect text that will meet the expectations of everyone teaching Canadian history. This, incidentally, is a good thing. Who would want a definitive text? Such a product would signal nothing else than the much-touted "end of history."

While one reviewer finds too much material on the North, another claims that there is not enough on the region. One reviewer finds a particular section well done, another thinks it should be scrapped. After more than a decade in the textbook business, it is clear to us that there is no perfect text that will meet the expectations of everyone teaching Canadian history. This, incidentally, is a good thing. Who would want a definitive text?

While we decided not to dignify Granatstein's comments by responding to them, other scholars felt obliged to call into question what they considered to be unsubstantiated claims and unfair comments about the direction of academic history in Canada. Graham Carr, a historian at Concordia University, concluded in a review published in the *American Review of Canadian Studies* in 1998 that *Who Killed Canadian History?* was "simplistically argued," "carelessly written" and served only "to raise the volume, while lowering the tone of the debate" about the role of history in society. We could not have said it better ourselves.

After hearing Granatstein present his arguments in a public lecture, A.B. McKillop, a historian based at Carleton University, also felt compelled to wade in. His extensive analysis of Chapter 3 ("Professing Trivia") drew masterfully on national and international sources to puncture what McKillop dismissed as a polemic and a bad one at that. McKillop addressed the nature of historical inquiry, argued that social historians had done their job in expanding the notion of citizenship, and concluded that Canadian history was neither dead nor dying. "What has died," McKillop concluded, "is the role of the academic historian as self-proclaimed public moralist and purveyor of conventional historical pieties that had long passed for the whole cloth of Canadian nationhood" (295).

This did not end the debate. In response to McKillop, Bryan Palmer in the *Canadian Historical Review* took up Granatstein's concern about the existence of a social history consensus that "seems to silence any critical engagement with contemporary historical writing" (678). Palmer claimed that "McKillop counters Granatstein and Bliss by joining them" (697), substituting a pluralistic national narrative for a narrow political one. As a result, Palmer argued, most historians, presumably Alvin and myself included, resist efforts to engage a discussion of social change as if "sundering," "fracturing," and "killing" the old political history constitutes a radical political act. The assumption, if from a very different ideological perspective than Granatstein's, is that our text simply deconstructs and does not pull the various components together again in any useful way.

Granatstein's focus on our text has made it inevitable that it would figure prominently in the continuing discussions of the state of Canadian history. Almost simultaneously, Jocelyn Létourneau used our text as an example in his critique of approaches to Canadian history (*Canadian Historical Review*, June 2000: 245-46); Timothy Stanley found both Granatstein and Conrad/Finkel Eurocentric and racist (*Histoire Sociale*, May 2000: 89); and Jacques Paul Couturier commented on the lack of depth in the coverage of Acadians (*Acadiensis*, May 2000: 108). In an effort to make a virtue out of the criticisms raised by people such as Granatstein, Palmer, and Stanley, we agreed that the one-volume abridgement of our text would be called *Canada: A National History* (Toronto: Longman, 2003). We had, after all, set out to write an introductory survey text on Canadian history, not a monograph on any of a number of important developments in the nation's past. Nor was it a call to revolution, except in the way that we approach the teaching of Canadian history.

That being said, all texts, *History of the Canadian Peoples* among them, may well be swept away in a tide of

technological innovation. In the future, Internet sources may well make print texts obsolete. If we are to be replaced as one of the leading textbooks in the field of Canadian history in the near future, it will probably not be by another hard copy text, but by some clever computer whiz who manages to post on the World Wide Web a compelling narrative, supplemented with readings, documents, images, links, games, projects, and assignments. As our generation shuffles into retirement, new professors will not be so likely to privilege textbooks. In Nova Scotia the department of education has created a Grade 11 Canadian history course that is 40% based on "learning technologies," 20% on texts. If this is the wave of the future, then the real question will be "What use are textbooks anyway?"

Bibliography

A. Textbooks:

Bercuson, D.J. et al. *Colonies: Canada to 1867*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson 1992 and J.L. Granatstein et al. *Nation: Canada Since Confederation*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1993.

Bumsted, J.M. *The Peoples of Canada*. 2 vols. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Conrad, Margaret, Alvin Finkel, and Cornelius Jaenen, with Veronica Strong-Boag. *History of the Canadian Peoples*, 2 vols. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1993.

Francis, R. Douglas, Richard Jones and Donald B. Smith. *Origins: Canadian History to Confederation*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace, 1992 and *Destinies: Canadian History Since Confederation*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace, 1992.

B. Other Sources:

Berger, Carl, ed. *Contemporary Approaches to Canadian History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

Bliss, Michael. "Privatizing the Mind: The Sundering of Canadian History, the Sundering of Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 26, 4 (Winter 1991-92): 5-17.

Brandt, Gail Cuthbert. "National Unity and the Politics of Political History," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, New Series, Vol 3 (1992): 3-11.

Buckner, Phillip A. "'Limited Identities' and Canadian Historical Scholarship: An Atlantic Canada Perspective," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, 1 and 2 (Spring-Summer 1988): 177-198.

Careless, J.M.S. "'Limited Identities' in Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* L, 1 (March 1969): 1-10.

Carr, Graham. "Harsh Sentences: Appealing the Strange Verdict of *Who Killed Canadian History? American Review of Canadian Studies* (1998): 167-176.

Couturier, Jacques Paul. "'L'Acadie: c'est un détail': Les représentations de l'Acadie dans le récit national canadien," *Acadiensis* XXIX, 2 (Spring 2000): 102-19.

Dick, Lyle. "'A Growing Necessity for Canada': W.L. Morton's Centennial Series and the Forms of National History, 1955-1980," *Canadian Historical Review* 82, 2 (June 2001): 223-52.

Granatstein, J. L. *Who Killed Canadian History?* Toronto: HarperCollins, 1998.

Kealey, Linda et al. "Teaching Canadian History in the 1990s: Whose 'National' History are We Lamenting?" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 27, 2 (Summer 1992): 129-31.

Létourneau, Jocelyn. "L'Avenir du Canada: par rapport à quelle histoire?" *Canadian Historical Review* 81, 2 (June 2000): 230-259.

David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. New York: The Free Press, 1996.

Lutz, John et al. "New Wines or Just Old Bottles? A Round Table on Recent Texts in Canadian History," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 30, 4 (Winter 1995-96): 175-201.

McKay, Ian. "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, 81, 4 (December 2000): 617-645.

McKillop, A.B. "Who Killed Canadian History? A View from the Trenches," *Canadian Historical Review* 80, 2 (June 1999): 269-299.

Nash, Gary B., Charlotte A. Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn. *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1997.

Owram, Doug. "Narrow Circles: The Historiography of Recent Canadian Historiography," *National History* I, 1 (Winter 1997): 5-21.

Palmer, Bryan D. "Of Silences and Trenches: A Dissident View of Granatstein's Meaning," *Canadian Historical Review* 80, 4 (December 1999): 676-86.

Stanley, Timothy. "Why I Killed Canadian History: Conditions for Anti-Racist History in Canada," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, XXXIII, 65 (mai-May 2000): 79-104.

Strong-Boag, Veronica. "Contested Space: The Politics of Canadian Memory," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, New Series, Vol.5 (1994): 3 - 18.

Valverde, Mariana. "Some Remarks on the Rise and Fall of Discourse Analysis," *Histoire sociale/Social History* XXXIII, 65 (mai-May 2000): 59-77.

ESSAI SUR LA MISE EN RÉCIT DE L'EXPÉRIENCE HISTORIQUE CANADIENNE

RÉSUMÉ

En se basant sur une expérience personnelle, soit celle d'avoir écrit une histoire du Canada en français, l'auteur partage ici certaines problématiques qui se posent, ainsi que plusieurs solutions qui s'offrent lors de la conception et rédaction d'un tel volume. Plus généralement, Jean-François Cardin explore diverses méthodes d'écrire et d'enseigner l'histoire nationale au niveau post-secondaire, et ce en considérant les principes théoriques post-modernes qui ont, depuis quelques décennies, forcé les historiens a revisiter leurs approches méthodologiques.

Parmi les problématiques abordées lors de la conférence *Donner à l'avenir un passé*, tenue à Winnipeg en octobre 2001, plusieurs s'articulaient autour de la question d'une histoire « nationale » pour le Canada et de sa transmission à la jeune génération dans le cadre de l'institution scolaire. Vaste question s'il en est, que les organisateurs de l'évènement ont découpée en plusieurs dimensions, chacune étant l'objet d'une session de communications. Le présent texte est une version retravaillée d'une réflexion personnelle que j'ai offerte dans le cadre d'une session consacrée à « la difficulté d'écrire des manuels d'histoire dans un pays aussi diversifié que le Canada »[1]. Mon propos s'articulera autour de quelques propositions esquissées à grands traits gravitant autour de cette problématique, mais qui également rejoignent des thèmes de fond liés à la nature et à l'épistémologie de la discipline historique — dont la question de la narration — et le sens à donner au passé de cet ensemble sociopolitique qu'est le Canada. Je plaiderai d'abord, à propos des synthèses d'histoire nationale destinées aux étudiants, pour une démarche de rédaction qui s'appuie d'abord et avant tout sur la méthode historique, une démarche par laquelle il nous faut toutefois, en tant qu'auteur, assumer notre subjectivité interprétative et l'offrir comme élément de discussion au lecteur-étudiant et à l'enseignant. Je passerai ensuite à la question de l'organisation du récit, une organisation qui se doit d'être d'autant plus signifiante par elle-même à l'heure d'une histoire pluraliste[2] qui s'avère par nature parcellaire et décousue. La recherche d'un fil conducteur signifiant m'amènera à proposer, dans le cas du Canada, le recours à la dimension politique de l'évolution historique comme thème unificateur du récit. Enfin, je conclurai par quelques réflexions concernant le manque d'intérêt des Québecois pour l'histoire du Canada dans son ensemble.

Mes propos seront principalement basés sur une expérience que j'ai vécue il y a quelques années, soit celle d'écrire, avec deux autres personnes, une histoire du Canada, en français, destinée à des étudiants des niveaux post-secondaires[3]. L'exercice consistera donc également à dépasser la réflexion théorique pour montrer comment, à partir de l'expérience de ce livre, nous avons trouvé comme auteurs des solutions concrètes au défi de rédiger une synthèse d'histoire canadienne.

Une démarche basée sur la méthode historique

Cette expérience de rédaction recouvre d'ailleurs à elle seule la problématique soulevée par la session, du moins pour l'essentiel. Ainsi, prenons les auteurs que nous étions au moment de la gestation de l'ouvrage, soit au tournant des années 1990, et qui formaient un groupe diversifié au plan de la géographie et de l'expérience personnelle et professionnelle. Bien que nous étions trois francophones, l'un était Québécois travaillant depuis peu dans une faculté francophone en Alberta; un autre vivait au Québec et, de plus, assumait son étiquette de « nationaliste québécois »; le dernier était d'origine acadienne, né en Gaspésie, mais était établi depuis plusieurs années en Alberta et enseignait dans le même établissement francophone que le premier. Bref, voilà une équipe qui, au départ, était fort dépareillée et constituait en quelque sorte une métaphore du pays lui-même — en particulier en regard de la diversité franco-canadienne —, un groupe qui par ailleurs ne partageait pas nécessairement les mêmes opinions politiques quant à l'avenir du pays dont ils avaient entrepris d'écrire l'histoire.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS CARDIN

Jean-François Cardin est professeur au Département d'études sur l'enseignement et l'apprentissage (FSE) depuis janvier 2002. En parallèle avec ses activités d'enseignement, M. Cardin a produit du matériel didactique en histoire (manuels, cahiers d'apprentissage, etc.). Il est notamment le principal auteur du manuel *Québec: Héritages et projets*, publié en 1984 et réédité en 1994, et qui est encore largement utilisé dans les classes du Québec. Il a également co-publié le livre *Histoire du Canada: Espace et différences*, publié aux PUL en 1996 et destiné aux étudiants des niveaux collégial et universitaire.

Et pourtant, loin d'être un obstacle au projet, cette diversité de points de vue a au contraire constitué un ferment fertile. Et cela m'amène à ma première proposition : écrire un livre de synthèse sur l'histoire de son propre pays, et à fortiori un manuel d'histoire contemporaine qui débouche directement sur le présent, ce n'est pas plus périlleux, je pense, que d'écrire un livre sur l'Égypte ancienne, dans la mesure où, *justement*, on fait d'abord et avant tout œuvre d'historien. En effet, au-delà des discussions initiales liées à nos divergences d'opinions sur le présent et l'avenir du pays – et qui, soit dit en passant, étaient pour nous de l'ordre des échanges intellectuels plus que de la polémique doctrinale – nous n'avons pas connu de difficultés particulières à cause de cela pour la simple raison que nous étions centrés sur une démarche d'historien et non sur celle de propagandistes au service d'une conception nationale quelconque de l'histoire du Canada et de son devenir. À partir d'une telle attitude, il devenait moins problématique, par exemple, de décrire longuement les tensions entre Canadiens français et Canadiens anglais — que d'aucuns voient pourtant comme une « matière dangereuse » qu'il faut manipuler avec prudence, voire comme autant de « blessures » encore sensibles, pour reprendre le mot de Jocelyn Létourneau[4] — le but étant non pas de régler des comptes ou de tirer des leçons pour un groupe ou un autre, mais bien de donner sur ces sujets les informations nécessaires et les clés de compréhension minimales pour permettre aux étudiants d'interpréter par la suite ces questions et, éventuellement, d'en débattre.

En effet, si l'on revient à la base, l'histoire a sa méthode, une méthode qui a sa finalité, soit de collecter et d'organiser les informations qui permettent de faire comprendre, et éventuellement de pouvoir *interpréter* — au sens de s'approprier personnellement —, ce chemin qui mène au présent. « Faire » de l'histoire, c'est aller au-delà des mythes qu'une certaine industrie de la conscience nationale, qui était très présente au congrès de Winnipeg, cherche à mettre en place depuis quelques années en déplorant que la population, et en particulier la jeunesse, ne connaît plus « son » histoire. La tâche est plus complexe que cela, comme l'avait bien résumé Peter Seixas dans la foulée de la télédiffusion de la première tranche de la série *Le Canada : une histoire populaire* :

> […] people have to move beyond myth and heritage to the complexity of history. They have to understand the distance between the present and the past, and the difficulty in representing the past in the present. […] They should see that [John A. Macdonald] is neither simply a Father of Confederation, as one heritage story would have it, nor simply a racist Imperialist, as would another. They must deal with multiple causes, conflicting belief systems and historical actors' differing perspectives. They have to comprehend the interpretive choices and constraints involved in constructing historical accounts based on evidence. Above all, they must recognize the tentative, provisional nature of all historical narratives.[5]

Et pour faire cela, pour atteindre ce but relativement exigeant au plan des opérations cognitives et métacognitives, 1000 façons, 1000 démarches, 1000 stratégies peuvent être déployées par les enseignants et les auteurs de manuels d'histoire, MAIS la finalité — i.e. faire de l'histoire — doit à mon sens rester la même. Et pour ce que je connais des grandes synthèses récentes d'histoire du Canada des niveaux post-secondaires, tant anglophones que francophones, c'est cette finalité qui a également guidé leurs auteurs, plutôt que celle de proposer des mythes édifiants[6].

Oui, mais l'histoire n'est pas neutre…

Ceci étant dit, je sais très bien que l'histoire n'est pas neutre, que tout écrit historique est biaisé, que l'historien est un sujet de son époque et de son groupe social, que son discours dépend de son rapport au pouvoir, etc., et donc qu'il est plus ou moins consciemment empreint de cette subjectivité. C'est un gros débat en histoire, qui a notamment pris l'allure depuis quelques décennies d'un défi ouvertement posé aux historiens par les tenants de la critique post-moderniste[7]. Et je n'ai pas l'intention ici de le rouvrir, d'autant plus que mon collègue et co-auteur Claude Couture a situé notre manuel par rapport à ce courant de pensée[8]. Cependant, cette question m'amène à ma deuxième idée, qui vient compléter et mettre en perspective ma première proposition.

Écrire une synthèse d'histoire nationale ne veut pas dire que les auteurs ne doivent s'en tenir qu'au factuel, qu'à une énumération de faits et de dates, ou encore qu'à des conclusions de premier niveau sur ceux-ci. Le fait d'avoir pour but de faire comprendre le passé ne signifie pas que les auteurs – de même que les enseignants – ne font pas des choix, qu'ils ne proposent pas d'interprétations, qu'ils n'ont pas un point de vue sur telle ou telle question, surtout lorsqu'on se situe au niveau post-secondaire. Bien au contraire.

J'ai dit précédemment que l'histoire a une méthode, une démarche, et que sa finalité est de permettre d'interpréter les faits historiques. Comme il y a une dimension d'interprétation incontournable en histoire, il est non seulement acceptable, mais même *nécessaire*, que des auteurs offrent des points de vue interprétatifs sur telle ou telle question car ils sont en fait autant de vecteurs qui permettent au lecteur cette lecture et, éventuellement, cette compréhension interprétative et critique du passé. D'ailleurs, au niveau post-secondaire dont il est ici question, la discussion et la confrontation des thèses font partie des apprentissages à développer en sciences humaines et les points de vue offerts dans un ouvrage d'histoire par les auteurs sont discutables en classe au même titre que les autres. Dans notre manuel, ces prises de position, où comme auteurs nous intervenons plus directement et explicitement au plan de l'interprétation des grands enjeux de l'histoire canadienne, sont situées en dehors du récit de base, et on les retrouve bien en vue, en conclusion des deux grandes parties de l'ouvrage. Ils offrent un espace pour le débat, qui est une autre dimension importante de la pratique de l'histoire.

Ainsi, on peut être en désaccord avec le diagnostic à première vue « sombre » que l'on y propose de l'évolution et du devenir du pays. Ainsi, en conclusion, nous affirmions :

> Deux voies s'offrent alors en cette fin de siècle [pour le Canada] : un statu quo répressif […],

> ou une réforme sérieuse du fédéralisme jumelée à une approche radicalement progressiste dans la promotion et l'épanouissement des groupes réclamant […] une place dans la société canadienne en fonction de leur différence. Quant à cette deuxième option, rien ne permet de penser pour l'instant que le Canada va aborder le tournant du XXIe siècle avec courage.[9]

Bien que selon moi elle puisse se défendre encore aujourd'hui, du moins pour l'essentiel, cette perception des choses s'avère néanmoins le produit de l'époque où elle a été écrite, au sortir du référendum québécois de 1995 et, à mes yeux, elle témoigne de l'esprit plutôt pessimiste du moment à l'égard de la fédération canadienne. Quoiqu'il en soit, voilà un élément qu'un enseignant peut exploiter dans son approfondissement de la méthode historique, soit amener ses étudiants à situer le contexte de toute narration historique — et un manuel scolaire EST un récit historique au même titre que les autres —, l'important étant d'en discuter, de le voir comme un moyen favorisant la réaction, la réflexion et le débat en salle de cours. Être des auteurs « post-modernes », c'est justement reconnaître le caractère fluide et relatif de notre production, le dire bien haut et offrir notre propre narration à l'analyse critique de ceux que l'on veut justement former par elle, soit les étudiants-lecteurs guidés dans cet exercice par leur professeur.

En somme, si je résume en les combinant mes deux premières propositions, je pense que de manifester de fortes idées personnelles sur un aspect ou un autre de la période ou du phénomène historique dont on parle, que l'on soit enseignant ou même auteur de manuel d'histoire nationale, cela ne sera aucunement un problème, ou une tare, dans la mesure où on les traite en suivant la démarche historique de base axée sur l'interprétation et le débat. Je parle toujours du niveau post-secondaire.

Un récit structuré de manière signifiante

Le troisième élément de réflexion que je soumets ici concerne l'approche narrative que nous avons choisie. Dans le programme de le conférence, le texte résumant la problématique de notre session évoque les solutions que les auteurs de manuels ont trouvées pour contourner les problèmes de rédaction de synthèses d'histoire pour un pays aussi diversifié que le Canada. En effet, contrairement à l'histoire américaine par exemple, le terrain en histoire canadienne n'est pas nécessairement balisé par un découpage « sacralisé » et intouchable, par un répertoire de périodes déjà toutes taillées d'avance et dont les appellations sont devenues autant d'icônes fortement connotées que reprennent avec peu de variantes les manuels scolaires, tels que « the Jacksonian Era », « The Civil War », « The Reconstruction », « The Gilded Age », « The Progressive Era », etc. Et c'est tant mieux! Pendant longtemps d'ailleurs, les manuels d'histoire américaine, du moins ceux destinés au *High-School* et au *College*, suivaient pour la plupart la même périodisation.

Un des problèmes auxquels nous nous sommes butés dès le départ était donc de procurer à notre ouvrage une structure qui saurait rendre compte à la fois de la dynamique nationale — en particulier de la scène fédérale — et *des* dynamiques régionales, qui sont souvent des réalités fort différenciées, et qui renvoient à des mondes qui n'évoluent pas selon les mêmes règles ni ne suivent une trame synchronisée. Tous les auteurs de synthèse d'histoire du Canada ont été confrontés au dilemme de rendre compte de cette « dissonance » fondamentale de l'expérience canadienne, une métaphore que Jocelyn Létourneau utilise pour désigner ce qu'il décrit avec raison comme « une tension jamais symétrique entre forces centripètes et forces centrifuges »[10].

Après bien des tâtonnements et tergiversations, nous avons opté, pour traduire cette réalité, pour une structure en deux parties bien distinctes, mais qui néanmoins étaient régulièrement mises en relation l'une et l'autre par des renvois entre les deux. La première partie de l'ouvrage est consacrée à l'étude de la société canadienne dans une perspective générale. La seconde rendait compte de l'évolution propre à chacune des régions. Cette structure, simple dans son esprit mais peu traditionnelle car elle allait à l'encontre de la trame chronologique unique propre à la plupart des manuels d'histoire du Canada, n'a pas laissé indifférent : pour certains il s'agissait d'une faiblesse, car elle allait semer la confusion chez le lecteur, tandis que pour d'autres, au contraire, elle clarifiait la démonstration et s'adaptait bien au cas d'un pays où la tension entre les dynamiques nationale et régionale était fondamentale[11].

Avec cette structure, nous avions fait le pari qu'un enseignant, qui par définition n'enseigne jamais de manière linéaire et purement chronologique, allait savoir organiser le programme de lecture du manuel pour ses étudiants et naviguer sans encombre entre les deux parties, selon les besoins. En effet, dans la vraie vie, au niveau post-secondaire, un manuel ne se lit pas linéairement, d'un couvert à l'autre, sur une session de quatre mois, ou alors très rarement. On ne lit pas un manuel d'histoire qui accompagne un cours comme on le fait pour un roman. L'enseignant organise généralement son programme de lecture en fonction de sa propre narration, de sa planification de cours, de sorte que l'étudiant ne lit rarement l'ouvrage en suivant le tracé prévu à la table des matières. À l'enseignant également d'opérer la jonction entre sa démarche, sa perception de l'évolution du pays, avec celle proposée par les auteurs, dont il sera plus ou moins proche. En somme : « Les manuels sont «travaillés» par les étudiants (et les professeurs), découpés, déconstruits, reconstruits, bref le matériau historique est justement trituré jusqu'à ce que chacun arrive à un certain bagage d'informations et à une vision ou interprétation de ce matériel historique. »[12] D'ailleurs, la plupart des manuels récents d'histoire canadienne, tant francophones qu'anglophones, sont compartimentés et constitués de courts chapitres conçus plus ou moins comme des blocs étanches couvrant divers aspects à l'intérieur d'une même tranche chronologique, de sorte que la linéarité chronologique pure, d'un chapitre à l'autre, n'existe pas *de facto*. De même, nous avions fait le pari qu'un lecteur non étudiant saurait également faire les liens qui s'imposent entre les deux parties. Quoiqu'il en soit, le débat reste ouvert, mais il est intéressant au plan épistémologique car il soulève une difficulté réelle dans l'écriture d'ouvrage de synthèse en histoire du Canada.

Passer de la politique au politique

Le même problème d'unification et de clarté du récit nous a amené à faire un autre choix qui nous semblait risqué, un choix qui avait pour but de fournir un fil conducteur à l'ouvrage et, en fait, à l'histoire d'un pays aussi éclaté et disparate que le Canada. Nous avons en effet choisi de faire de la vie politique, de la scène politique, la trame unificatrice de l'évolution de ce pays et la clé de compréhension de celle-ci.

En effet, écrire une synthèse d'histoire ne signifie pas de parler de *tous* les sujets de manière indifférenciée. Il faut une clé de lecture, une grille interprétative qui permette de discriminer certains faits et phénomènes et qui donne un sens à ceux que l'on conserve. Cela permet de donner du relief à la narration afin d'éviter que le texte ne ressemble à un magasin à rayon où chaque « département » est étanche et à travers lequel il est difficile de trouver un fil conducteur.

Au début du travail de rédaction, en commençant à rédiger nos premiers textes, nous constations que nous étions en train de reproduire le schéma habituel que l'on retrouvait dans les synthèses d'histoire alors en vogue, soit celui d'une approche socio-économique, de type École des Annales, à laquelle étaient jointes les incontournables sections relevant de l'histoire pluraliste sur les femmes, les Autochtones, les travailleurs, les immigrants, etc. Or, en donnant depuis quelques années des cours d'histoire canadienne auprès d'étudiants universitaires[13], nous nous étions aperçus que l'approche socio-économique globale passait plus ou moins bien auprès d'eux, parce qu'elle conduisait notamment à une certaine compartimentation de l'analyse, une compartimentation qui conduisait elle-même à une certaine désarticulation de l'objet historique, bref, que cela avait des limites au plan proprement didactique.

Indépendamment de la question de son enseignement, d'autres on relevé les limites de ce type d'histoire. Ainsi, Jocelyn Létourneau, loin de céder aux appels cocardiers d'un Jack Granatstein en mal de récit historique unificateur à la sauce traditionnelle du « nation building »[14], a mis en évidence, avec plus d'analyse et de nuances, deux grandes difficultés reliées à cette approche. D'abord, il relève avec raison le « manque de perspective de cette histoire et […] l'absence, chez ses praticiens, d'un souci explicite d'ordonnancement et de hiérarchisation des dynamismes, des forces et des facteurs qu'ils s'attachent à mettre en relief dans le passé du Canada »; dans le même esprit, il déplore ensuite le manque de sens qui en ressort et qui permettrait au passé « d'être rassemblé dans une unité narrative pour perdre son caractère évasif et dispersé ». Et Létourneau d'ajouter :

> En pratique, l'histoire pluraliste soumet la matière du passé à l'empire d'une fausse rectitude scientifique de même qu'à une philosophie plate de la connaissance, celle de l'indifférenciation comme principe d'objectivité historienne et de mise en narration du passé[15].

Pour le Canada anglais, Doug Owram a montré comment l'essor de l'histoire pluraliste, après 1970, s'est traduit par une raréfaction des synthèses d'« histoire nationale », particulièrement celles destinées aux étudiants[16]. Il conclut son article par un appel à des synthèses compréhensives du passé canadien : « We have learned much about the parts. Now we must try to reconstruct the whole ». Puis il ajoute: « There is […] the need for synthesis between the sub-disciplines, to see how politics, economics, class, gender, and other issues affected events in the past ». Les remarques de Létourneau et de Owram, qui concernent justement les synthèses qui sont bâties sur le mode de l'histoire pluraliste, me semblent justes et on ne peut plus les ignorer.

D'un point de vue d'auteurs, il nous apparaissait donc qu'il manquait un fil conducteur pour mettre en place toutes les pièces d'un puzzle qui se complexifiait au fur et à mesure que nous avancions dans le récit. De plus, on s'apercevait que nos étudiants, même à l'université, avaient des faiblesses chronologiques, et recherchaient souvent des points d'ancrage chronologiques. Ainsi, lorsque dans mes cours j'arrivais aux sections politiques, où je parlais notamment des élections et de la succession des partis au pouvoir, la matière passait plus facilement. Et, je dirais presque « naturellement », les étudiants se servaient souvent des points de repères politiques pour fixer les faits socio-économiques, plus abstraits et intemporels par nature.

Donc, de discussions en discussions, mes collègues et moi en sommes venus à trouver dans le politique, ce fil conducteur, cet angle d'analyse qui servirait de principe intégrateur à cette synthèse d'histoire globale, et qui donc tiendrait compte de toutes les dimensions économiques, sociales, idéologiques et culturelles de l'évolution des sociétés au sein du Canada sur le long terme. Comme nous l'évoquions en introduction :

> […] le changement s'exprime à travers le niveau politique en ce sens que les innombrables dynamiques de changement, à différents niveaux ou dimensions de la société, font ultimement pression sur celui-ci. Il devient le lieu privilégié de l'éclatement des contradictions, de la définition, pour différents groupes d'individus, de stratégies en fonction de positions sociales et économiques, de rapport de pouvoir entre les sexes, de différences ethniques ou religieuses. Loin d'être une dimension comme les autres, le politique est en fait la filière à partir de laquelle il est possible de remonter jusqu'aux aspects globaux, voire inconscients, de la vie en société.[17]

Bref, l'histoire, c'est le changement, et le changement engendre et restructure constamment de nouveaux rapports sociaux, de nouveaux débats, et donc de nouvelles idéologies, et tout ça aboutit d'une manière ou d'une autre dans l'arène politique. Bien sûr, on l'aura compris, le politique est vu ici au sens large, au-delà du phénomène restreint des seuls partis politiques et de leur succession au pouvoir. Donc, si on passe de la politique *au* politique, on ouvre ainsi une perspective intéressante, notamment pour comprendre un pays comme le Canada qui, à partir de 1867 en tous les cas, voit régulièrement aboutir sur l'arène politique, et en particulier la scène fédérale, la plupart des débats générés par l'évolution socio-économique.

Pour conclure

En terminant, j'aimerais souligner, pour ne pas dire déplorer le peu d'intérêt des historiens francophones pour l'histoire du Canada, du moins parmi ceux de ma génération, celle qui *grosso modo* a reçu sa formation durant les années 1970 et 1980. Avec le virage vers l'histoire pluraliste, l'histoire des « identités partielles », les historiens franco-québécois — comme les autres d'ailleurs… — ont en quelque sorte abandonné la vision pancanadienne qui était celle des historiens généralistes de la génération d'après-guerre, les Michel Brunet, Maurice Séguin, Fernand Ouellet ou Jean Hamelin, pour ne nommer que ceux qui me viennent spontanément à l'esprit. Résultat : depuis le début des années 1970, on a pratiquement cessé, du côté francophone, d'écrire sur — et donc d'interpréter — le Canada anglais et son histoire, alors qu'à l'inverse, le même processus de spécialisation de l'histoire a amené au même moment beaucoup d'historiens anglo-canadiens à écrire sur le Québec comme objet d'études spécifique, histoire notamment de comprendre le fameux « what does Quebec want ». Au même titre que les femmes ou les Autochtones, les Canadiens français et les Franco-Québécois faisaient désormais partie de ces groupes ayant des récriminations face à la société canadienne en place, doléances dont il fallait tenir compte désormais. Cela s'est donc souvent traduit par l'apparition, dans les synthèses d'histoire canadienne anglophone publiées ces vingt-cinq dernières années, de chapitres spécialisés sur le Québec dont on cherchait désormais à présenter le point de vue de manière respectueuse et compréhensive.

Je déplore donc quelque peu cette situation où, comme Québécois, je me sens étudié et radiographié sous toutes mes coutures par des Anglo-Canadiens (ce qui est tout à fait correct en soi), alors qu'à l'inverse, au Québec, on ignore un peu beaucoup, et surtout nos étudiants, l'évolution du Canada anglais et l'histoire qui a fait que la société anglo-canadienne est ce qu'elle est aujourd'hui, à une période de notre histoire où justement il serait vital de mieux la connaître compte tenu des débats actuels et futurs sur la question nationale.

De même, personnellement, la connaissance de l'histoire du Canada anglais m'a beaucoup aidé à comprendre et à mettre en perspective l'histoire du Québec, à la relativiser en quelque sorte. Un exemple parmi d'autres, Duplessis et la « Grande noirceur ». C'est en constatant le profond conservatisme social et politique que l'on retrouve dans beaucoup d'autres provinces canadiennes après la guerre que j'ai compris que Duplessis et le « duplessisme » n'étaient en fait que la version québécoise d'un phénomène généralisé et présent, sauf exceptions, à la grandeur de l'Amérique du Nord. Entre Duplessis, Hepburn (Ontario), Bennet (Colombie-Britannique) et même le « libéral » Smalwood (Terre-Neuve), pas de différences fondamentales! Les mêmes politiques antisyndicales, le même esprit de libéralisme économique visant à faire profiter au maximum leur province de la prospérité économique ambiante en favorisant l'entreprise privée et les investissements, qu'ils soient canadiens ou américains. Entre l'Ontario et le Québec d'après-guerre, la même arrivée massive d'immigrants, le même baby-boom entraînant une augmentation semblable des dépenses de l'État provincial dans la santé et l'éducation, la même société de consommation, la même passion des jeunes pour Elvis, etc. Bien sûr, tous ces phénomènes sont vécus au Québec avec les particularités propres à la société québécoise de l'époque, de sorte que l'« universel » dont je parle est tempéré par le « particulier » propre à chaque province ou région du Canada. Je ne prétends donc pas ici que le Québec de l'époque n'ait pas de caractères propres, de phénomènes particuliers, comme par exemple la présence pesante de l'Église catholique dans le système scolaire (quoique encore, le cas terre-neuvien vient atténuer cette spécificité…). À certains égards, la Saskatchewan socialiste représente peut-être encore plus que le Québec un cas d'exception au sein du Canada d'après-guerre. Quoiqu'il en soit, en histoire, bien souvent, il n'y a rien de plus universel que le cas particulier, et le point que je tente ici — trop brièvement, on m'en excusera — de mettre de l'avant est qu'une meilleure connaissance de l'histoire du Canada anglais peut favoriser à son tour une meilleure compréhension de l'histoire québécoise auprès de nos propres étudiants.

Et que l'on m'entende bien : ce n'est pas un propagandiste de l'unité nationale canadienne qui parle ici, mais un enseignant et didacticien de l'histoire du Québec. Car en effet, je pense que la question de l'enseignement de l'histoire nationale au Canada est un faux problème si on tente de l'aborder en soi, et si on ne relie pas cette question à celle plus pesante des rapports entre les trois nationalismes qui se sont développés au Canada et qui sont toujours actifs, soit le nationalisme franco-québécois, le nationalisme anglo-canadien et le nationalisme autochtone. Je pense que la question de l'*histoire* nationale ne se règlera pas tant que la *question* nationale au Québec et au Canada ne se règlera pas. Et autant dire que ce problème ne trouvera pas de « solution » à court ou à moyen terme au sens où, par exemple, on en arriverait à un seul récit unificateur « coast to coast » dans les écoles du pays. Au Québec, la position que j'exprime ici n'a rien d'originale et est communément admise, me semble-t-il, y compris chez les historiens ou personnages publics qui désirent le maintien du Québec dans le giron constitutionnel canadien.

Mais cela étant dit, il m'arrive souvent de penser que le principal obstacle à cet objectif d'un manuel unique, ou à tout le moins d'un grand récit historique national unique, qui dans beaucoup d'autres pays paraîtrait louable et irait de soi, est la présence du Québec et de son projet national bien à lui, plus que la présence du nationalisme autochtone. Parions que si un jour le Québec fait son indépendance politique, il ne se passera pas beaucoup de temps pour que le reste du Canada se dote d'une histoire « nationale » unique, bien à elle, d'un océan à l'autre...

Notes

[1] Ce texte est proche de l'esprit dans lequel il a été originalement conçu pour la conférence, soit une réflexion « impressionniste » tirée de mon expérience personnelle en tant qu'auteur et enseignant, et destinée à servir de prélude à un échange entre les participants et l'auditoire. En vue de sa publication, je l'ai retravaillé afin d'étoffer et d'appuyer davantage certaines de mes propositions. Je prie donc le lecteur d'en tenir compte et de se montrer indulgent à cet égard... Par ailleurs, les idées qui y sont développées n'engagent que moi.

[2] J'emploierai dans ce texte l'expression de J. Létourneau, « histoire pluraliste », pour désigner, suivant ses propres mots, « ce récit reconnaissant la diversité spatiale, ethnique, sociale, culturelle et sexuelle du pays » et qui s'est généralement traduit dans les synthèses d'histoire qui s'en réclament par la multiplication de chapitres spécifiques portant sur ces « identités partielles » (J. Létourneau, *Passer à l'avenir. Histoire, mémoire, identité dans le Québec d'aujourd'hui*, Montréal, Boréal, 2000, pp. 86-87).

[3] J.-F. Cardin et C. Couture, avec la coll. de G. Alaire, *Histoire du Canada : Espace et différences*, Ste-Foy, Presses de l'Université Laval, 1996. 397 p. Dans ce texte, bien que l'esprit de la session à laquelle j'ai participée était justement de faire appel à l'expérience des participants en tant qu'auteurs, je ne ferai allusion à cet ouvrage et à son contenu que dans la mesure où cela éclairera mon propos. Pour une analyse critique de l'ouvrage, voir les textes liés au débat « À propos de deux manuels récents d'histoire du Canada » organisé par le comité de rédaction de la *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. 51, n° 4, printemps 1998, pp. 549-577.

[4] Létourneau, p. 101.

[5] P. Seixas, « History's Fractured Mirror », *Globe and Mail*, 26 décembre 2000, p. A19.

[6] Non pas qu'en histoire les mythes — au sens d'un rappel plus ou moins sacralisé et vénérateur de personnages ou d'évènements exemplaires, comme le font par exemple les *Minutes du Patrimoine* — n'aient pas leur place dans l'espace public ou même à l'école, bien au contraire, mais ils ne peuvent remplacer le travail intellectuel plus exigeant lié à l'acquisition de la méthode historique, ce qu'on nomme de plus en plus la « pensée historique ». Comme le mentionne une fois de plus le professeur Seixas : « These – like the successful Heritage Minutes – are excellent vehicles for intensifying historical consciousness, but not for advancing it » (*loc. cit.*)

[7] Les références ici pourraient être nombreuses, allant de Michel Foucault à Hayden White, en passant par Roland Barthes. Je me contenterai d'une seule, retenue parce qu'elle vient d'un historien dont les idées post-modernistes ont eu quelques retentissements depuis une dizaine d'années dans le monde de l'histoire et de son enseignement, en particulier dans le monde anglophone : Keith Jenkins, *Re-thinking History*, London, Routledge, 1991. Jenkins a par la suite développé et précisé son point de vue dans d'autres écrits. Toujours controversé, il a été invité à donner la conférence d'ouverture au tout récent colloque *The Future of the Past*, tenu en mars 2002 à l'Université Western Ontario.

[8] C. Couture et J.-F. Cardin, « L'histoire du Canada et le problème de la narration », *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. 51, n° 4, printemps 1998, pp. 566-568.

[9] Cardin, Couture et Allaire, *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[10] Létourneau, p. 107.

[11] À ce sujet, voir les comptes rendus critiques de Béatrice Craig et Michèle Dagenais dans « À propos de deux manuels récents d'histoire du Canada », *loc.cit.*, en particulier les pp. 553 et 560-562. [Indiquer aussi Dionne dans *Spirale*, si il parle de cet aspect.]

[12] Couture et Cardin, *loc.cit.*, p. 569-570.

[13] J'ai personnellement donné des cours d'histoire du Québec et d'histoire du Canada aux niveaux collégial et universitaire, de 1992 à 2001, période durant laquelle j'ai pu maintes fois le constater…

[14] J. L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* New York, Harper Collins, 1998.

[15] Létourneau, pp. 87-88.

[16] D. Owram, « Narrow Circles : The Historiography of Recent Canadian Historiography », *National History*, vol. 1, no1, hiver 1997, p. 17. Dans le meme esprit, on lira aussi avec profit: Charles W. Humphries, "The Past and the Culture of Compliance: My History, Your History, No History" dans T.H.B. Symons éd., *Les lieux de la mémoire. La commémoration du passé du Canada*, Société royale du Canada, 1997, pp. 119-126.

[17] Cardin, Couture et Allaire, *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Interlude historique

Cyril Jessop / National Archives of Canada / PA-030212

NELLIE McCLUNG – "Women are going to form a chain, a greater sisterhood than the world has ever known." So said Nellie McClung in 1916, the same year that her native Manitoba became the first province to give women the vote. From Manitou to Winnipeg to Edmonton, this brash teacher left her mark on reform movements such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and female suffrage. She was elected to the Alberta legislature in 1921 and fought for progressive social measures including dower rights for women and factory safety laws. A powerful public speaker, she nonetheless felt constrained by party politics and served only one term. Soon after, McClung and four other women (the Famous Five) successfully fought to have women recognized as "persons" under the law. McClung was also a prolific author, publishing sixteen books including *Sowing Seeds in Danny*, her first. She died September 1, 1951.

NELLIE McCLUNG – « Les femmes vont former une chaîne, la plus grande fraternité que le monde ait connu », a dit Nellie McClung en 1916, année où le Manitoba, sa province natale, devient la première province à donner le droit de vote aux femmes. De Manitou à Winnipeg jusqu'à Edmonton, cette enseignante impétueuse laisse sa marque par des mouvements de réforme tels que le Women's Christian Temperance Union et le suffrage féminin. Elle est élue à la législature d'Alberta en 1921 et se bat pour le progrès social, les droits de succession des femmes et des normes de sécurité dans les usines. Malgré qu'elle soit une oratrice convaincante, elle se sent contrainte par la politique de parti et ne sert qu'une année. Peu après, McClung et quatre autres femmes (les Fameuses cinq) débattent avec succès la reconnaissance légale des femmes en tant que « personnes ». McClung a écrit 16 livres dont *Sowing Seeds in Danny*, son premier. Elle meurt le 1er septembre 1951.

Historical Interlude

Un portrait imaginaire vers 1886 de Tecumseh (artiste inconnu) / Archives Nationales du Canada / C-000319

TECUMSEH – A great Shawnee war chief, Tecumseh is remembered as a tragic figure and remarkable orator whose heroic death marked the end of an era of Indian resistance. Born in the Ohio Valley around 1768, Tecumseh (named for a meteor) energetically pursued first a life of peaceful coexistence for his people with the Americans, followed by a widespread Indian resistance movement against US territorial ambitions. The Shawnee were losing their land, driven from their homes on the Ohio into scattered sites. Tecumseh worked on a national scale to rally disparate native peoples to a defense of their religion and traditions against the Americans, but in the end his efforts were futile. He allied with the British and Canadians in the War of 1812 and his support was vital to the survival of British Canada. After a great victory in the woods at Fort Meigs, Tecumseh was killed at the battle of Moraviantown in October 1813.

TECUMSEH – On se souvient de Tecumseh, un grand chef Shawnee, comme un personnage tragique et un orateur remarquable dont la mort a marqué la fin d'une époque de résistance amérindienne. Né dans la vallée de l'Ohio vers 1768, Tecumseh (nommé d'après un météore) poursuivait une vie énergique et en coexistence paisible avec les Américains, jusqu'à ce qu'il doive mener un mouvement de résistance contre les ambitions territoriales des États-Unis. Alors, les Shawnee perdent leurs terres et se font chasser de leur maison dans l'Ohio vers des sites éparpillés. Tecumseh travaille au niveau national pour rallier des peuples disparates dans le but de défendre leur religion et leurs traditions contre les Américains, mais ses efforts demeurent futiles. Il s'allie aux Britanniques et aux Canadiens dans la Guerre de 1812 et son support est vital pour le Canada britannique. Après une brillante victoire dans la forêt à Fort Meigs, Tecumseh est assassiné pendant la bataille de Moraviantown en octobre 1813.

CANADA: ITS CRADLE, ITS NAME, ITS SPIRIT:

The Stadaconan Contribution to Canadian Culture and Identity

ABSTRACT

Georges Sioui shares with us some of his 'secret Huron Knowledge" about the Stadaconas's relationship with Jacques Cartier and his people, including the treacherous acts committed by the Frenchmen despite the hospitality and cordiality extended to them by their hosts. The author believes that a better understanding of the history of the encounters between Aboriginals and Europeens in Canada can potentially lessen the "glacial indifference of mainstream society" towards Canadian aboriginal people.

I am a Huron and a Canadian Indian. I am well aware that my nation originates in part from the Wendat of present-day Ontario and that the name "Huron" was given by the French to the Wendat as a way to belittle, negate and ultimately, dispossess them. However, I am able to fully assume the history that made me and my people what we are today, that is, Hurons. That name allows us to see the whole picture of where we have been, where we are and where we want to go. To me, Huron means being Canadian in a uniquely profound way, a sacred way. Being a Huron means being directly related to the Stadaconans, the people who were there before Quebec City existed, just like the rocks, the trees and the Saint-Charles and Saint-Lawrence rivers. The Stadaconans were those of my ancestors who, in 1535, gave Jacques Cartier a cradle, a name and a spirit for the country he fancied he had discovered: Kanatha.

I guess my dear reader already has a sense that if asked to talk or write about "Aboriginal Contributions to Canadian Culture and Identity," I can really get going. I will use the opportunity to share with my fellow Canadians some of my secret Huron knowledge about what the most ancient Canadians, the Stadaconas, did in order to help create a country that would, from then on, have to include Cartier's people and, as they already knew, so many other Europeans. I use the words "have to" because the French and others (such as the Basques) showed clear signs, by 1535, that they were going to keep coming here, many to stay. We knew this from at least two of our own Stadaconan youth who had been deceitfully captured by Cartier the year before and brought back home to Stadacona in 1535 on Cartier's second voyage.

At this point, some readers may object that the Huron, reputed to have come from (what is now) Ontario to (what is now) Quebec about 115 years later (1650), when their country was definitively destroyed "by the Iroquois," cannot claim to be ethnically related to the Stadaconans. I would answer that recent archaeological findings have confirmed our "coming to Quebec" in 1649-1650. It was, in fact, a return home for many of our families who had their roots as Stadaconans, but had had to flee from their ancestral "Quebec" lands as a result of the first impact of the French and European invasion in Cartier's time. More than any other Amerindian group, the Huron of today, though few in number, carry the heritage of the Stadaconans, just as they are the principal carriers of the spiritual and intellectual heritage of many of the great Iroquoian (or Nadouek) peoples and confederacies who have disappeared: the Tionontati or Tobacco, the Attiwandaronk or Neutral, the Erié or Cougars, the Wenro, the Susquehanna, the Hochelaga and others.

Cartier first used the word "Canada" in his log book in 1535, on his second voyage, to designate both the town of Stadacona (now Quebec City) and the country whose centre it was, which extends approximately from Trois-Rivières to l'Ile-aux-Coudres. The previous year, Cartier's three ships had entered the Gulf of the Saint Lawrence and had encountered two groups of Amerindians: Mi'kmaq (Micmacs) and Stadaconans. These people possibly journeyed far away from their homes with other people from "Canada." The Stadaconans camped at present-day Gaspé and were catching lots of fish and smoking them.

On Friday, July 24, 1534, Cartier had a large cross made and planted at the entrance of the bay of Gaspé, carrying the inscription: "Vive le Roi de France." Donnacona, whom Cartier will identify a year later (September 8, 1535) as the "Seigneur du Canada," paddled up to Cartier's ship with three of his sons. This historically important moment was described in some detail by Cartier. First, we learn that the Stadaconan leader and his people did not come as close to the French as they had

GEORGE SIOUI

George Sioui is a Huron-Wyandot traditionalist. Dr. Sioui has taught Amerindian Studies at various universities. He has been Dean of Academics at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. He has published two landmark books on Amerindian history and philosophy: For an Amerindian Autohistory (McGill-Queen's, 1992) and Huron-Wendat. The Heritage of the Circle (UBC Press, 1999).

during the initial days of this one-week encounter. Rather, Donnacona's canoe remained at a distance while he addressed the French to explain to them that, as Cartier understood, "all the land is his" and that his people opposed the making and the planting of that object, which the French call a cross and collectively worship. (We know from many early sources that Aboriginal people were then able to and, in fact, did enforce their strict prohibition that the Europeans should not cut even a twig or to take anything from their land without their permission.) We also learned that even though very far away from their homes and immediate country, these first Canadians shared territorial rights and, therefore, land stewardship with the Mi'kmaq. Also importantly, we learned that these Frenchmen, far from being affected by this defensive act against their intrusion, had a subterfuge ready to use that was intended to make the Native people understand that the French did not believe they had to respect the political order that Native peoples had already established on their lands. At the end of Donnacona's harangue, which Cartier found lengthy, he showed the Stadaconan leader an axe, feigning a wish to barter it for a bearskin that the Chief wore. The latter, moved by this gesture, came closer to the French ship, "believing he was going to get [the axe]." Upon this, one of the sailors grabbed the Stadaconans' canoe, which allowed two or three Frenchmen to get into it and force two of Donnacona's sons to climb into Cartier's boat. Fear of French arms and the vulnerability of the women and children present may have been a factor in the lack of Stadaconan resistance to the treacherous act of the French, to whom the Aboriginal people had given no motive whatsoever to conduct themselves in such underhanded manner.

At the end of Donnacona's harangue, which Cartier found lengthy, he showed the Stadaconan leader an axe, feigning a wish to barter it for a bearskin that the Chief wore. The latter, moved by this gesture, came closer to the French ship, "believing he was going to get [the axe]."

The French, on board their ship, made "a great show of love" for their two captives in presence of their people gathered in many canoes in the bay of Gaspé. Cartier, then, responded to Donnacona's speech about the cross and about Aboriginal "ownership" of the land by explaining (again deceitfully) that the cross was only meant to be a landmark for future visits, which they intended to make soon, and that, at any rate, they would then bring with them all sorts of gifts, of iron and otherwise, for Donnacona's people. This, of course, meant that the French, despite the strange way they had acted by seizing Donnacona's sons, still felt that they had to pay for using the land and, furthermore, had to account to the Aboriginal people for that use and for their presence. The Stadaconans considered all the components of this new necessary relationship: the love and solicitude the French showed for their two captured "Sauvages;" their promise to bring them back soon; and the strategic knowledge about the French these two young men would bring back. The Stadaconans, then, decided that they would, in time, be able to control and contain those newcomers. They showed themselves to be happy enough about everything. They even promised that they would not cut down the cross. Thus ended, on July 24, 1534, this prelude to France's Canadian adventure.

Over the next year they spent in France, Cartier's two Stadaconan captives, Domagaya and Taignoagny, studied the French in order to understand their motives and their aims and devised their own Aboriginal strategy. Most certainly, the two young men, probably drawing maps, had spoken to Jacques Cartier and other French about their "Kanatha," that is, their "chief town," which was Stadacona (present-day Quebec City). Little did they know that the French would use this descriptive word as the name of a country, an actual "Kingdom" called "Canada." Nor could the two Stadaconans imagine that their father, Donnacona, had been made a European-style monarch in this new land, which the French fancied and planned to conquer (steal). Certainly, these two sons of an important Aboriginal Headman could not have foreseen that their father, too, would soon be deceitfully and forcefully captured by Cartier and his men on May 3, 1636, and would die in France less than two years afterwards, sick and mortally sad for his lost people and country.

However, much happened before Donnacona's capture that is very significant to the Stadaconan contribution to Canada's culture and identity. As promised, Cartier did return on a second voyage the following year. Cartier's three ships left Saint-Malo on May 19, 1535. Taking advantage of their two Amerindian guides' knowledge of the geography of the two coasts from the entrance of the gulf right up to Montreal (Hochelaga) and beyond (Cartier is explicit about that knowledge and assistance), the French took their time to reconnoitre (they, of course, said "discover") the country, where they met inhabitants in every part.

The French were intent on visiting three "countries," namely, Canada, Saguenay and Hochelaga. Cartier's account and other evidence (including our own oral tradition) indicate that Donnacona's sons, already well trained in the region's geopolitics, had reasoned that such an exploratory plan, still to be approved by leading Stadaconan Councils and their allies, could potentially develop into an eventual alliance between their people and the French. They first took the French to Canada, where Donnacona, their father and major leader, lived.

Donnacona was a man whose authority the French already knew extended at least as far east as Gaspé.

Cartier and his people believed that during their year spent in France, Taignoagny and Domagaya had become naturally imbued with a sense of French cultural and religious superiority in relation to their own people, and would, therefore, once back home in Canada, be perfectly prepared to help the French conquer their land and peoples. To Cartier's dismay, the attitude of the two young men changed radically from the moment they set foot on their own soil once again. Understandably, that evening and night of September 8, 1535, was one spent in intense discussion and long-awaited revelations about the French and their land. The Aboriginal people of the region had, by this time, been aware of and mystified by the Europeans for almost four decades.[1]

Fixated on the idea of finding a passage to the Orient, its gold and its other riches, the French were determined to visit Hochelaga and, at a later date, Saguenay, another very rich "kingdom," according to the two Stadaconan captives and guides. During the trip back, the Stadaconans had agreed that they would lead the French to Hochelaga. However, Donnacona and other council leaders did not think the time was appropriate. Not only was the season too advanced to travel much more, but there were also strict protocols to be learned and observed regarding the laws of a particular territory, the respect to be paid to its leaders, customs of different Aboriginal nations, the advance notice to be sent to another country that one wished to visit, and many other things to be aware of.

The French had only been in "Canada" for six days when on September 14, they began pressing their two former captives to lead them to Hochelaga. On the next day, Taignoagny, whom Cartier resented more than he did Domagaya, informed the French captain that the Headman Donnacona was annoyed to see the French constantly bearing arms, to which Cartier replied that he (Taignoagny) knew very well that this was the way in France and that he would, therefore, let his men bear arms. Still, the Stadaconans remained cheerful and optimistic that they would eventually find common ground and make the French see their real interests, which meant using the friendship that was being offered them to create a larger, more affluent and powerful society from uniting the two peoples.

On September 16, Donnacona and 500 of his people (roughly the population of the town of Stadacona) approached Cartier's two main boats anchored in the harbour of the Saint Charles River. The leaders entered Cartier's boat to once again try to impress on the French that they should not navigate towards Hochelaga (Montreal) at this time (they, of course, thought of another time, likely the following spring). Taignoagny, once again acting as the spokesman for the Stadaconans, withdrew his offer to guide Cartier, stating that his father, Donnacona, did not wish him to go because the Headman had said, "la rivière ne valait rien" (the river forebode nothing good). The French explorer answered that his mind was set to go anyway, adding that should Taignoagny change his mind and agree to accompany them as he had promised, he would receive gifts and attention from the French that would make him happy. At any rate, Cartier explained, his aim was only to make a quick trip to see Hochelaga and then return to Canada. Taignoagny remained firm in his refusal to go and the visit ended.

Over the next year they spent in France, Cartier's two Stadaconan captives, Domagaya and Taignoagny, studied the French in order to understand their motives and their aims and devised their own Aboriginal strategy. Most certainly, the two young men, probably drawing maps, had spoken to Jacques Cartier and other French about their "Kanatha," that is, their "chief town," which was Stadacona (present-day Quebec City).

The next day, the Stadaconans staged a very sensitive and solemn effort to make the French reconsider their plan to go to Hochelaga and, mostly, to appreciate the great solidarity that would result from uniting their two peoples. They attempted this by actually marrying Jacques Cartier to the highest-ranking of their marriageable young women. To this day, an account other than Cartier's own has never been presented to Canadians about this very meaningful event in their country's history.

I have personally witnessed wedding ceremonies and other similar ceremonies still practised by Canadian Aboriginal peoples whose spiritual ways are almost identical to ours. I will take the reader through Cartier's account of what happened to him, the young maiden and the people of Canada that day. First, we are told that the people of Stadacona walked up to the French boats at low tide with large quantities of eels and other fish, as gifts for the French. Then, there was much chanting and dancing, which usually occurred at such visits, Cartier said. What Cartier did not see, at this point, was that these particular songs and dances were preparatory to a specific ceremony that was about to take place. As well, the abundant quantities of fish and the prevailing feasting atmosphere that was described, indicate that the whole town (very likely with many guests and visitors from neighbouring places) was present for a very important event – a ceremony ordained after much praying, chanting, council-making and, quite likely, fasting, under the highest spiritual leadership.

Then, the Agouhanna (a title carried by Donnacona, which implies very high stature in society) had his people

(likely, the other leaders) stand to one side and drew a circle on the sand, inside of which he had Cartier and his own principals stand. Donnacona then made a long speech in front of the, thus, reunited French and Stadaconans. While he spoke, the headman "holds the hand of a girl of about ten to twelve years old" whom, after finishing speaking, he presented to the French captain. At this point, all of Donnacona's people began to "scream and shout, as a sign of joy and alliance." Now, the fact that Cartier accepted the girl was affirmed by the loud, festive reaction of the throng. At any rate, was not Cartier and all of these Frenchmen, in the eyes of the Amerindians, much too long deprived of normal social relations, including those of a man with his wife, or a woman's companionship, as sadly seen in their disorderly behaviour and appearance? Could so many negative traits in the present state of their intercultural relations not be modified by beginning to create a normal human life, a society around those angry, rude, rowdy strangers?

Following this ceremony, two younger boys were given to Cartier in the same official way, upon which the Stadaconans made similar demonstrations of joy.[2] Cartier then officially thanked Donnacona for these presents. Finally, a crucial detail was given by Taignoagny: the "girl" (in Aboriginal cultural terms, she is a *young woman*) ceremonially given (again, in the Aboriginal social frame of reference, that gift was a wife) to Jacques Cartier was "Lord Donnacona's sister's own daughter." This, in the matrilineal system of these Huron-Iroquoians, meant that the young woman was called "my daughter" by Donnacona, and that she belonged to the same clan as he does, as opposed to his own children, who belonged to their mother's clan.

Thus, that young woman was the highest, as well as the purest, gift that could possibly have been offered to the first man among these Frenchmen. The Stadaconans probably thought, given these gifts and a chance to establish a normal life in this new land, who would care about an oppressive monarch back in problem-ridden France and about the lifelong odious obedience that was owed him: this land was Donnacona's, this was a pure and abundant, free country, this was Canada. Most surely and naturally, there was a burning desire in many French hearts present to make that Canadian way of thinking their own.[3] Unfortunately, of course, it was, for that time, impossible. It was almost entirely a matter of religious prejudice.[4]

Cartier had his human gifts "put on board the ships." He gave no details about what occurred to the three young Stadaconans thereafter, except that the "older girl," had, three days later, fled the ship and that a special guard had been arranged so that the two boys would not do likewise. When finally "found" by Donnacona and her own family, the young woman explained that she had escaped because "the pages had beaten her," and not, as the French contended, because her own people had tried to make her (and the two boys) leave the French. Cartier showed reluctance to take the young woman back until, he said, the Stadaconan leaders (her family) begged him to do so. (To them, at least, Jacques Cartier and she were husband and wife.) She was accompanied to the ship by her father and other relatives. Nothing further is said about her.

Cartier tells us that Taignoagny said to him, after the bride-giving ceremony, that these three human presents had been given in order to keep the French from going up to Hochelaga. I have already presented my reasoning, based on the available evidence which includes my own culturally informed perception, about the Stadaconans' motives for trying their hardest to create unifying bridges between themselves and the French. At any rate, I believe Cartier's blinding obsession about going to Hochelaga is self-evident. The last-ditch attempt of the Stadaconans to make him stay, on the next day, and the strange but accurate warning that he received about having to prepare for wintering right away, are further proof of Cartier's foolhardiness and spite toward his Aboriginal hosts, friends and benefactors.

While he spoke, the headman "holds the hand of a girl of about ten to twelve years old" whom, after finishing speaking, he presented to the French captain. At this point, all of Donnacona's people began to "scream and shout, as a sign of joy and alliance." Now, the fact that Cartier accepted the girl was affirmed by the loud, festive reaction of the throng.

On September 18, 1535, the Stadaconans, again attempting to avert misfortune from the French, turned to supernatural forces. Cartier described how this was acted out before his eyes. First, three men clothed themselves in black and white fur (Cartier disparagingly says dog skins) and wore long horns on their heads. The three men hid in a canoe and, momentarily, rose up as their craft approached the boats. The spirit-being in the middle began to make a "marvellous" speech directed at the French, even though the three "devils" never even took notice of the French, as they floated past the French boats. The canoe was steered back to shore. Upon arriving, the three beings dropped to the bottom of the canoe, as though they had died. They were then carried to the woods in the canoe by Donnacona and other men. Every single Stadaconan followed their leaders into the forest and disappeared from sight. Then began a half-hour "predication" by the three spirit-beings. At the end of this, Taignoagny and Domagaya came out of the woods and, after the Catholic way they had observed, walked towards the French, their hands joined as if in prayer. "Showing great admiration," they advanced with their eyes lifted towards the sky and pronounced the words "Jesus, Maria, Jacques Cartier," as though (my interpretation) asking for

protection for Cartier and his men. At that moment, the French captain, seeing their grave countenance and having witnessed their "ceremonies," inquired "what the matter was, what new things had occurred." The two young men answered that there was "pitiful news," that nothing foreboded well ("il n'y a rien de bon"). When pressed further by Cartier, his two usual interpreters told him that Cudouagny (likely the Great Spirit for the Stadaconans and possibly the Hochelagans) had spoken in Hochelaga and, through the three spirit impersonators mentioned above, had announced that there would be so much ice and snow that they (the French) would all die. (Actually, 25 sailors died of sickness and hardship over the winter. At one point, Cartier himself became quite certain that all, including himself, would die. We will later see how they were saved.)

To be sure, Cartier made light of the Stadaconans' way of trying to make him stay and to persuade his companions to start preparing for their first Canadian winter. "Go tell your messengers that your god Cudouagny is a fool who does not know what he talks about," retorted Cartier amid laughter from all the French who were there. "If you just believe in Jesus, he will keep you from the cold," added a sailor. As a way of restoring balance in the communication, the two youths then diplomatically asked Cartier whether he had had Jesus' word on the matter, to which the captain curtly replied that his priests had asked him (Jesus) about it and learned that the weather was going to be all right. Taignoagny and Domagaya gave many thanks to Cartier for this exchange and returned to fetch from the woods their own townsfolk who, as Cartier detected, could not conceal their disillusion, even amidst their cheers, shouts, chants, dances and other expressions of joy.

The next day, on September 19, Cartier's smaller vessel left for Hochelaga. The round trip lasted 24 days, during which the rest of his men, back in Stadacona, mostly used their time bracing for imagined attacks from the Stadaconans. As for them, the Stadaconans continued to demonstrate the same goodwill and humanity toward their strange visitors, bringing them victuals and waiting for their visits, which were, in fact, quite infrequent. Because the French did not visit very often, they began suffering from a lack of fresh food, especially meat and fish.

The rest of the story of Cartier's second voyage to Canada is better known. In brief, things soon turned very bad for the French, as foreseen by the Stadaconans. From mid-November, the cold was brutally felt by the ill-prepared Frenchmen. From December, the whole crew was hit hard by scurvy. By mid-February, eight sailors were dead. By mid-April, 25 had succumbed to the scourge and another 40 were dying; of 110, "there were not three healthy men," wrote Cartier. "We were so overtaken by the said disease," confided the explorer, "that we had almost lost all hope of ever returning to France."[5]

Most readers will already know that people stopped dying in Cartier's fort thanks to a remedy (very likely, the white cedar) that the Stadaconans gave the French and taught them how to prepare. The credit for this human solicitude and actual salvation from sure catastrophe, however, was entirely given to God, the Europeans' God. The surviving crewmen, further strengthened by the fresh meat and fish that the Amerindians brought them every day, got better so rapidly that in less than three weeks, they were ready to set sail for France. However, as many readers must also know, they did not depart from Canada before realizing a very pressing dream: that of capturing Donnacona, Domagaya and Taignoagny, along with two other prominent leaders and two other young Stadaconans, one of whom was another pubescent girl. To succeed in laying his hands on these people, especially the headmen, Cartier had to act his wiliest and also use force, as he proudly recounted in his journal. We know that ten Stadaconans, probably all belonging to Donnacona's direct immediate family, were in possession of the French when they left for France on May 6, 1536. Among them were Donnacona, Taignoagny, Domagaya, two other chiefs, another girl "of about ten," (almost certainly) Cartier's Canadian wife and his two given sons, and lastly, two other persons of unknown gender or age.

Most readers will already know that people stopped dying in Cartier's fort thanks to a remedy (very likely, the white cedar) that the Stadaconans gave the French and taught them how to prepare.

One of Cartier's promises made to appease the Stadaconans after so callously and treacherously stealing their leaders was that he would bring back all ten of their people "in ten or twelve moons" (as, in fact, he had done with his first two captives). When he finally came back, without his captives, five years later and was asked by the Stadaconans what had become of their Agouhanna and other people, Cartier, still his deceitful self, replied that Donnacona had died and was buried in France (which was factual), but that all the others had remained there, where they were now married and had become "grands Seigneurs" (great Lords). We know from Cartier's own chronicle that eight more of his captives had died by then (French archival sources confirm that they all died within two years), except a girl of about 10 (at the time of her capture).

This time, in August 1541, the French arrived in Canada to find an Aboriginal population in a state of

virtual panic. Diplomacy was still present, but was mostly dictated by fear. The French had brought heavy weaponry and were ready for any eventuality. They were here to create a French colony. The Canadians' country would be theirs, for civilized Europeans were not bound to virtues practised by "Savages."

However for now, the task proved too great, support from France was not quite sufficient and the enmity of the First Peoples was too overwhelming. Cartier's third and last voyage ended in failure. However, the French (and Basque) presence in the Laurentian region increased year by year, drawn to the wealth of fur and fish. Hochelaga and Saguenay endured, but Canada's peoples, directly and forcibly affected by the European invasion (not just the sheer human pressure, but also, and mostly, by the ever-present, devastating new epidemic diseases), had to seek refuge, which archaeology in the last few decades has revealed (again confirming our own traditional belief), that they mostly found among the Wendat of present-day Ontario (in the Lake Simcoe-Georgian Bay area). According to leading archaeologists,[6] it is more likely that the original Canadians joined the Wendat Confederacy in the last decades of the 16th century, becoming its Nation of the Rock (maybe in remembrance of Stadacona: the place of the Big Standing Rock[7]).

Conclusion

No foundation can forever rest on lies, especially lies rooted in racial prejudice. While it is necessary to find the reasons and to understand why the French, like many Europeans at the time, perceived reality and other peoples as they did and acted with corresponding spite and inhumanity, it is equally necessary to help today's heirs to that ancient society (which means most of us, in greater or smaller measure) shed any lingering thinking and behavioural patterns related to that inheritance. We are long past the time when Europeans came here needing new places and new conditions for a renewed lease on life. However, after providing the same "Canadian" generosity and contributing the very best of themselves and what they have, our Aboriginal peoples are still being deceived, mistreated and visibly destroyed as peoples in this great, rich and powerful country. One can take the Stadaconans' history of contact with Europe and, thereafter, non-Aboriginal Canada, and apply it exactly to the historical and present-day experience of any other Canadian Aboriginal group or nation. After all the political, social, academic and religious rhetoric, the very real fact remains that Canada, born in 1534 with an Aboriginal spirit, given an Aboriginal name in 1535 and tenderly cared for in an Amerindian cradleboard by the people of Stadacona, has seen, and caused, its Aboriginal peoples to waste away during its 468 years of existence, while everyone else who has come here has, as Jacques Cartier and his men were, been cared for, healed and found a new life. Can we now stop saying that this was, and will continue to be, the price to pay for a true civilization, until Canada's "Indian problem" has been settled?

In this essay, I have mainly wanted to suggest to my readers and fellow Canadians that a better understanding of the way things happened in their country at the beginning of the contact between Aboriginals (the first Canadians) and Europeans is necessary if one is to also understand why all Canadians are still collectively afflicted by an immense incapacity to empathize, communicate and construct as we should, the kind of secure, happy future that we all desire for our children and their descendants. As an Aboriginal historian, I believe an ignorance of history is the major reason for the glacial indifference of mainstream society that is still felt by most of my Aboriginal fellow citizens and is known and denounced by many non-Aboriginal Canadians and others, and is the major reason so much impedes us collectively to tackle and conduct our many common affairs in normal, empathetic, intelligent ways.

Finally, a am grateful for this opportunity to write about our peoples – their very many important past, present and, maybe especially, potential future contributions to our great and dear country's culture and identity. I also wish to greet and thank my readers for their time.

Long live my country, Canada!

Endnotes

[1] Two centuries or so after the Vikings ceased coming to the region, vivid memories of them were certainly still present. However this time, these newcomers behaved in very different, much more aggressive ways than had their Norse predecessors.

[2] With a high-ranking young wife given to him by the first Headman of the land and two young boys, one of whom was Donnacona's own son, did Cartier not have prime human material with which to start up a very good life in "Canada?" The Stadaconans certainly thought he did.

[3] The "ensauvagement" of the French "coureurs des bois" probably was the most marking trait (and simultaneously the one most damned by the religious authorities) in French-Indian relations throughout the next two centuries. It produced Canada's Métis nation.

[4] Cartier exhibited his deep European religious conditioning and unfeelingly uttered a very dark sentence regarding the original Canadians when, pondering what little he knew about their spiritual beliefs, he simply wrote: "One must be baptized or go to hell."

[5] Since mid-November, the Stadaconans also had lost about 50 people. Cartier, reflecting the knowledge of his epoch, could and did blame the "Canadians" for his people's sickness. Today's science, however, informs us that, rather, the Stadaconans' disease was caused by the Europeans' presence, because they were beginning to be struck down by "contact epidemics."

[6] For sources, readers may consult my book *Huron-Wendat. The Heritage of the Circle* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999).

[7] Because of the imposing rocky promontory it presents, Quebec has historically been called "Canada's Gibraltar." I encourage readers to consult a remarkable book on Quebec City, published in 2001 by Les Presses de l'Université Laval: *Québec, ville et capitale*, a volume in the *Atlas historique du Québec*, which is edited by Serge Courville and Robert Garon.

EXPLORATEURS ET FRONTIÈRES

RÉSUMÉ

Ce compte rendu des voyages entrepris pas les explorateurs français et britanniques tente de démontrer que les moments fondateurs de l'histoire du Canada appartiennent aussi à l'histoire des États-Unis. Après tout, l'établissement de la frontière canadienne-américaine au long du 49iem parallèle ne dépend-t-elle pas d'un hasard précipité par un série de dénouements historiques au sud de notre frontière? Pour cette raison, l'auteur déplore le manque d'attention porté aux écrits des explorateurs Lewis et Clarke. Bien que les historiens canadiens considèrent que ces textes traitent de l'histoire américaine, ils contiennent d'importantes informations, comme par exemple des détails concernant le triste sort subi par les peuples Métis lors de la conquête de l'Amérique du Nord.

Ce n'est pas par esprit de contradiction, mais je me rends compte que mon propos illustrera plutôt l'absence plutôt que la présence d'un certain passé.

Jadis, pour provoquer mes étudiants, je soutenais que l'événement le plus important de l'histoire du Canada était la Révolution américaine. Est-ce que le Canada n'est pas né du grand schisme anglo-saxon - selon l'expression de l'historien Maurice Séguin - qui a déchiré l'Amérique du Nord en 1783 pour provoquer ensuite la séparation de la *Province of Quebec* en deux provinces, le Haut et le Bas Canada, de même que la création du Nouveau-Brunswick à côté de la Nouvelle-Écosse ?

Aujourd'hui je pose la question : d'où la frontière entre le Canada et les États-Unis tire-t-elle son origine? La délimitation de la partie est du Canada se trouve dans la proclamation royale de 1763 qui trace une frontière depuis le sud du lac Nipissing en direction du fleuve Saint-Laurent et du lac Champlain « par 45 degrés de latitude nord » « pour longer ensuite les terres hautes qui séparent les rivières qui se jettent dans le dit fleuve Saint-Laurent de celles qui se jettent dans la mer ».

Les Anglo-Américains qui avaient convoité la rive sud du fleuve Saint-Laurent étaient ainsi déjoués par les autorités britanniques qui ne se doutaient certes pas de l'énorme portée de leur décision.

Cette frontière, pour l'essentiel, résistera au temps. Elle résistera aux assauts de la révolution américaine et servira à délimiter, au sud, le Bas-Canada lors de l'Acte constitutionnel de 1791. C'est ainsi que le Québec, et par voie de conséquence le Canada, est toujours borné au sud par les états du Maine, du New Hampshire, du Vermont et de New York.

La rive sud du Saint-Laurent (à l'ouest de Montréal) et l'accès aux Grands Lacs, les Anglo-Américains l'obtiendront en partie en 1783 avec le second traité de Paris (1783), lequel trace en outre un début de frontière à l'ouest du lac Supérieur jusqu'au lac des Bois sur les limites du territoire de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson. Et au-delà? Il y aura ce tracé à la hauteur du 49^{e} degré de latitude nord. D'où vient-il?

Les Canadiens sont partout. Ou presque.

Si je me tourne vers le sujet de notre atelier *Explorers\Discoverers and Their Role in Canadian History*, les limites du Canada devraient être toutes autres. Louis Jolliet et le père Jacques Marquette ont descendu le Mississippi jusqu'au pays des Arkansas; Cavelier de LaSalle et Henri de Tonti ont exploré ce fleuve jusqu'au golfe du Mexique. Vienard de Bourgmont a remonté le Missouri jusqu'au pays des Arkansas puis des Padoucas (Comanches). Plus étonnante encore sera l'épopée des frères Pierre et Paul Mallet qui atteindront Santa Fe à partir du Missouri après avoir traversé diverses missions espagnoles dont l'une appelée Cagnada.

Sur les traces des ces explorateurs, des aventuriers canadiens suivent. D'autres explorateurs également. Les La Vérendrye sont réputés pour avoir atteint les Rocheuses. Or, le visiteur canadien qui s'arrête à Pierre, capitale du Dakota du Sud, découvre avec étonnement un monument dédié aux La Vérendrye. La ville de Pierre est au cœur du pays des Mandanes qui habitaient ces régions avant d'être exterminés par de successives épidémies de variole. C'est à partir de là que deux des fils de Pierre de La Vérendrye marchèrent vers l'ouest pour arriver, le 11 janvier 1743, « à la vue de

DENIS VAUGEOIS

Comme historien, Denis Vaugeois est l'auteur de plusieurs comptes rendus, articles et ouvrages dont *America, L'expédition de Lewis & Clark et la naissance d'une nouvelle puissance*, aux Éditions du Septentrion, 2002.

montagnes, (…) la plupart bien boisées de toutes espèces de bois et paraissant fort hautes ». Leur guide, le chef des Gens de l'arc, à la tête d'une troupe de quelque deux mille Indiens, ne peut aller plus loin par crainte des Gens du serpent, leurs ennemis. « Il est bien fâcheux, explique le chef indien à Chevalier de La Vérendrye, que je vous aie amené jusqu'ici et de ne pas pouvoir passer outre ».

Les La Vérendrye avaient atteint le pays des Mandanes et des Aricaras à partir du Fort La Reine construit sur la rivière Assiniboine. Cette route deviendra très fréquentée. C'est celle qu'empruntent les brigades de la North West dont les hommes aiment bien l'accueil que les Mandanes (ici au féminin) leur réservent. L'explorateur David Thompson qui les accompagne en janvier 1798 en a laissé une description non équivoque qui rejoint celle de l'explorateur Jean Baptiste Trudeau. Cette route sera sans doute celle suivie par le jeune François-Antoine Larocque dont la présence chez les Mandanes en novembre 1804 surprendra tellement les Américains Lewis et Clark, eux qui, après un interminable voyage à partir de Saint Louis, se croient arrivés au bout du monde. Encore qu'ils se savent toujours en territoire américain. Aussi, cette présence sur le Missouri d'agents de la North West Company ne leur plaît pas du tout.

Par les cartes dont les avait munis le président Jefferson, Lewis et Clark ne pouvaient ignorer que les Britanniques installés au nord du continent avaient une longueur d'avance dans le Nord-Ouest. La plus récente carte d'Aaron Arrowsmith ne profitait-elle pas d'informations obtenues des Canadiens David Thompson, Alexander Mackenzie et Peter Fidler.

Depuis longtemps, les agents de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson remontaient les rivières Churchill, Nelson et Hayes lesquelles leur avaient permis de pénétrer de plus en plus profondément dans le cœur du continent et finalement de croiser les routes suivies par les agents de la *North West* en provenance de Montréal. Durant un demi-siècle, les agents des deux compagnies rivaliseront sur la rivière Rouge, les rivières Saskatchewan, Assiniboine et Souris. Ceux de la *North West* poussent toujours plus loin sur la rivière de la Paix et l'Athabasca. En 1793, Alexander Mackenzie finit par atteindre le Pacifique un peu au nord du 50e degré de latitude nord tandis que David Thompson s'y rend en 1811 par le fleuve Columbia, c'est-à-dire bien au sud du 50e parallèle.

Très tôt au début du 19e siècle, l'Oregon, situé au nord et au sud de l'embouchure du fleuve Columbia, devient un territoire convoité par les Russes, les Espagnols, les Britanniques et les Américains. La lutte s'engagera entre ces deux derniers après une période d'occupation conjointe. La région sera vite envahie par des colons venus de l'Est et d'aussi loin que la vallée du Saint-Laurent. Ces derniers deviendront même assez nombreux pour donner naissance à des paroisses catholiques. Rappelons seulement que celui qu'on a surnommé le père de l'Oregon était né à Rivière-du-Loup près de Québec.

Le 49e, un choix arbitraire?

En 1818, la Grande-Bretagne et les États-Unis s'étaient entendus pour fixer la frontière les séparant au 49e degré de latitude nord depuis le lac des Bois jusqu'aux Rocheuses. Finalement, en 1846, les négociateurs des deux puissances coupèrent la poire en deux et, par le traité de Washington, prolongèrent le 49e parallèle comme frontière depuis les Rocheuses jusqu'au Pacifique, sauf pour l'île de Vancouver qui est cédée entièrement à la Grande-Bretagne et éventuellement au Canada, même si une extrémité de l'île se trouve au sud du 49eparallèle.

À première vue, le 49e parallèle paraît un choix arbitraire qui donne une frontière artificielle. C'est le cas, oui et non. À l'ouest des Rocheuses, oui; à l'est, non, même si ce n'est pas évident.

La clé, à notre avis, est dans l'acquisition de la Louisiane par les États-Unis en 1803. Là non plus, ce n'est pas évident. Dans l'esprit de plusieurs, la Louisiane est un état situé à l'embouchure du Mississippi. Quel est le rapport avec le 49e parallèle?

Tant qu'à embrouiller les pistes, disons que c'est Napoléon qui est ultimement responsable de plus de la moitié de la frontière qui sépare le Canada des États-Unis.

L'action des découvreurs et des explorateurs avait permis à la France de contrôler une bonne partie de l'Amérique du Nord. En 1763, cet ensemble bascule dans le giron britannique et vient s'ajouter aux quatorze colonies déjà existantes - je compte en effet la Nouvelle-Écosse. L'Amérique du Nord devient donc britannique, à l'exception du bassin occidental du Mississippi et curieusement de la ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans située sur le côté oriental.

Le véritable enjeu : la libre navigation sur le Mississippi

Bien peu d'historiens se sont intéressé à l'article 7 du traité de Paris de 1763. Il importe de le citer largement.

> « Afin de rétablir la paix sur des Fondements solides & durables, & écarter pour jamais tout sujet de Dispute par Rapport aux Limites des Territoires Britanniques et Français sur le Continent de l'Amérique, il est convenu, qu'à l'avenir les Confins entre les États de Sa Majesté Britannique & ceux de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne en cette Partie du monde, seront irrévocablement fixés par une Ligne tirée au milieu du Fleuve Mississippi depuis sa Naissance jusqu'à la rivière d'Iberville, & de là par une Ligne tirée au milieu de cette Rivière & des Lacs Maurepas & Pontchartrain jusqu'à la Mer; Et à cette Fin le Roy Très Chrétien cède (…) tout ce qu'il possède, ou dû posséder, du côté gauche du fleuve Mississippi, à l'Exception de la Ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans, & de l'Isle dans laquelle Elle est située, qui demeureront à la France. Bien entendu, que la navigation du fleuve Mississippi sera également libre tant aux Sujets de la Grande-Bretagne comme à ceux de la France, dans toute sa Largeur, & toute son Étendue, depuis sa Source jusqu'à la Mer.(…) Il est de plus stipulé, que les Batimens appartenants aux Sujets de l'une ou l'autre Nation ne pourront être arrêtés, visités, ni assujettis au Payement d'aucun Droit quelconque… »

Que comprendre? Avant tout, on constate que les rédacteurs du traité ignorent que le bassin ouest du

Mississippi et la ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans n'appartiennent plus à la France. Ce n'est pas pour rien qu'on dit toujours que la France avait cédé secrètement à l'Espagne la Louisiane peu avant la signature du traité du 10 février 1763. Ce rappel étant fait, il faut donc comprendre que ce qui est laissé à la France appartient en réalité à l'Espagne. Également, l'article 7 précise bien que la navigation sera libre entre l'île de la Nouvelle-Orléans et la rive droite du fleuve « aussi bien que l'Entrée & la Sortie par son Embouchure ».

Plusieurs d'entre vous serez surpris d'apprendre que la ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans est située sur une île. En réalité, cette ville est érigée sur la rive gauche du Mississippi, mais sur une immense bande de terre ceinturée d'eau, à l'ouest, le Mississippi, et à l'est, la rivière d'Iberville qui se jette dans les lacs Maurepas et Pontchartrain, puis dans la mer. Ajoutons encore que la navigation vers le golfe du Mexique se fait par le Mississippi et non par la rivière d'Iberville. Tout est là.

Ce qui devait s'appliquer à la France s'appliquera donc à l'Espagne. En 1783, les États-Unis acquièrent leur indépendance et se font céder par la Grande-Bretagne un territoire qui va jusqu'au Mississippi. Or celle-ci ne peut céder que ce qui lui appartient. La ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans reste donc soumise à la même juridiction que la rive droite. Quant à la libre navigation, c'est donc à négocier entre l'Espagne et les États-Unis.

L'affaire connaît des hauts et des bas. Au fur et à mesure qu'un peuplement se développe entre les Appalaches et le Mississippi, la question prend de l'importance. Le jour ou les états du Kentucky et du Tennessee prennent forme, le problème prend une dimension politique. Déjà ces deux états se sentent bien loin de Washington et manifestent même certaines velléités séparatistes. Jefferson en est conscient, mais résiste à la tentation de les laisser avec leur problème. Il épouse leur cause et considère essentiel d'assurer la libre navigation sur le Mississippi. Jusqu'à son élection à la présidence en 1801, l'affaire s'était négocié avec l'Espagne, mais voilà que la rumeur veut que l'Espagne ait été forcée de céder l'immense territoire de la Louisiane à la France, c'est-à-dire à Napoléon.

« Je viens de créer un rival à l'angleterre, » Napoléon, 1803.

Jefferson est un francophile. Son amour de la France ne l'aveugle pas. Bien au contraire, il se doute que cette puissance sera plus gênante que pouvait l'être l'Espagne. Le jour où les rumeurs se confirment, c'est-à-dire en octobre 1802, Jefferson a pris sa décision. James Monroe est envoyé à Paris rejoindre Robert Livingston avec le mandat très clair d'acquérir la Nouvelle-Orléans, à défaut de quoi « la guerre pourrait ne pas être loin, et il vaut mieux s'y préparer ». Les Français seraient-ils prêts à vendre la ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans? Ce serait étonnant de la part du jeune consul alors en pleine ascension. La Louisiane a déjà été française, il en a exigé la rétrocession. Quels sont ces plans? Ils sont liés à l'avenir de Saint-Domingue où les Noirs lui donnent cependant du fil à retordre. Joséphine, une fille des îles, lui a fait comprendre qu'une plantation sans esclaves ne vaut pas cher. La révolution française a aboli l'esclavage. Dans l'intérêt supérieur de la France, des ajustements s'imposent.

En 1802, Napoléon confie à son beau frère, le général Charles Leclerc, le soin de rétablir l'ordre à Saint-Domingue. C'est un échec. La guérilla et la fièvre jaune ont raison du général et de près des trois quarts de ses 20 000 hommes. Napoléon s'emploie à rapatrier sa sœur Pauline et son jeune fils. Le leader Haïtien, Toussaint L'Ouverture, est traîtreusement fait prisonnier, mais son acolyte Jean-Jacques Dessaline continue le combat et dote les insurgés d'un drapeau : il retranche le blanc du tricolore français! Quelques mois plus tard, soit le 18 janvier 1804, il proclamera l'indépendance d'Haïti, le nom indigène de Saint-Domingue.

> L'exploration menée par Lewis le long de la rivière Maria, expédition qui connaîtra un dramatique dénouement, est précisément menée pour tenter d'établir si cette rivière ne serait pas l'affluent du Missouri, et indirectement du Mississippi, dont la source est la plus au nord.

Au moment où Monroe se pointe à Paris, Napoléon ne reçoit que de mauvaises nouvelles d'Amérique. Il fait contre mauvaise fortune bon cœur et choisit d'appliquer un croc-en-jambe à son ennemi d'Outre-Manche. Napoléon connaît peut-être mal la Louisiane, mais il sait tout de même qu'elle jouxte les États-Unis à l'ouest et les territoires britanniques au nord. La guerre d'indépendance des États-Unis a laissé des séquelles entre les protagonistes. Mais, par ailleurs, la France n'a-t-elle pas été l'alliée des Américains? Il y là une amitié à entretenir. La France fera un énorme cadeau aux États-Unis. Elle lui cèdera pour une bouchée de pain, environ 3 cents l'acre (5200 mètres carrés), un territoire qui double sa superficie et surtout lui ouvre les portes d'une expansion fantastique.

L'affaire est conclue à Paris dès le 30 avril 1803. « Le Premier Consul de la République française, précise le texte du traité, désirant donner aux États-Unis une forte preuve de son amitié, cède par la présente aux États-Unis, au nom de la République française et à jamais, en toute souveraineté, la Louisiane avec ses droits et appartenances ». Pour les Américains, ce sera le *Louisiana Purchase*. Aujourd'hui, ce sont les États de la Louisiane, de l'Arkansas, de l'Oklahoma, du Missouri, du Kansas, de l'Iowa, du Nebraska, du Minnesota, des deux Dakotas, du Montana et d'une bonne partie du Wyoming et du Colorado. Bref, le Mississippi jusqu'à sa source, puis ses affluents jusqu'à leurs sources.

L'expédition confiée à Lewis et Clark se met en marche au moment où se conclut l'acquisition de la Louisiane. Les deux Américains devront informer les Indiens qu'ils ont un nouveau « père » à Washington et

ils devront eux-mêmes tenter de s'informer des limites de cette fameuse Louisiane. C'est ainsi qu'au moment du retour, Lewis et Clark se sépareront dans le but de reconnaître le plus de territoire possible. L'exploration menée par Lewis le long de la rivière Maria, expédition qui connaîtra un dramatique dénouement, est précisément menée pour tenter d'établir si cette rivière ne serait pas l'affluent du Missouri, et indirectement du Mississippi, dont la source est la plus au nord.

Il faudra bien des années et plusieurs explorations pour trouver les sources des multiples affluents du Mississippi, de même que celles de cet immense fleuve.

Les limites nordiques de la grande Louisiane

Plutôt qu'une frontière en zigzag plus ou moins à la hauteur du 49e parallèle, les négociateurs britanniques et américains conviennent, en 1818, d'échanger des territoires et acceptent finalement (1846) comme frontière le 49e degré de latitude nord à partir du lac des Bois jusqu'aux Rocheuses. D'où vient ce choix du 49e parallèle? Très nettement de l'acquisition du territoire de la Louisiane en 1803. Ainsi, le Canada correspond au versant nord du continent et les États-Unis au versant sud (au sens large). Le 49e est en effet grosso modo la ligne est-ouest de partage des eaux au centre de l'Amérique du Nord.

Autre résultat : les États-Unis, de pays côtier tourné vers l'Atlantique, deviennent une partie de continent mais, le temps de le dire, en viennent à se prendre pour tout le continent. C'est le fameux *Manifest Destiny*. Plus tard, ils interdiront toutes interventions européennes dans les Amériques – la doctrine Monroe- puis finiront par se proposer comme gendarmes de la planète. Ce jour est arrivé.

De la baie d'Hudson au golfe du Mexique; le Canada des explorateurs

Dans la foulée des explorateurs viennent les commerçants - quand ce ne sont pas les mêmes individus, puis les militaires, les arpenteurs ou les ingénieurs. Des relevés sont faits, des cartes naissent. Elles se retrouvent dans les bureaux des ministres et des rois.

L'histoire du Canada le montre bien, le rôle des découvreurs et des explorateurs n'est pas déterminant. Pas plus que le peuplement d'ailleurs. Même les guerres n'ont pas à être locales pour avoir de l'impact.

En 1713, l'Acadie, Terre-Neuve et la baie d'Hudson sont cédées à l'Angleterre sans qu'une seule bataille n'ait été perdue par les Français en Amérique.

Par contre, en 1763, le Canada aurait pu être rendu à la France malgré les défaites de cette dernière en Amérique. Voilà une affirmation qui est souvent répétée mais rarement démontrée. Il me suffira de rappeler le farouche lobby organisé par les planteurs britanniques qui obtinrent d'abord le désaveu de William Pitt, lequel songeait sérieusement à rendre le Canada et à garder plutôt la Guadeloupe; leur position fut amenée devant la Chambre des communes où les députés se déclarèrent en faveur du retour des îles à la France par 319 voix contre 65. Les riches planteurs craignaient la concurrence des planteurs français qui pratiquaient des prix très inférieurs. Après tout, les Français ne boivent pas leur thé sucré!

Si le sort d'un pays peut dépendre du hasard de négociations et d'enjeux presque triviaux, c'est encore plus vrai pour ses limites, ses frontières.

L'Amérique du Nord offrait aux explorateurs européens quatre importantes portes d'entrée. Elles menaient toutes au cœur du continent. Assez étonnamment, c'est aussi le cas de la baie d'Hudson. Les avenues qui en partent mènent en effet à la rencontre de celles qui s'inscrivent dans le prolongement du fleuve Saint-Laurent, seconde porte d'entrée. Les deux autres sont les fleuves Hudson et Mississippi. Chacune de ces voies de pénétration fit l'objet de disputes et d'affrontements entre Anglais et Français ou entre Anglais et Hollandais. Seul le Mississippi fut longtemps laissé à la seule initiative des Français.

Si on dresse un bilan, on doit reconnaître les mérites des explorateurs, mais guère plus. Ils ont soutenu les connaissances, nommé les lieux et les régions, alimenté les rivalités.

Le Canada des découvreurs et des explorateurs devrait s'étendre de la baie d'Hudson au golfe du Mexique et conséquemment jusqu'au Pacifique, avec comme voisins les Russes au Nord et les Mexicains au Sud. En outre, ces régions devraient être habitées de peuples métissés. Derrière (ou devant) les découvreurs, il y a immanquablement des guides indiens. Souvent la compagne des explorateurs est aussi indienne.

Les Indiens ont beaucoup donné et bien peu reçu. Les épidémies les ont fauchés, balayés, parfois exterminés. Les journaux tenus par Lewis et Clark sont tristement éloquents à cet égard. Ils nous font découvrir le drame vécu par les Missouris, les Aricaras, les Mandanes, etc. Il nous font revivre également une fabuleuse épopée, celle de la rencontre entre Blancs et Indiens.

Les Indiens ont beaucoup donné et bien peu reçu. Les épidémies les ont fauchés, balayés, parfois exterminés. Les journaux tenus par Lewis et Clark sont tristement éloquents à cet égard. Ils nous font découvrir le drame vécu par les Missouris, les Aricaras, les Mandanes, etc. Il nous font revivre également une fabuleuse épopée, celle de la rencontre entre Blancs et Indiens. Leurs textes sont hélas trop peu connus des Canadiens. Après tout, se dit-on, ne s'agit-il pas de l'histoire des États-Unis!

Bref, la révolution américaine, l'expédition de Lewis et Clark, l'acquisition de la Louisiane sont autant de moments fondateurs de l'histoire du Canada.

Découvreurs et explorateurs se moquent des frontières. Ils les précèdent. Tout comme les Amérindiens d'ailleurs.

THE PUBLIC GOOD AND PRIVATE PLEASURES OF READING

NATIONAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
NOVEMBER 6-8, 2003

LES BÉNÉFICES PUBLICS ET LES PLAISIRS PRIVÉS DE LA LECTURE

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ARCHIVES NATIONALES
DU 6-8 NOVEMBRE 2003

ACS • AEC

CBC Radio

Conseil des Arts du Canada | Canada Council for the Arts

National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada et Archives nationales du Canada

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS INCLUDE:
LES CONFÉRENCIERS ET PRÉSENTEURS INCLUENT :

SENATOR JOYCE FAIRBAIRN,
Senate of Canada/Sénat du Canada

ANNE KOTHAWALA,
President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Newspaper
Présidente-directrice générale, Association canadienne des journaux

MARC LABERGE,
speaking on publishing in French Canada/Auteur

RICK BOYCHUK,
Editor, Canadian Geographic
Éditeur, Canadian Geographic

MYRNA KOSTASH,
Author/Auteure

JAMES E. PAGE,
author of the UNESO document on literacy
Auteur du rapport sur l'alphabétisme de l'UNESCO

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS INLCUDE SEVERAL POET LAUREATES:
PARMIS LES CONFÉRENCIERS NOUS RETROUVONS PLUSIEURS POÈTES LAURÉATS :

GEORGE BOWERING,
Parliamentary Poet Laureate
Poète officiel du Parlement

SUE MACLEOD,
Poet Laureate for Saskatchewan
Poète lauréate de la Saskatchewan

DENNIS LEE,
Poet Laureate for Toronto
Poète lauréat de Toronto

GLEN SORESTAD,
Poet Laureate for Saskatchewan
Poète lauréat de la Saskatchewan

CBC RADIO PERSONALITIES INCLUDE:
LES PERSONNALITÉS DE LA RADIO ANGLOPOHONE DE RADIO-CANADA INCLUENT :

BRENT BAMBURY

SHELAGH ROGERS

BILL RICHARDSON

SOME OF THE THEMES OF THE CONFERENCE INCLUDE:
QUELQUES UNS DES THÈMES DE LA CONFÉRENCE :

- Literacy/illiteracy - New Readers
- Publications Policy
- Print Vs Electronic - The Future Of The Book
- Great Canadian Writers – Fiction, Non-fiction And Poetry
- Self-discovery Through Reading
- The Social Benefits Of Reading: Young And Old
- Developing Canada's Future Writers
- Readers Of Magazines And Newspapers
- The Role Of Public And School Libraries
- Book Clubs / Shared Reading Initiatives
- Acquisitions
- Information Overload
- Translation
- Reviewing Books
- Selling Books
- Braille And Other Reading/interpreting Systems
- International Comparisons
- Alphabétisation / Analphabétisme - Les nouveaux lecteurs
- Politiques de publication – Imprimé vs. électronique - L'avenir des livres
- Les grands écrivains canadiens - Fiction, essais et poésie
- La découverte de soi à travers les lectures
- Les bénéfices sociaux de la lecture : jeunes et moins jeunes
- Développer les futurs écrivains du Canada
- Lecteurs de magazines et de journaux
- Le rôle des bibliothèques publiques et scolaires
- Les clubs littéraires - Initiatives de lecture en groupe
- Acquisitions
- Surcharge d'information
- Traduction
- Critiques littéraires
- Le commerce des livres
- Le braille et autre lectures / Systèmes d'interprétation • Comparaisons internationales

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:
À SOULIGNER :

Robert Adams, celebrated Canadian author, has agreed to deliver the keynote address at the November 6th cocktail reception hosted by the Association for Canadian Studies. Mr. Adams will share with us the meaning of reading for him, and how reading enriches his day-to-day life. Further more, Mr. Roch Carrier, Canada's national librarian, will also join us as the guest of honour for the Thurdsay luncheon from 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm.

Robert Adams, illustre auteur Canadian et orateur célèbre a accepté notre invitation et se joindra à nous lors de la réception d'ouverture le 6 novembre. M. Adams nous parlera de son amour de la lecture et de ce que la lecture lui apporte concrétement dans sa vie de tous les jours. De plus, M. Roch Carrier, administrateur général de la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada, sera l'invité d'honneur au cours du dîner du 6 novembre de 12:00 à 13:30.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT WWW.ACS-AEC.CA OR CONTACT US DIRECTLY:
POUR DE PLUS AMPLES INFORMATIONS OU POUR VOUS INSCRIRE, VEUILLEZ CONSULTER NOTRE SITE WEB AU WWW.ACS-AEC.CA, OU CONTACTEZ-NOUS :

A C S • A E C

The Association for Canadian Studies
L'Association d'études canadiennes
209 Ste-Catherine Street East, Suite V-5140
a/s Université de Québec a Montréal
P.O. Box 8888, Downtown Station
Montréal, Québec H3C 3P8
Tel: (514) 987-7784 Fax: (514) 987-3481
e-mail: general@acs-aec.ca

MUSEUMS FACING TRUDEAU'S CHALLENGE:

The Informal Teaching of History

ABSTRACT

While museums' previous concerns revolved principally around the creation of knowledge with little emphasis on visitors needs, many are now reshaping their mission as one that should provide the general public with more accessible opportunities for learning Canadian history. The author illustrates this shift – from creation of knowledge to dissemination of knowledge – through the example of the relocation of the Canadian Museum of Civilization to new facilities in the 1980s, and to the changes that were made to exhibitions in order to enhance the quality of the learning experience by targeting both the intellect and the emotions of the visitors.

(My warm acknowledgement to museum colleagues, notably Stephen Alsford, for assistance in preparing this article.)

VICTOR RABINOVITCH

Victor Rabinovitch is the President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation, which is responsible for both the Civilization Museum (Canada's largest and most visited) and the Canadian War Museum. He has had a long career in many departments of the federal government, and also worked for the Canadian Labour Congress and the Manitoba Government. He is a graduate of McGill University, and Sussex University in England, a fellow of Queen's University School of Policy Studies, and is involved as a volunteer in Canadian cultural organizations

It is worthwhile to start with the words of Pierre-Elliot Trudeau, written shortly after his election as Prime Minister of Canada:

> "In the past the teaching of history in our schools has been dominated by traditions inherited from Europe. On that continent history has been filled with battles, and the lives of national heroes. In Canada we have had few decisive battles and not many dominant leaders. Much more important to our history has been the struggle of nameless Canadians to improve their lives in our often hostile environment. This struggle has produced its share of adventure and heroism. But perhaps this lesson is best learned outside the classroom."[1]

How ironic that Trudeau's words contradict his own evolution as he later became the type of leader he said Canada does not produce – a leader of mythical proportions, a national hero to many, a political villain to some. Soon after Trudeau, Prime Minister Mulroney also became a leader of historic proportions, with a profound impact on Canada's relations with the world, especially America.

Do we therefore conclude that Trudeau's populist version of Canada is simply untrue? Clearly, this country in its pre-Confederation days and its more recent configurations has been shaped by many exceptional leaders – political, social, aboriginal, military, labour and industrial. The real challenge in Trudeau's words is aimed at how we learn about the past, whether such learning should be focused on 'heroes,' and what role informal learning should play in our education.

Trudeau expressed a view that very much reflected the spirit of the 1960s. He believed Canada had evolved a unique identity that was more than the sum of values and traits inherited from Europe. He felt that in Canada – a nation reliant on immigrants and pioneers, rather than on dominant aristocrats and military adventurers – the history of the common person is central to our national narrative. Trudeau also challenged the dominance of old-fashioned school-room teaching, favouring instead a process of learning through in-the-field experiences.

In the late 1960s, as well, the teaching of history in both formal and informal settings moved towards the theme of social movements. The stories of great heroes and pivotal events were downplayed in favour of the narratives of communities, social conditions, lesser-known individuals and movements of many kinds. Those historians who continued to espouse the "great man" view of history sometimes saw themselves as voices in the wilderness.

There is a current perception of Canadian youth lacking a knowledge of their country's history (a problem which has also been noted in the United States and the United Kingdom). Perhaps what we see is not a lack of interest in history, as such, but a lack of interest in learning history in the schoolroom. Informal learning experiences are increasingly sought out, as is seen in the growth of tourist-oriented attractions – such as heritage centres and heritage theme parks. Museums have also benefited from expanding public interest, and the competition from commercial attractions and their high quality of visitor relations has defined new standards for "client service". Museum popularity among Americans has grown along with tourism as a whole; about 60% of Americans now

report visiting a museum annually, compared to 25% in the early 60s.[2] Museums are perceived as reputable places for learning trustworthy information, and for doing so in an entertaining way. That there has been a corresponding growth in the use of engaging heritage interpretation techniques (such as re-enactments, reconstructed historical environments, multimedia presentations) suggests that Trudeau was right in his belief that most people prefer to learn about history experientially, and in easy doses.

The purpose of this article is to look at what museums do in providing opportunities for learning Canadian history. In particular, what can a national museum do in responding to the challenge of providing quality learning experiences for a wide range of age groups? The educational role of a museum is mainly informal. Museum-visiting is not an obligation or a necessity; the motivations for coming and learning are quite different from those in a school situation.

What Do Museums Really Do?

If we distill its activities down to basics, a modern large-scale museum has three fundamental tasks: to create knowledge, to disseminate knowledge, and to provide services to visitors.

The creation of knowledge requires activities that are generally behind-the-scenes; the public tends to be unaware of them, even though within the museum community these activities are central to the profession. I am speaking of collecting, storage, conservation, and research. Although there are exceptions to this rule, most museums have at their core a collection of artifacts. In a history museum, the process of collecting assumes a knowledge of the past that guides decisions on what objects are significant to help us understand that past. Storage requires us to organize artifacts in a way that imposes knowledge structures on collections. Conservation contributes to our understanding of those artifacts, the people who made or used them, and their societal role. Research provides a more detailed context for understanding the objects and what they tell us. While some of this research is derived from secondary sources, much of it is direct and primary, possibly involving archaeological excavation, oral interviews, archival work, as well as study of the objects themselves.

Prior to the 1970s, these knowledge-creation processes absorbed the bulk of museum resources. Exhibitions did provide for some public access, but without much emphasis on visitor needs. The dissemination of information was relatively small-scale. The shift of museums towards mass cultural tourism is largely a product of the past thirty years. To take the example of my own institution, the Canadian Museum of Civilization was able during the 1980s to entirely renew itself in preparation for its move to new facilities, purpose-built to meet the needs of many museum visitors.

Museums today place less emphasis on showing artifacts than on helping people create meaning. Exhibitions in the past typically consisted of long rows of display cases crowded with artifacts on a theme. Labels provided sparse information because museums saw themselves as educational institutions for a select few. It was assumed that

Museums use various interpretive techniques to communicate knowledge of history; in the case shown here, a scripted drama in the context of a reconstructed New France town square, with an audience comprising students and adults.

Photo by Stephen Alsford, © Canadian Museum of Civilization

visitors would have sufficient educational background to appreciate, with minimal aid, the artifacts on display.

Museums today are more popular in their communication styles, even though the largest portion of visitors still come from the more educated segment of the population.[3] This popular approach recognizes that an effective visit, in terms of visitor learning, relies heavily on the overall quality of a visit. Factors such as helpful staff, fast processing of line-ups, accessible spaces within buildings, physical amenities (parking, cafeteria, rest areas), and opportunities to purchase souvenirs are all elements that reinforce a pleasant experience. By dealing effectively with such needs, museums can make visitors more receptive to a meaningful learning experience.

Contemporary museums make themselves more appealing through the way exhibitions are designed. In the past, physical objects –artifacts – were often presented in large numbers, with similar objects shown for comparative purposes. We might call this a 'parking lot' approach to display. Today's exhibitions are highly selective in showing objects to illustrate themes. More space is assigned to interpretive aids, explanatory texts, photographs, audiovisual presentations, or entire settings reconstructing the historical environment in which objects were used.

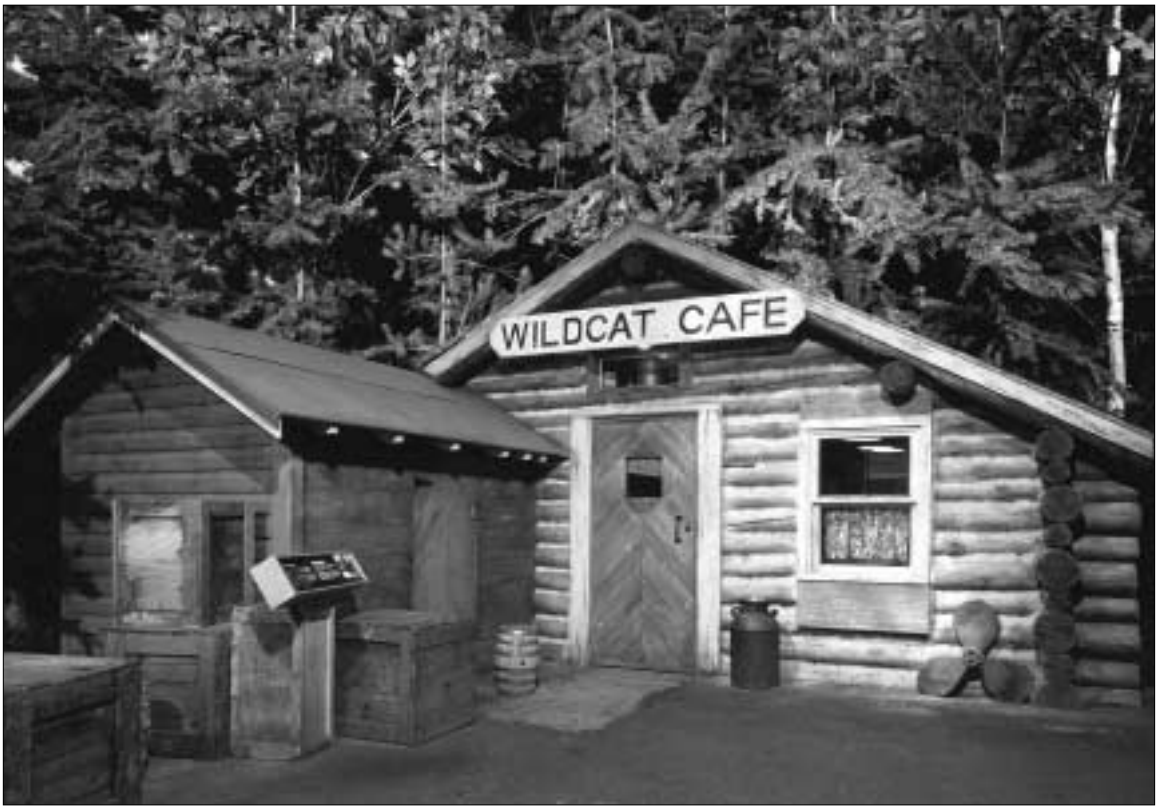
Museum exhibitions therefore seek to communicate by targeting a range of senses, as well as the intellect and the emotions of visitors. The learning process occurs through the assimilation of impressions; this affective learning is an informal, often unconscious, process. The range of media used, combined with interactive opportunities, cater to a variety of learning preferences. Visitors choose which elements they examine with care, and which they gloss over, based on individual preferences such as what makes a personal connection, what is exotic, or intriguing.

Museums also use some techniques of formal learning, but do so as a supplement to their informal information roles. Their major interest is to act as adjuncts to the classroom. At the Museum of Civilization, we have facilities catering specifically to school group visits – reception area, classrooms, lunchroom. There are also structured programmes to support curriculum themes, outreach programmes for interpreters to bring hands-on artifacts into schools, and guided visits geared to provincial curricula.

What About History Museums?

History museums increasingly recognize that although physical artifacts are their 'medium of specialization', they are really multimedia institutions that use documents, photographs, artwork, sound and video recordings. These media support the interpretation of artifacts, reflecting the fact that history is manifested through processes, personalities and ideas, as well as through physical objects.

While various interpretive media are important, I suggest that at the heart of a meaningful experience in a history museum are two particular qualities: authenticity and imaginative engagement. *Authenticity* means that a museum must try to show the "real thing", whether from its own collections or others. It must also ensure that the



An exact reproduction of a legendary cafe in Yellowknife, used by the museum in illustrating the theme of northern resource exploration. Inside the cafe, visitors can sit and listen to twenty recorded interviews with contemporary historical figures who have been active in social, religious, aboriginal or industrial affairs in the Northwest Territories.

Photo by Harry Foster, © Canadian Museum of Civilization

information it communicates is truthful and comprehensive, balanced and in context. *Imaginative engagement* means that the visitor, through the exercise of personal imagination, constructs meaning from objects, contexts and narrative interpretation. This approach to learning and entertainment is very different from watching TV or films where a product is delivered at such speed and with so many images that the viewer has little time to think and thereby interpose his or her own creative analysis.

The primary reaction that a TV production seeks from its audience is emotional; audiences expect to be assaulted by a rapid succession of high-powered dramatic scenes. For example, the average length of a scene in *Star Wars* is calculated to be 11 seconds.[4] Museums present a very different learning atmosphere. Visitors are invited to move at their own pace to look, admire, read, think, and reconstruct historical scenes in their own minds. Museums provide an intellectual breathing space in the learning process. The pedagogical challenge for museums is to persuade visitors to shift from watching films or fantasy PlayStations in order to actively construct, challenge, learn and enjoy.

Museums provide an intellectual breathing space in the learning process. The pedagogical challenge for museums is to persuade visitors to shift from watching films or fantasy PlayStations in order to actively construct, challenge, learn and enjoy.

In our national museum we have approached this learning challenge by presenting history and social commentary through two exhibition strategies. Our first strategy is to present *meta-narratives*, meaning large-scale narratives that set out an integrated telling of history through several perspectives. For example, an Aboriginal perspective on continuity, survival and cultural wealth is presented through the First Peoples Hall which we recently opened. It is a huge installation, with multiple sets of images, artifacts, recordings and texts. Another meta-narrative is found in our Canada Hall which presents a metaphoric journey across Canada, from east to west, over 1000 years of European contact with North America. This exhibition hall receives over a half-million visitors each year – it is the most popular historical learning activity in Canada.

Our second strategy is to offer a *diversity of choices*, large and small. During 2003, we presented Canada's first-ever exhibition on Inuit woven tapestry; an international exhibition looking at peoples in ancient north-western Europe; an exhibition produced by Montreal's McCord history museum on men's clothing fashions over the centuries; an ethno-cultural exhibition on the Italian-Canadian community; two children's–themed exhibitions; a postal exhibition on retail catalogue sales; and several types of art exhibitions.

All these exhibitions, both permanent and special, speak to elements of our national identity. The focus is not exclusively on the hero, nor the common person. We look at many types of people, and especially at the social and economic conditions forming the contexts of our lives.

Narrating History in a National Museum

No museum can be all things to all people; there are always limits on space, resources and collections. A national history museum has particularly difficult challenges, as it has a broad primary audience coming from many regions, and a secondary audience that is international in origin. It is essential for such a museum to affirm the "national" component of its identity and be true to its national mandate. In part, this flows from the location of the museum in the capital, which acts as cultural pilgrimage site. Visitors come to the capital to obtain a particular perspective on their country, to see up close the national symbols of government, and to examine how they are reflected in the national mirror.

Some of the challenges facing a national history museum are similar to those of local and regional museums; some are unique. The first is that the institution must meet visitor expectations. It must provide a wide range of interesting, high-quality exhibitions and programmes to leave people satisfied that the hours invested in the visit were a worthwhile use of their limited time. It must provide visitors with substantive information about the country in which they live, and its historical relationship with other societies.

A second challenge is to make available, beyond the museum's walls, a range of knowledge products to complement formal learning available from other institutions. For example, we have a major programme of travelling exhibits for which we bear the full costs of production; recipient museums cover only the direct costs involved in travelling. There is also a research publishing programme in which we collaborate with commercial publishers. Most important, we have developed a very large and knowledge-rich Web site, which has proven very useful to both teachers and students. Virtual visits to the Web site fluctuate in parallel with the school-year calendar. In other words, the "virtual exhibitions" on the Web have become a major learning tool for schools and the public, with over 5,400,000 unique visits in the current year.

A third challenge is to remain relevant to the formal educational system. Since the majority of visiting school groups come from Ontario and Quebec, our focus is on the curricula of those two provinces. But the resulting programmes are clearly relevant to curricula in other provinces.

A fourth challenge is a particularly difficult one in a country as regionally focused as Canada, for it involves

selecting and presenting elements of a national perspective. Canada's national museum of human history should not try to tell the detailed story of Nova Scotia, or Alberta, or Upper Canada. What it is uniquely positioned to do is to present a national narrative and express an overview of Canadian history. We seek to provide insights into national identity, portray relationships of the different parts to the whole, and provoke thinking on reciprocal influences between Canada and world.

"When You're Dead You're Still Teaching"

While museums are able to support school curriculum-based learning, they can also provide an opportunity for students to stretch their knowledge and their imaginations beyond the boundaries of the formal curriculum. When a museum offers a diversity of viewpoints and exhibition topics, it opens a door which leads beyond the curriculum boundary. A brief period of time, even as short as 30 minutes, can enable students to experience something new, intellectually broadening and visually stimulating.

This taste of something different, even exotic, can stimulate interest in cultures, history and other peoples. It can be the unexpected add-on, the unplanned supplement. The words of one anonymous adult visitor who evaluated our history exhibition on rituals and sacrifice in ancient Europe ("The Mysterious Bog People") expressed her museum learning experience beautifully:

> "The main theme is how much the present, past and future are all intermingled. Amazing. Whoever thought all these people who lived centuries ago would be on display? Even when you're dead you're still teaching people. I guess that's what museums are about, aren't they?"

Footnotes:

1 Pierre Trudeau, Foreword to Eric Morse, *Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada*, University of Toronto Press, 1969.

2 Reported by John Falk at the American Association of Museums annual conference, 2003.

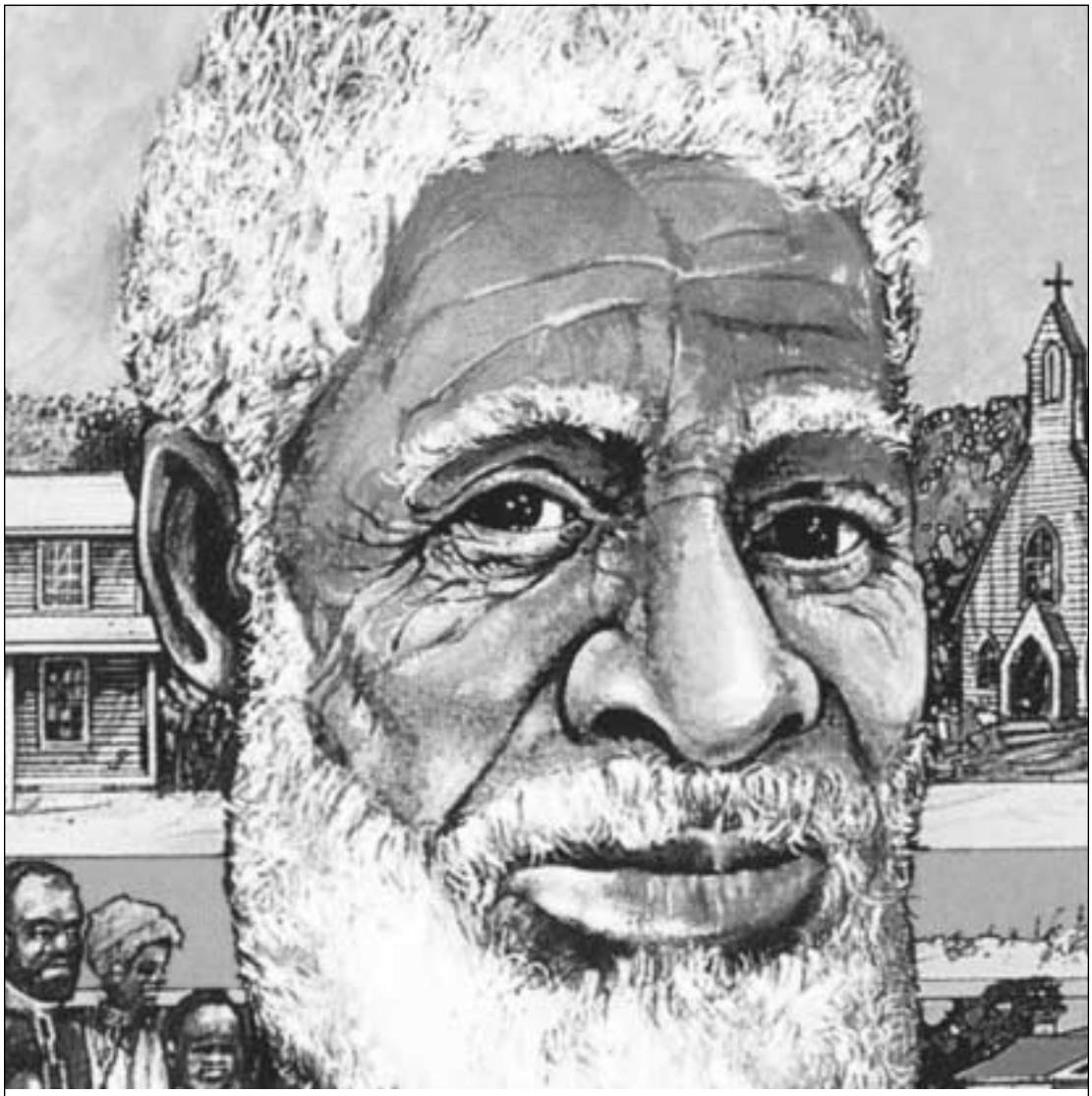
3 Average education profile of Canadian Museum of Civilization visitors: 48% with some university or higher; 22% with pre-university college; 22% with high school; 8% with elementary school.

4 Reported by M. Sylvester at the American Association of Museums annual conference, 2003.

In this reproduction boat shed ca.1970 a variety of media – video, text panels, original artifacts and historical reproductions – combine to help evoke the multicultural setting of the Steveston fishing port near Vancouver. The issues of aboriginal fisheries and Japanese internment during WWII are introduced in this exhibition.

Photo by Steven Darby, © Canadian Museum of Civilization

Interlude historique – Historical Interlude



Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site

REV. JOSIAH HENSON – "Canada was often spoken of as the only sure refuge from pursuit, and that blessed land was now the desire of my longing heart." These were the words of Josiah Henson, a Maryland-born slave for forty-one years who led his family north through dangerous terrain toward freedom in 1830. The Underground Railroad – an illegal network of paths and river crossings operated by brave agents along the way – provided the Hensons and thousands of other enslaved blacks with escape routes to Canada. The remarkable story of Josiah Henson – a Methodist preacher, abolitionist, lecturer and founder of a self-supporting Black community (the Dawn settlement) in Dresden, Ontario – is truly historic. It is believed that his 1849 memoirs *The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada* provided Harriet Beecher Stowe with her model for the title character in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel which proved to be a catalyst for the US Civil War.

LE RÉVÉREND JOSIAH HENSON – « On a souvent évoqué le Canada comme étant le seul refuge certain contre la poursuite et cette terre bénie était maintenant le désir de mon coeur. » Ces mots sont ceux de Josiah Henson, né au Maryland et esclave pendant quanrante et un ans. En 1830, cet homme mène sa famille vers le nord à travers des terres hostiles dans le but de trouver la liberté. Le Chemin de fer clandestin, un réseau illégal de sentiers et de traverses de rivières opéré par de braves agents postés tout au long du parcours, procure aux Henson et à des milliers d'autres esclaves noirs des routes pour s'évader au Canada. La vie de Josiah Henson, un pasteur méthodiste, un abolitionniste, un orateur et fondateur d'une communauté noire indépendante (la colonie Dawn à Dresden en Ontario), est marquante sur le plan historique. Certains croient que ses mémoires de 1849, « The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an inhabitant of Canada », ont fourni à Harriet Beecher Stowe le modèle du héros de son livre « Uncle Tom's Cabin » qui a encouragé la Guerre Civile des États-Unis.

FIRST PERSON, SINGULAR… FIRST PERSON, PLURAL:

Making Canada's Past Accessible

ABSTRACT

Ian Wilson attempts to put to rest the myth that Canadians have no interest in their own history. If Canadians seem to possess limited knowledge about their nation's history, they are "increasingly interested in history that is personal and individualized." This increase is visible in the number of virtual visitors who access The National Archives website – one of the Government of Canada's top ten most frequently visited. Indeed, the level of cybertraffic on the site suggests that Canadians do have considerable interest in exploring their past.

All of us at the conference have much in common and together have much at stake. As writers, teachers, researchers, librarians, archivists and other heritage specialists, we are attempting to make information and knowledge of our country and its past available and more accessible to Canadians. We are communicators with stories to tell. These stories are about who we are and how we came to be this way – as individuals, as communities, as organizations and institutions, and as Canadians. History is the collective body of these stories as expressed in writing and recollection, in image and anecdote, in sworn testimony and tall tale, and in the preserved evidence in our archives, libraries, museums and elsewhere.

We are all in the information business. Our greatest skill is in knowing how to turn information into knowledge. This intellectual alchemy is a process without which our history would be incomprehensible and patternless – some accidental or arbitrary alignment of time and opportunity, people and place. Our knowledge of ourselves and of the world requires not only access to accurate and reliable information, but it also requires context, observation, analysis, assessment and testing over time. Information becomes knowledge through a flash of insight, through reasoning and reflection and sometimes through learning that spans generations and millennia.

Every age and culture expresses its views about why chronicling the past is important and how best to do so. But nearly 2,500 years ago, Thucydides had pretty much figured it out. He thought about these issues as he wrote his monumental history of the Peloponnesian War and its terrible impact on every facet of Greek life[1]. Writing soon after the events occurred, he advised his readers that he did not write down the first story he heard, nor was he guided by his own opinions. "I was present myself," he tells us, "at the events which I have described or else I heard of them from eye-witnesses whose reports I have checked with as much thoroughness as possible."[2] These are the hallmarks of the vigorous, enquiring and objective mind. Our word "history" comes from the Greek verb, "to ask questions". Not even then was the truth easy to discover, he says. Different eyewitnesses gave different accounts of the same events, because of imperfect memories or partiality toward one side or the other. He also recognizes that some of his readers might not like what he has written because he has not romanticized the war between Athens and Sparta. This doesn't bother him. "My work," he says, "is not a piece of writing designed to meet the taste of an immediate public, but was done to last for ever."[3] And he tells us, with candor and common sense, why this is important: he will be happy "if these words of mine are judged useful by those who want to understand clearly the events which happened in the past and which (human nature being what it is) will, at some time or other and in much the same ways, be repeated in the future."[4] It would be hard today to provide a better or wiser rationale for the writing and reading of history or for preserving the evidence of its passage.

Every generation leaves certain information and messages for the next … a kind of historical *paying it forward*. At the same time, each generation constantly re-evaluates the past, asking the same and new questions relevant to its concerns and future; seeking answers in the recorded memory of those who came before … *paying it back*, if you will. History is a dialogue between present and past with the voices and images of our predecessors still alive in the archives and in the books that they have bequeathed to us. This dialogue is inevitably informed, if not coloured, by views or concerns about a future. History is a complex, honest interplay of present, future and past. Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland and now UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) captured the essence of this dialogue when commenting on a research project on 19th century workhouses where

IAN E. WILSON

Dr. Ian E. Wilson was appointed National Archivist of Canada in July 1999 In 2001, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters (Litt.D) from York University in recognition of his contribution to Canadian archives. In May 2002, he was appointed to the Order of Canada. In 2003, he was elected Fellow of the Society of American Archivists and appointed Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Government of France.

so many Irish died: "... it is important, indeed imperative, that we the survivors, and future generations, should know about those who had no one to speak for them at the time of their greatest need and suffering. The story of the silent people should be heard."[5]

Our own age is more impatient than that of the Greeks' and less appreciative of the past. The lessons of history are often neglected in a technological environment which is squarely focused on the future. Even the techno-term "legacy systems" suggests the old and the useless, and "to archive" in computer terms suggests retention for no more than a few weeks.

The study of history requires effort and discipline. If we could label it, our history would surely carry the instructions "Some Assembly Required" and perhaps the additional warning "Contents Under Pressure".[6] It needs researchers, historians, film-makers, teachers and others who bring to it ideas and interpretation, vision and values. Ultimately, information becomes knowledge when an individual absorbs it, questions it and integrates it into his or her own experience. Through our professions and personal interests, all of us are trying to help this critical process take place for ourselves and for others.

Assembly is certainly required of the materials which archivists collect and care for. Sometimes these materials speak powerfully and on their own – for example, a striking photographic image or moving letter. Usually, however, they require others to link them together and interpret them, give them context and make them accessible. Unlike library and other published materials, archival records are usually original, unique and one-of-a-kind – "authorized but unedited," to be understood only in context of their creation and use. They need to be organized and described differently than library materials. There are many other differences, although they are beginning to blur as professional roles and definitions converge in the online information environment.

Archives are a fundamental source of information, evidence, knowledge and sometimes inspiration. The diaries and journals, the photographs, the paintings, the sounds and voices, the records of government, the maps and treaties – all of these collectively document the Canadian experience in its personal, social, economic, political, cultural and other dimensions. They are essential to identifying and understanding the issues, events, individuals and influences that shaped and often continue to affect that development. Archives constitute the legal evidence of what has happened.

Archives are the most cost-effective, comprehensive and concentrated way of preserving and making available authoritative information about our past. We can preserve only a few historical buildings and sites, but we can more readily preserve their architectural plans, their images, the recollections of their architects and builders and the stories of those who lived or worked in them.

The traditional view is that in the past, Canadians have been less interested in their history than other people. We were apparently content to accept the values, stories and myths of others rather than create our own. This reputed modesty and this reticence are yet another stereotype. Canadians know that in its overall shape our history is much like that of other nations – a mixture of the unique and the universal, the momentous and the minor with a generous sprinkling of genuine and would-be heroes. But it is *our* history, constituting an important part of *our* identity, as elusive as that identity sometimes seems. At its most inspiring, it is the stories of common people trying to learn from their experience and with courage and perseverance, accomplish uncommon things. Their stories provide a rich understanding of who they were as individuals, as families, as communities and as Canadians. Vincent Massey once said, "We don't have to make our history interesting. It *is* interesting."[7]

There is considerable evidence that Canadians want to know more about their past. Some of this evidence lies in the shifting age and demographic profile of Canadians. As the population ages, there is greater interest in learning about our personal and collective history. Genealogy is our fastest growing leisure-time pursuit. As well, five million people have immigrated to Canada since the end of the Second World War, largely from non-English and non-French speaking nations.[8] Canada today is a rich and diverse mix of peoples, many from cultures with a strong sense of identity and history. They are anxious to put down new roots and learn about Canada. They also want their own contributions to be recorded and remembered. Their stories must be added to those of other Canadians, including those of Canada's First Peoples. On September 1, 1905, the day that Alberta officially became a province, Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier addressed a huge crowd in Edmonton. "When I look about me," he declared, "I see everywhere hope, calm resolution, courage, enthusiasm to face all difficulties, to settle all problems. ... We do not anticipate, and we do not want, that any individuals should forget the land of their origin or their ancestors. Let them look to the past, but let them also look to the future; let them look to the land of their ancestors, but let them look also to the land of their children."[9]

Other factors influencing the appetite of Canadians for history include the explosion in information available via electronic media and, in particular, the Internet and related technologies. We live in the Information Age and the Digital Domain, we work in the Knowledge Economy, and we travel on the Information Highway searching, no doubt, for the next cyber-café. The information we have access to relates to every subject and to issues and events across a shrinking globe. Canadians now rank second in the world in terms of Internet use.[10] It is clear, however, that Canadians want to know who they are, where they came from and where they fit.

The growing awareness and interest in our history is evident in many ways: in the rising interest in genealogy, in new history and historical fiction writing, in television and film productions, in outstanding Canadian broadcast news and information programming, in Canadian history resources on the 'Net, and in imaginative school programs. When CBC's *Canada: A People's History* was aired in October of last year, it drew debut audiences of 3.26 million viewers, putting to rest, in the words of its producer, "the myth that Canadians are not interested in their history…"[11] The popularity of historical fiction, such as Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace*, is another example.

The National Archives contributed extensively to both of these projects.

Our experience in the National Archives confirms this rising tide of interest in Canada's past and who we are as Canadians – an often passionate belief that our history is relevant, interesting and often exciting. It can be seen daily in our Reading Room, in the activity on our Web site and in the flood of other requests for information from researchers.

When they find what they are searching for, they are often excited. One appreciative researcher wrote, "I received the details in this morning's post. A lot of disjointed facts I had all came together ... someone who was just a name to me is now a person …I know what [my grandfather] looked like, his age, where he was from ... it has been a strange day, a mixture of emotions; happiness at finding out about him and what he was like and sadness that he died [so young]." Another letter said, "I went to your Web site to look up information on my family history. Your site…brought me to tears. For there was a picture of the SS Metagama sailing into Quebec City in June 1927. My mom was on that ship on that day. She was 14 years old…[Her family] had left Belfast, Ireland, to homestead in Canada. [She] is now 88 years old and in good health."

While studies show that Canadians are weak on the facts of their nation's history, they are increasingly interested in history that is personal and individualized. People are searching for "my history", "my family" and "our home", "our community". This is history in the *first person, singular* and *first person, plural*.

Our staff works hard to connect Canadians to the sources of their past. Last year, more than 38,000 researchers visited the National Archives in person and we responded to 39,832 written requests for information, down slightly as more people locate information on our Web site. We produced 883,571 copies of documents from original and microfilmed sources, an increase of 15% over the previous year. I am also pleased that the breakdown of our researchers by age shows a fairly even distribution between 25 and 64, with the vast majority repeat visitors. We are seeing a more and better-informed audience who knows about our resources and who wants and expects convenient access to them.

Aside from assisting individual researchers – amateur and professional – we have developed and are planning a variety of programs and services to make Canada's history more accessible. Some are on-site; others are available in communities and schools, and more and more are accessible through the Internet. I would like to tell you about some of them.

In October 2001, we worked closely with the Famous 5 Foundation of Calgary and others to present events at the National Archives to coincide with the unveiling of the statue on Parliament Hill commemorating the Famous 5. You will recall that their efforts resulted in The Persons Case and the landmark legal decision in October 1929 on the rights and roles of Canadian women. One of the events was an exhibition based on our holdings and those of the National Library as well as the production of a booklet on The Persons Case. The booklet and other materials are available on our Web site.

For Black History Month this year, we marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada. Together with members of the local Black community and colleagues from the National Library and other federal institutions, we produced a commemorative exhibition. It was complemented by the Ottawa premiere of a new NFB film on the struggle for Black civil rights in Canada, *Journey to Justice*.

Some of you may be aware of the education kit on Prime Ministers that we produced for school use in collaboration with Kodak Canada. The kit was designed to fit curricula in every province and is intended for youth aged 12 to 18. It includes lesson plans and activities reflecting a range of difficulty. It remains in high demand and is free of charge, with separate English and French versions available. About 3500 kits have been distributed to date.

I am also proud of another planned initiative. We recently collaborated with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, various religious archives and the National Library to produce an exhibition – largely photographic – on residential schools. The exhibition opened in Ottawa on June 21, 2002 – National Aboriginal Day. The Foundation began touring a circulating version on the same day, and a virtual version has been placed on the Foundation's Web site and linked to the National Archives site. Aside from this initiative, our records relating to the Residential Schools have played a major part in understanding this complex chapter in Canadian history. In the Archives you will find the full story of Canada, our successes and failures, our hopes and worries as a society over the course of decades and centuries.

I would also like to mention the 3D Virtual Buildings project which was developed by the National Research Council in conjunction with Industry Canada's SchoolNet program. We provided archival content on the study and re-creation of heritage buildings and supplied other material on how best to access and make use of archival resources.

The Portrait Gallery of Canada offers visitors an unparalleled chance to see Canadians from all walks of life who have helped to create and tell our stories and build our country, as well as of those whose lives continue to enrich us. The Gallery is part of the National Archives and is housed in a renovated heritage building in Ottawa. We will be assembling works for exhibition from our extensive portrait holdings, comprising some 20,000 paintings and drawings, four million photographs and 10,000 medals and philatelic works. Through its activities on-site and online, the Gallery puts faces to Canadian history.

The foundation for the Archives' public programming activities and its new Web products is its extraordinary collection built up over 129 years of documenting Canada. This now represents more than 150 kilometers of records – or the equivalent of the distance from Winnipeg to Portage la Prairie. Our Internet initiative will help deliver the Government of Canada's commitment to increase the level of Canadian content available on the Internet in both English and French. Under the leadership of the Honourable Sheila Copps, the Department of Canadian Heritage is funding a wide range of on-line initiatives intended to enhance Canadians' knowledge of where they

come from and to strengthen their sense of citizenship. One such initiative is our *Canadian Memory* program which makes available on the Web a rich sampling of authentic primary historical resources in all media from our collections. These documents and images are available via ArchiviaNet, our main online research tool. An example is the Canadian Expeditionary Forces database which includes the names of the more than 600,000 men and women who served during the First World War, as well as over 200,000 of their Attestation papers . This has allowed countless Canadians to research the role of family members in the War. We have also re-structured ArchiviaNet to provide simpler links and a continuously developing view of the National Archives' holdings.

We have also been working closely with other Canadian institutions to expand access to our country's network of archival resources. Today, the Canadian Archival Information Network (CAIN) is accessible on the Internet, providing a gateway to the holdings of over 800 participating institutions. Through its links to these institutions, CAIN offers searchable access to thousands of records and collection level descriptions as well as access to digital images and to virtual exhibits. CAIN will make Canadian archives accessible at one Internet address and provide researchers – amateur and professional alike – with a major portal to information about the past.

The Internet is transforming the way we serve our clients. The National Archives Web site demonstrates daily that there has never been greater access by Canadians to information about their country's history or greater interest in exploring it. Since the launch of the site – one of the Government of Canada's top ten most frequently visited – many Canadians are discovering for the very first time the extent and detail of the information gathered in the Archives since 1872. This year, the number of user sessions on the Archives Web site exceeded 1.5 million. At the same time, on-site use increased and demand for copies of certain records highlighted on our Web site doubled.

The Web's impact on the profile of the researcher has been particularly gratifying. In the past, most users of the National Archives have been experienced researchers and often professionals. With more and more information online and easily searchable, we are seeing an extraordinary increase in interest and use by ordinary Canadians. Although not always successful, searching the past is now something that Canadians can do – anytime, any place, anywhere. No archive has ever experienced this kind of very direct and public use. The Internet is changing archives from the least accessible heritage institution to the most accessible and expanding the demand for information by Canadians about themselves, their families, their communities and their country. Technology is finally enabling us to do what archivists have wanted to do for decades: to share the genuine records and authentic voices of our past with a broad public.

Archives, like other heritage organizations, are learning to communicate with and serve their audiences better with the help of the Internet. Imaginative new ways of presenting their resources are being developed by institutions used to focusing on the physical rather than the virtual visitor. They are both very real and they are out there waiting – *patiently*, in line and, *impatiently*, online.

Technology is also allowing those of you who are teachers to access and make greater use in the classroom of authentic historical materials from the National Archives and other sources. Teaching plans and projects can be built around the diverse range of resources on our Web site and available through the CAIN gateway. And if there are other materials in our own collections or different approaches that you would like to see, I hope that you will tell me or talk to staff members at the National Archives booth. We want to know what your needs are and will do our best to respond to them.

Clearly, the e-world is changing our individual lives and every one of our professions. It is breaking down barriers and stereotypes that have limited our reaching out to one another. We need to recognize these changes and accept them, using the new tools to respond to the growing desire by Canadians for the authentic stories of their past. Together, we can reshape the teaching of history by enabling all generations of Canadians to have first-hand experience, in schools and at home, with the documents and images that provide testimony to the Canadian experience. History is indeed at a crossroads, and isn't it exciting to be part of the community that will make it live for this and for future generations of Canadians.

Notes

[1] 431-404 B.C.

[2] Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, Penguin Classics, Baltimore, 1965 (Translated by Rex Warner)

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Mary Robinson, Keynote Address, International Conference on Hunger, New York University, May 19, 1995.

[6] Christopher Hitchens drew a similar analogy in his November 1998 article in *Harper's Magazine* on the teaching of American history.

[7] The Right Honourable Charles Vincent Massey (1887-1967), Governor General of Canada, 1952-1959; quoted in *Colombo's Canadian Quotations*

[8] Estimated, based on Statistics Canada data.

[9] Quoted in the *Toronto Globe*, September 2, 1905, page 1.

[10] Angus Reid Group, 2000

[11] Catherine Dawson March, "The Next Chapter," *Globe Television Magazine*, September 29-October 6, 2001

DONNÉES HISTORIQUES, PERSPECTIVES GÉOGRAPHIQUES

Un exemple de communication de l'histoire

RÉSUMÉ

Serge Courville suggère d'ajouter aux écrits historiques une dimension visuelle qui nous permettrait de «lire les processus sociaux à partir des traces laissées dans l'espace». À l'aide d'une approche multidisciplinaire qui rallierait géographes, historiens, sociologues, anthropologues, et archéologues, nous pourrions observer la relation intime qui existe entre un moment historique et le territoire sur lequel il se développe.

Qui étudie le passé sait les difficultés qui entourent la diffusion des résultats de recherche. Comme les travaux sont souvent spécialisés, on ne peut éclairer que des aspects d'une problématique. Même quand la recherche est terminée, des difficultés similaires surgissent : comment rendre compte des réalités observées? Comment les inscrire dans des perspectives larges? Surtout, comment exprimer leur rôle dans les processus sociaux de l'époque?

La carte peut être d'un précieux secours à cet égard, en faisant voir des distributions qui révéleront des concentrations ou au contraire des absences, éventuellement des récurrences, si la cartographie est dynamique. Mais ce n'est pas tout de montrer ces distributions, encore faut-il les expliquer. C'est pourquoi la cartographie a évolué vers le concept de « planches », où se retrouvent des cartes, des textes, des graphiques et des illustrations qui, ensemble, font mieux ressortir les liens entre les différentes variables.

Encore là, cependant, le moyen a ses limites, car si la planche peut montrer des rapports, elle ne peut les illustrer tous, encore moins les expliciter complètement. D'où la nécessité de l'appuyer sur des textes plus élaborés, qui poseront plus franchement le problème des processus sociaux à l'origine de ces distributions.

C'est cette dernière orientation qui a guidé la réalisation de l'Atlas historique du Québec. Plus qu'un bilan illustré de l'expérience historique québécoise, il s'est voulu un outil didactique capable d'offrir une vue plus compréhensive des réalités du passé, non seulement pour les étudiants et les chercheurs des collèges et des universités, mais pour le public qui s'intéresse à l'histoire. Comment? En alliant les vertus du livre et des présentations multimédias de la cartographie moderne. En outre, en privilégiant une approche thématique qui permettrait une vue plus en profondeur des espaces et des réalités étudiés. Surtout, en faisant appel à des équipes multidisciplinaires, qui auraient à « lire » les processus sociaux à partir des traces laissées dans l'espace.

Ont donc été appelés à collaborer au projet des géographes, des historiens, des sociologues, des anthropologues, des archéologues et même des théologiens et des pédagogues, dont le défi serait de penser leur objet en regard des spatialités qu'il génère. Ainsi, leurs démarches resteraient celles de leur discipline, mais enrichies de celles de la géographie historique, qui fait des géographies du passé des fenêtres ouvertes sur la société. En outre, comme il s'agissait aussi de dresser des bilans, tous devaient rester sensibles aux acquis de l'historiographie, ce qui en a conduit plus d'un à revenir aux idéaux de l'École des Annales et à l'histoire problème, si chère à Lucien Febvre.

On trouve un exemple de ces approches dans le volume III de l'Atlas historique du Québec (*Le pays laurentien au XIX^e siècle*, Sainte-Foy, Presses de l'Université Laval, 1995). Consacré aux morphologies de base de la vallée du Saint-Laurent, il montre comment la société bas-canadienne a tiré parti de son espace pour se reproduire et survivre économiquement et socialement. L'un des exemples les plus éloquents à cet égard reste celui de ses régulations démographiques, assurées par des stratégies inspirées non seulement du passé mais des mouvements migratoires de l'époque.

1. L'explosion démographique du XIX^e siècle

L'un des traits marquants du XIX^e siècle au Bas-Canada reste la forte augmentation de la population, qui passe de quelque 500 000 habitants en 1831 à près de 900 000 en 1851. En 1871, elle atteindra près de 1,2 million d'habitants, puis 1,6 million en 1901 et 2,8 en 1931.

Bien qu'imposante – encore que variable dans le temps – cette croissance n'est cependant pas propre au Québec. On la retrouve dans tous les Nouveaux Mondes et même en Europe, dans les îles britanniques notamment, où nombreux sont ceux qui font droit aux théories de Malthus sur les conséquences d'une trop

SERGE COURVILLE

Serge Courville est professeur de géographie à l'Université Laval et membre du Centre interuniversitaire d'études québécoises (CIEQ), où il a contribué à lancer la collection d'Atlas historique du Québec. Spécialiste du XIXe siècle québécois, il a signé récemment Immigration, Colonisation et Propagande; du Rêve américain au Rêve colonial (Québec, Éditions Multimondes, 2002), grâce à une bourse Killam du Conseil des Arts du Canada et de la British Academy.

forte augmentation de la population sur les ressources. D'où leur discours en faveur de l'émigration et de la colonisation, qui permettraient, selon eux, d'assurer la paix sociale tout en servant les intérêts politiques et économiques du royaume.

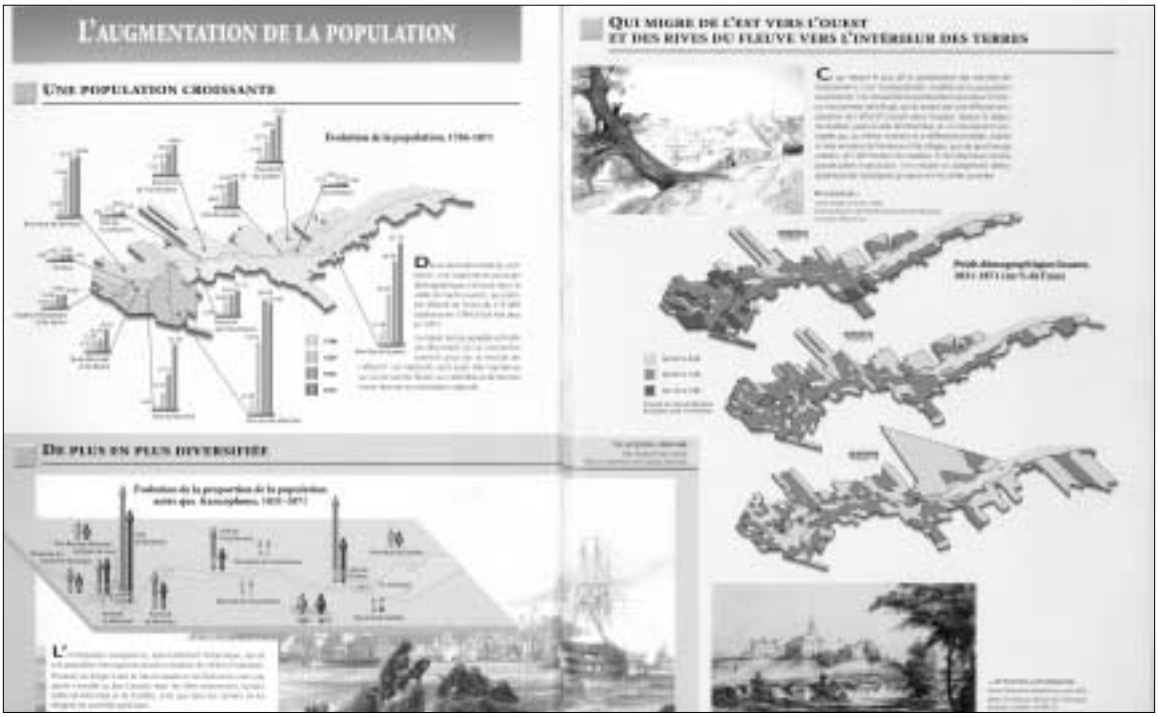
On sait la suite : de 1815 à 1930, entre 50 et 60 millions d'Européens migrent outre-mer, dont près de 15 millions de Britanniques et d'Irlandais. De ce nombre, entre 40% et 72 %, selon les années, choisissent d'aller s'établir aux États-Unis, une destination que retiennent également des millions d'autres Européens, sans compter ceux qui, dans les colonies britanniques elles-mêmes, optent pour la jeune république: plus de 2,8 millions au Canada, de 1840 à 1940. Même au Québec, où l'immigration ne compte plus pourtant que pour une faible part de l'augmentation démographique, ils seront bientôt plus de 925 000 à traverser ainsi la frontière, surtout de 1870 à 1900.

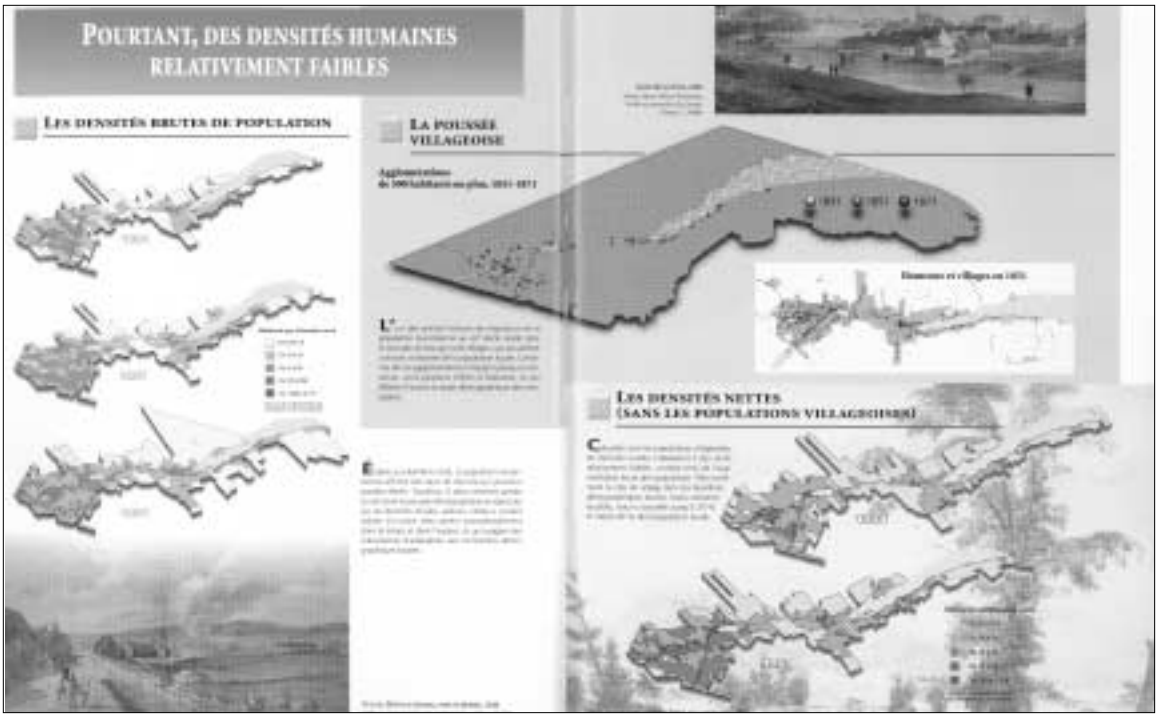
Pour beaucoup d'observateurs québécois, la cause est surtout d'ordre économique, liée au manque de terre et de débouchés pour l'emploi. D'autres font valoir le goût des salaires et de la vie facile, d'ailleurs attisé par les parents et amis déjà établis. Pour la plupart des propagandistes de la colonisation, cependant, le vrai facteur est d'ordre démographique. Craignant que la province ne perde sa place dans la fédération canadienne, ils invoquent le cas britannique pour soutenir que c'est parce que la population croît trop vite qu'elle doit « se résigner » à émigrer. D'où leurs projets de coloniser les plateaux, qui devaient être de véritables « Terres Promises » pour les Canadiens français. En même temps, comme leurs homologues canadiens et britanniques, les propagandistes québécois condamnent la destination américaine et font des nouveaux cantons des colonies du Québec de base, capables d'accueillir les surplus démographiques des basses terres et de fournir aux villes du sud les ressources dont elles ont besoin pour prospérer. *Greater Quebec, but Quebec all the same!*, pour paraphraser le mot de Sir Charles Dilke à propos de l'empire britannique : *Greater Britain, but Britain all the same* (Courville, 2002).

Nul ne niera le rôle de la démographie dans l'explication des migrations québécoises. Pourtant, à y regarder de plus près, on se rend vite compte que le discours ici a pris le pas sur la réalité. En effet, aussi loin que l'on remonte dans le temps, on constate une mobilité régulatrice des tensions démographiques. C'est ainsi, par exemple, que l'on a pu éviter le surfractionnement des terres, en excluant du ménage les enfants en surnombre au moment de leur mariage. Sans doute ces derniers obtenaient-ils leur part d'héritage, mais sans trop menacer l'intégrité du lot principal, puisque celle-ci était payée en argent ou en lots secondaires. C'est ainsi, également, que chaque génération a été amenée à repousser toujours plus loin les limites de l'écoumène, un processus qui se poursuit toujours au XIX[e] siècle, en prenant même de l'ampleur.

C'est à cette forme de régulation que nous nous sommes intéressés dans nos travaux, moins pour la décrire dans ses mécanismes internes, ce que les historiens ont très bien fait, que pour l'observer dans l'espace et en apprécier le rôle dans les processus sociaux de l'époque. Ce que nous avons découvert, c'est l'intimité du lien que la société rurale entretient avec le territoire et qui permet cette régulation sociale. Bien plus, à ce jeu, il n'y a pas de frontières. Aussitôt l'aire seigneuriale occupée (ou monopolisée par la propriété bourgeoise), on la déborde en effet de toutes parts, en direction des cantons et même des États-Unis et des autres provinces canadiennes, comme si, à l'échelle de la territorialité locale, les contraintes culturelles n'existaient pas. En même temps, on migre vers le village et vers la ville, ce qui déleste d'autant le territoire agricole.

C'est ce double mouvement qu'il fallait démontrer et illustrer dans nos travaux, par une démarche que nous voulions à la fois scientifique et didactique, pour mieux faire saisir la subtilité de ces mécanismes régulateurs. D'où l'idée





de réaliser un atlas, qui comprendrait certes des cartes, mais aussi bien d'autres composantes.

2. La mobilité de la sédentarité

Comme vieille société coloniale, le Québec se prête bien à ce genre de réalisation. En effet, bien qu'elle fut une société terrienne, donc « sédentaire » par définition, elle a été animée de mouvements constants dans l'espace. Ce sont ces mouvements que nous avons tenté de retracer et illustrer à partir des données de recensements du XIX[e] siècle. Sans doute cette source présentait-elle l'inconvénient d'offrir un portrait statique des réalités anciennes, mais comme elle autorisait aussi une lecture d'ensemble du territoire pour un même moment dans le temps – et qu'il serait même possible d'effectuer à différentes échelles (régionales, sous-régionales, municipales ou paroissiales, rangs d'habitat) –, elle permettrait une bonne appréhension du fait démographique. En outre, comparées entre elles, les données de recensement révéleraient des dynamismes invisibles autrement.

On trouve les résultats de cette démarche dans les trois planches réalisées pour clore le premier chapitre de l'atlas sur le *Pays laurentien*. Ces planches sont une synthèse de la présentation écrite, qu'elle présente en un ensemble de constats et de messages dont la cohérence repose sur une lecture à différentes échelles du fait démographique, chaque illustration devenant un moyen de saisir les processus sociaux.

La première planche, intitulée « L'augmentation de la population », présente une vue en longue durée de la croissance démographique du XIX[e] siècle au Québec. Elle est articulée autour de constats qui deviennent autant de messages pour le lecteur :

1. D'un peu plus d'un demi-million d'habitants en 1830, la population double dans la seconde moitié du XIX[e] siècle pour dépasser bientôt le million d'habitants, dont plus des trois quarts vivent encore dans les basses terres.
2. Cette croissance n'est pas continue dans le temps et varie considérablement d'un endroit à l'autre de la vallée du Saint-Laurent.
3. En même temps, la population se diversifie, avec l'arrivée massive d'imigrants dans les villes et les cantons limitrophes du Bas-Canada, mais qui diminue dans le siècle.
4. Enfin, loin d'être immobile dans l'espace, cette population se déplace en de longs mouvements qui prolongent ceux du Régime français (de la région de Québec vers celle de Montréal et la péninsule gaspésienne) et qui épaississent les lignes d'habitat (du fleuve vers l'intérieur des terres).
5. Ces mouvements sont *centrifuges* et délestent progressivement les paroisses riveraines de leurs surplus démographiques, comme l'indique d'ailleurs l'iconographie ancienne, qui oppose souvent les pays pleins du nord-est (environs de Québec) aux pays neufs de l'est et surtout du sud-ouest (plaine sud de Montréal), où les bonnes terres sont nettement plus abondantes.

C'est l'essentiel du contenu de cette planche qui, après avoir constaté la forte augmentation de la population au XIX[e] siècle, en signale la diversification et les déplacements dans l'espace, non seulement le long des grands axes de circulation, mais vers l'intérieur des terres. (voir image 1)

La deuxième planche, intitulée « Pourtant, des densités humaines relativement faibles », est une extension de la première. Elle pose tout le problème de la charge démographique du territoire, agricole notamment, pour lequel toutes les thèses sur les malaises de l'économie bas-canadienne ont été élaborées. Appréciées sur la seule base du nombre (doublement de l'effectif aux 25 ou 30 ans), on aurait pu s'attendre, en effet, à ce que les densités agraires

augmentent. Or, c'est tout le contraire qui s'est produit. Comment expliquer ce phénomène?

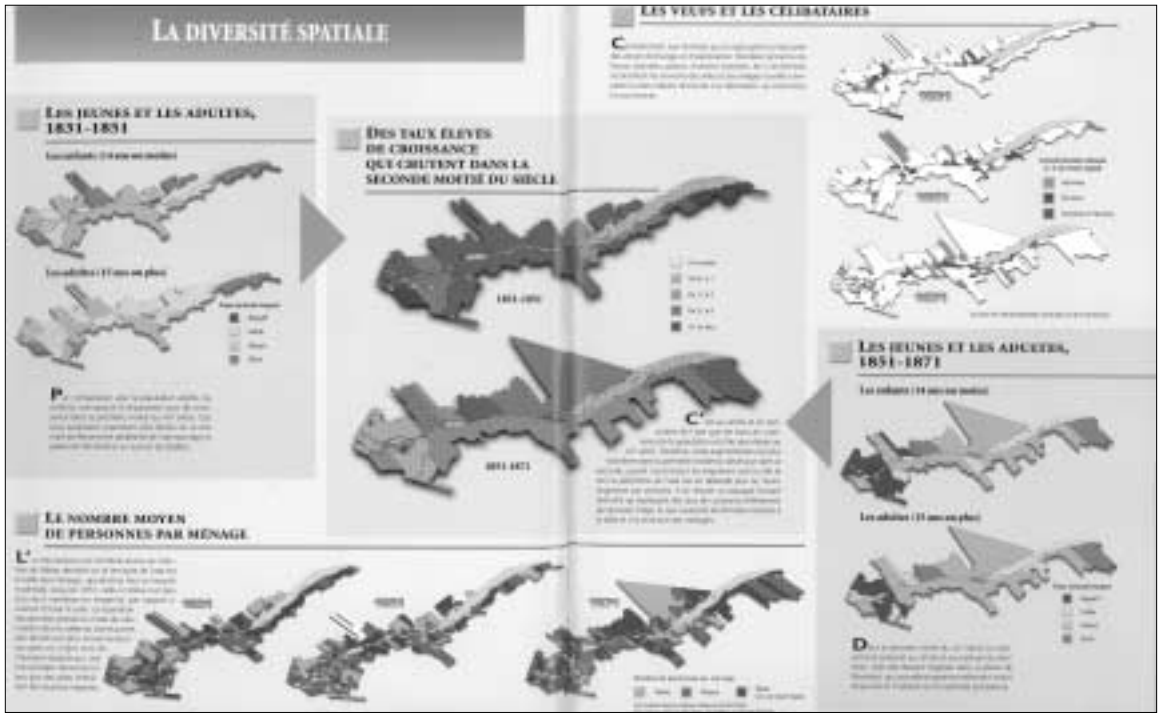
1. D'abord, par les mouvements décrits précédemment.
2. Ensuite, par des mouvements plus centripètes ceux-là, en direction des villes et des villages, lesquels sont en pleine croissance à l'époque.
3. Le bilan net de ces mouvements (*centrifuges* et *centripètes*) indique des densités humaines non seulement faibles, mais qui ont tendance à décroître dans le siècle, selon l'évolution de l'urbanisation et des défrichements.
4. Il en résulte des contextes de vie fortement différenciés, dont la charge humaine est beaucoup moins imposante que celle évoquée par les premiers analystes.(voir image 2)

La troisième planche, intitulée « La diversité spatiale », propose une exploration plus fine de cette évolution et de ses effets dans l'espace, vus à travers la structure et la taille des ménages. La composante principale de cette planche est une carte montrant le pourcentage de croissance de la population de chaque localité, que deux cartons latéraux illustrent pour deux groupes témoins : la population adulte et les jeunes de moins de 14 ou 15 ans. L'un des principaux constats autorisés par cette cartographie réside dans la différence des taux de croissance entre la première et la seconde moitié du XIX[e] siècle. Ainsi :

1. Jusqu'en 1850, ces taux sont relativement élevés. Après cette date, ils s'affaissent et deviennent même négatifs par endroits.
2. Cette diminution a des effets sensibles sur la taille et la structure des ménages, qui changent considérablement dans le temps. Ainsi, contrairement aux zones riveraines, où les maisonnées ont tendance à diminuer et à devenir plus âgées dans le siècle, sur les fronts pionniers, elles augmentent et deviennent plus jeunes.
3. De même, contrairement aux hommes qui ont tendance à devenir plus nombreux sur les fronts pionniers et près des zones portuaires ou de transbordement, où ils s'activent dans les défrichements ou le transport, les femmes se concentrent plutôt dans les villes et dans les villages, où elles peuvent plus facilement trouver de l'emploi, soit comme domestique, soit dans la fabrication, textile notamment.

Tels sont les principaux messages de ces planches et, plus globalement, du chapitre consacré au fait démographique québécois du XIX[e] siècle. En reconstituant les mouvements de la population dans l'espace et dans le temps, elles permettent de plonger au coeur des processus de régulation de la société laurentienne, en montrant comment elle a pu résoudre les inévitables tensions posées par ses forts taux de natalité et l'immigration massive de la première moitié du XIX[e] siècle. C'est par ces mouvements, également, qu'elle a pu territorialiser son espace et qu'elle l'a transformé en aire culturelle. Enfin, c'est par eux qu'elle a pu se reproduire outre-frontière.

Tel est le sens donné au projet d'Atlas historique du Québec. S'il se veut un bilan de connaissances, il se veut aussi un moyen de les communiquer, par des présentations qui ajoutent une dimension didactique aux réalisations scientifiques habituelles. Surtout, il se veut un moyen de pousser plus loin la recherche, en faisant de l'espace une catégorie historique accessible non seulement aux géographes et aux historiens, mais à toutes les disciplines qui s'intéressent au passé. (voir image 3)



EVERY NOW AND THEN ...

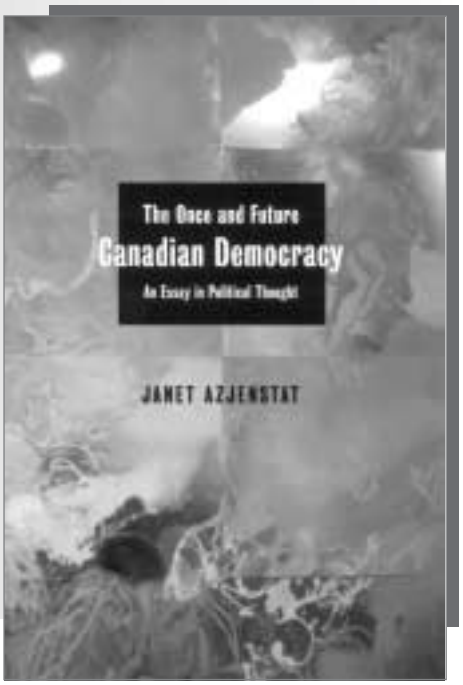
THE ONCE AND FUTURE CANADIAN DEMOCRACY

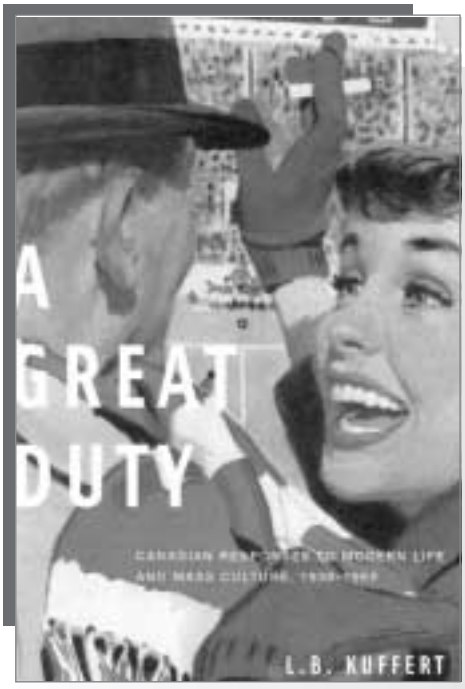
An Essay in Political Thought

JANET AJZENSTAT

"Janet Ajzenstat jousts again, leveling her lance at generations of historians, philosophers, political scientists, and political reformers bent on denying Canada's history and future as a liberal democracy. This ambitious, witty book is the first to confront head-on the new generation of literal and metaphorical green-haired rock-throwers." *Ian Brodie, Department of Political Science, University of Western Ontario*

Due October 2003
0-7735-2659-5 $24.95 paper





A GREAT DUTY

Responses to Modern Life and Mass Culture in Canada, 1939-1967

L.B. KUFFERT

"A fine piece of work. This book is carefully and clearly argued in a way that is at once conceptually rich, interpretatively challenging, and remarkably easy to read. It rests on a rigorous examination of primary and secondary sources, all of which are utilized in ways that build argument effectively. Indeed, argument and evidence have a very comfortable relationship with each other throughout." *Allan Smith, Department of History, University of British Columbia*

Due October 2003
0-7735-2601-3 $27.95 paper

CREATING A HEROINE FOR ENGLISH CANADA:

The Commemoration of Laura Secord

ABSTRACT

Morgan addresses some of the theoretical and methodological challenges involved in the study of such heroines, as Laura Secord, about whom historical records yield very little information. The author suggests that to point to the absences that surround certain heroines' presence in history is certainly a starting point to filling in these historical blanks. Reconstituting the lives of heroines outside of the framework of the "nation," towards the realm of the personal, perhaps even of the domestic, may also result in creating a more complete picture of Secord's life.

To say that the study of 'heroines' and their place in historical narratives is a complicated endeavour, one fraught with many challenges, would be an understatement. For a feminist historian such as myself, one very basic task was that of 'uncovering' and 'restoring' women's activities, experiences, and identities to the historical record, while simultaneously engaging with the ongoing creation of the category 'woman' and its relationship to other categories and identities: class, race and ethnicity, religion, and so on. Moreover, in the case of a woman such as Secord, matters are no less challenging because her image and narrative have been deployed in the creation of 'national' and imperial narratives and representations and her justification as a person of historical significance has been intimately linked to her service to the nation. While some might see this as a cause for celebration – at the very least legitimization of their subject – I viewed it as a test of my skills as a historian and scholar of gender and culture. I leave it to my peers and colleagues to determine how well I have succeeded in providing some kind of 'unified' exploration of these identities, relationships, and locations. What concerns me more here are some of the theoretical and methodological challenges involved in the study of 'heroines,' not to mention the political nuances that overlay all of the above.

First, 'finding' Secord was the most basic and, yet, the most unsolvable task of this research. To be sure, certain biographical details exist that allowed me to sketch out the contours of her life. I can tell you her (approximate) date of birth, her family background, the date of her arrival in Upper Canada, the date and fact of her marriage to James Secord, and the number of children she bore. I can tell you about her walk to warn James Fitzgibbon, although as I have argued elsewhere that narrative is not without its own vagaries, inconsistencies, and blurred edges. And I can tell you something about her life 'post-walk': her struggle to gain state recognition, her attempts to help support her family given her husband's disability, not to mention her widowed daughters' and their children's move back to the family home, along with their children. And I would argue that it is not inconsequential to be able to narrate that much of an Upper Canadian woman's life, even when the woman was white and of 'middling' status.

Yet there are many other dimensions of Secord's life, particularly questions surrounding her own subjectivity, which remain hidden and at present are lost to the curious historian. In all likelihood, they will remain obscured. I cannot tell you, for example, how she experienced and remembered her 'walk' in any way outside of the public domain of service to the colonial state and British Empire: all I have are her petitions to the Crown which, not surprisingly, stress duty, loyal service, and her family's needs. In themselves these petitions may somehow seem to 'complete' the story – in that, as I have argued, they let us see how she framed her narrative– but I would suggest that they represent only fragments of the historical record, testimony to the power of the colonial state and to the specific kinds of linkages of public and private in this period. I cannot tell you, for example, precisely what Secord herself made of the occupation of American troops – her former countrymen – of her village and, it seems, home, nor can I do more than speculate as to how she might have weighed and assessed her responsibilities as a wife and, in particular, mother (although I do know that some of her commemorators were keen to reconcile these aspects of her life with her loyal service).

CECILIA MORGAN

Cecilia Morgan is Assistant Professor and Associate Chair in the department of Theory and Political Studies at OISE/UT. This paper is based on her work on the commemoration of Laura Secord, published in Colin M. Coates and Cecilia Morgan, Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Verchéres and Laura Secord (University of Toronto Press, 2002).

Secord's body is yet another dimension of this narrative that alerts us to absences and silences. Her commemorators, particularly women such as Curzon and Currie, were eager to write about the marks of such service on Secord's body: her innate frailty and slightness of stature, her bleeding feet, the exhaustion she suffered, the heat and insects of late June, and the trepidation and fear she experienced. In doing so it might be said that they turned her body into an archive of knowledge of the sacrifices heroines endured; certainly in their accounts her body became a historical artefact, as much a 'source' that testified to her walk as any political or military document. But we have no idea how she experienced any of this. Was the walk a daunting physical struggle for her? Did her feet in fact bleed? The answer may well be yes to both questions, yet she had also borne and raised a number of children and perhaps had endured miscarriages and/or stillbirths; early nineteenth-century childbirth was itself a test of physical endurance for women such as Secord. It is impossible to know how she incorporated and ranked the trek to Beaverdams in what might have been a lexicon of gynecological and other kinds of physical sufferings endured by women in this period.

Moreover, her fear was said to have encompassed wild animals, American soldiers, and Aboriginal warriors; as I have argued elsewhere, it was the latter who, her commemorators argued, both concerned her the most and allowed Secord to demonstrate her 'heroic' qualities. Yet, apart from a few references in some of her petitions to her trepidation and alarm upon discovering the Mohawk camp, I can do no more than speculate about her conceptions of Native peoples and her understanding of the role played by the Iroquois in the War of 1812. For example, it is possible that, as a child in Barrington, Massachusetts, Secord had been exposed to New England's narratives of white captivity at the hands of Natives and had come to see them as a group to be feared and mistrusted. Yet it is also possible that she had some contact with those Native peoples who might have been hunting and trading in the Niagara Peninsula. Moreover, given her husband's military service, particularly his involvement at Queenston Heights, she may have been aware that certain Native men, at least, were allies and not enemies of the British.

The determination of her story by the state and empire, the place of domesticity and maternity, the embodiment and corporeality of this narrative, and the place of racial fears, fantasies, and relationships are only a few of the questions and themes that impinge upon any attempt to find the 'real' Laura Secord and the 'true' narrative. Less discussed, but still important, is the question of labour. Secord's walk could well have been perceived as 'work' for Crown and colony and acknowledged as a spectrum of physical toil that also incorporated her labour for her family, particularly the nursing care – itself a very common form of women's work – expended in looking after her semi-invalid husband. To be sure, her commemorators often linked her physical sacrifice in getting to Beaverdams to her (quite likely imagined) defense of the wounded James on the Queenston Heights battlefield and argued that she had shielded him to prevent his being fatally stabbed. Some were not afraid to depict Secord as a 'hard-working' wife and mother, part of Niagara pioneer life: witness the ubiquitous and fictive cow. Yet it was equally and, for some, even more important that Secord's femininity, class, and racial identity be aligned in ways that would depict her as a 'lady.' Thus some commemorators added black servants, or her love of Lieutenant Governor's balls at Newark, and substituted silk gowns and thin slippers for plain cotton dresses and sensible shoes. Feminine consumption and love of 'finery' could be managed and controlled and could be an acceptable companion to nation and empire. Once more, Secord's own fantasies and desires lie buried.

Her commemorators, particularly women such as Curzon and Currie, were eager to write about the marks of such service on Secord's body: her innate frailty and slightness of stature, her bleeding feet, the exhaustion she suffered, the heat and insects of late June, and the trepidation and fear she experienced. In doing so it might be said that they turned her body into an archive of knowledge of the sacrifices heroines endured.

Thus, while I am unable to do anything more than simply point to absences, Secord's commemorators were far more optimistic. Using genres and methodologies other than the kind of 'scientific' history I have been trained to practice and produce, writers such as Sarah Curzon, Emma Currie, John Price-Brown, and Merrill Denison, blended prose and poetry, history and literature, to produce a Secord who was much more than the sum of a historian's sources. And while we have argued in *Heroines and History* that their imaginings were criss-crossed by conceptions of gender, race, empire, and nation, we also have tried to point out that the issue is simply not just that of writing 'bad' history. Instead, we must recognize that Secord's commemorators conceptualized their tasks in ways both similar to and different from our notions of creating historical narratives. And yet I return once again to the problem of studying Secord and her commemoration: was there any other way of examining her life and its significance without the framework of 'the nation?' Could they have told her story with another theoretical structure that would not have

relegated her experiences to the realm of not just 'the private' domain but that of the domestic, which in that context might well have been viewed as the realm of trivia?

Yet trying to construct a 'Laura Secord' whose narrative was not built on the scaffold of English-Canadian nationalism is not the only challenge or question. We have argued in *Heroines and History* that both Madeleine de Verchères and Secord's story are dependent on the presence and, at times, absence of the Iroquois; hence our narratives about these 'heroines' creation had to tackle the intermingling of nationalism with imperialism. And, as I searched for and found Secord's commemorators, I became increasingly aware that not all those active in the creation of 'Canadian' historical memory were white and middle class. While not engaged in Secord's commemoration, Iroquois historians such as John Brant-Sero, Ethel Brant Monture, Bernice Loft, and Elliott Moses, crafted narratives of both Native societies and 'Canada' that at times engaged with those of the historical societies, the builders of monuments, and the writers of textbooks.

At other times, the histories told by Native historians followed different trajectories and sought to tell a different story. Their work can be and, I would argue, should be seen as not merely a triumphant narrative of subaltern peoples' agency, although their agency and resistance should not be overlooked. But equally important is their complex, if fraught, relationship with both the Canadian nation-state and the modernity that these historical narratives engaged in and helped create. I would argue that this point is relevant even when we are faced with the issue of these narrators and their narratives' partial absences from the dominant theatres in which much of English Canada's narratives were dreamed of, rehearsed, and enacted. To be sure, the historical memories created and told by historians such as Brant-Sero and Monture are not so much historical memories that 'failed' (as one might argue de Verchères' narrative does today) but, instead, they took shape in forms and locations both similar to and different from those chosen by Secord's commemorators. For example, at times their archive was the public imperial and national one favoured by English-Canadian historians. However, their archive also could take an embodied form, as historians such as Brant-Sero, Monture, and Loft performed history, using narrative in conjunction with Iroquois poetry, music, and dance. It may well be that their labour as historians – or some facets of it – succeeded in either uniting the seemingly disparate elements of 'private' and 'public,' 'home' and 'nation,' better than their non-Native contemporaries. And it is worth considering that such designations and categories might have had very little or possibly even no meaning for them in the first place.

But to return to Laura Secord and the question of 'heroines.' We argue in the conclusion of *Heroines and History* that the latter and its creators treat the former more harshly and subject them to a greater degree of scrutiny that that meted out to 'heroes.' And while I do not of course disagree with this observation, since the book's publication I have been forced to think about contemporary meanings of Secord's story, in ways that other work I have published has not forced me to return and reflect on my own scholarship. To no small extent my repetition and reiteration of these issues has been because of issues of reception, that great question for cultural historians: both of *Heroines and History* and my own writing of history as public discourse and knowledge. Rather than being something 'over and done with,' Secord's memory and life continue to be narrated and recreated: in schools, in books for girls, and in her descendants, a number of whom have attended the public talks I have given in the Niagara area and who are themselves bridges between the domains of history and memory. The reception of the book has made me wonder if Secord's narrative and the story of her commemoration is more relevant, more 'alive,' and more central to these audiences than individuals such as Isaac Brock or those others who figured so prominently in 'traditional' political and military history. For these audiences, it seems, the image and narrative of Laura Secord bridges the public and private, the nation and the home, and provides them with a 'better story' with which to construct past and present (and possibly even future). But that would be a subject of a future, and another, study.

Laura Secord in the 21st Century: Advertising the Angel Inn's Best Bitter, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Artist: Mary LittleJohn-Gillespie

IS NATIONAL HISTORY POSSIBLE?

ABSTRACT

Is it even possible to talk of a national history in the context of Canada? Doesn't the history of Quebec, for example, with its nationalist narratives, make such a definition if not impossible, at least highly problematic? In such a pluralistic society, Dr. Morton points out, a national identity can put on many faces, for Canada is a country of several nations.

Is national history possible? As author of five editions of a book called *The Short History of Canada*, I answer, as did Count Frontenac,: "par la bouche de mes canons." But is this book really "a national history of Canada"? In these post-modern days, that would be unfashionable. Ostensibly, I insist that it is nothing but a "User's Manual" to help the current residents to take advantage of the country with the least damage to themselves and their fellow citizens. No doubt my critics could have done better and will.

The words "nation" and "nation" are what translators call "faux amis" though the confusion exist in both languages – a culture, language and history on one side; a sovereign territory on the other, and René Lévesque and his successors to mix them up. That is certainly part of our separate and joint histories. Does it make "a national history"?

L'"histoire nationale":idéologique ou métaphysique?

Indeed how can we describe a book that comments on the evolution of two self-conscious national ideals, and perhaps six hundred of them if we accept Native usage? And is national history bound to be celebratory, exclusive and positivist? If so, then we will repeat ancestral errors by excluding those unwilling to cheer. But could a history of Quebec that ignores important minorities who do not naturally see themselves as *Québécois* be any more truly nationalist? Not unless, like Abbé Groulx, we conflate nation and race. What about history which seeks a sobre re-evaluation of our shared human experience of this part of our small planet? Is that "national history"? If not does anyone show much enduring interest?

For Canadians, Confederation may be a success, a failure, or a work in progress and still sparking creativity and conflict. One common theme of Canada's history is the emergence of different linguistic, cultural, sexual, regional, religious and economic identities, federally or regionally, whatever the desire of authority, be it in Ottawa or Quebec, to make us take a broader view. In 1995, Jacques Parizeau sent out regional commissions to promote the common interests; they returned laden with parochial concerns, from road repairs to opening hours for local CLSCs. How Canadian.

Histoire d'un peuple

In such a pluralist society, it is needless to point out that a national history can have lots of meanings. My own approach was to open with all the different histories Canadians shared at Confederation. The carpenters of this structure added their own places in the plan because, as Toronto suburbanites, their histories came from the whole world. In the end, my own choices had to be imposed but they were not those I would have made at the outset and some have shifted in each edition. Anyone who sets up a survey course will recognize the grand ambitions, hard choices and the modest fulfillment.

Manuel de l'usager

In this book, as in my teaching, I endeavoured not to be carried away by pride or patriotism. My chosen theme was to write a users' manual for Canadians who wanted to understand how their country had worked. The *Short History* was for me a narrative of events, personalities and developments which were remote from my life and experience but which I wanted to understand. Was Canada a country of one, two or several nations? There was, for me, no correct answer but there was some fascinating working out of contradictory principles. Canada was a nation with frontiers where

DESMOND MORTON

Desmond Morton is Professor of History at McGill University. He is the author of *Canada: A Millennium Portrait* (Toronto: Edgar Kent, 1999), *A Military History of Canada: From Champlain to Kosovo*, Revised 4th ed., (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1999) and more recently, of *Understanding Canadian Defence* (Toronto: Penguin/McGill Institute, 2003).

the inhabitants shared some experiences in common and many more which were different and, in consequence, Canadians came in many sizes, shapes and identities.

My model, if any, was Maurice Careless, possibly because he was unquestionably among the most charming and open of my senior colleagues when I moved to the University of Toronto in 1969, but chiefly because of his brilliant vision of a Canada of "limited identities." Canadians, he suggested, are defined by their "hyphens." When John Diefenbaker insisted he was "an unhyphenated Canadian," it was invariably a pretext for the media to recall him as an Ontario-born Saskatchewan Baptist of mingled Norwegian and British ancestry, embittered because his own party leaders had deliberately mispronounced his name to spoil his leadership bid in 1948. If I had an objective in writing the *Short History*, it was to explain Canadians to Canadians and particularly les Québécois to the multicultural anglophones I had met and taught during my many years at Erindale College in Mississauga.

History, at its most traditional and nationalist, is once more in fashion, in the United States and most of Europe and in our more conservative provinces. In Quebec, passing History in Secondary 4th is the avenue to further education. Other provinces could be tempted in the same direction. You will be familiar with the surveys and promotions fostered by the conservative young men of the Dominion Institute, and the business-backed Historica Foundation managed by former Trudeau aide Tom Axworthy.

History's popularity may be posited on the illusion that, somehow, the study of our past will rediscover roots of duty, patriotism and commitment not yet visible to the naked eye. Faced with this dream or nightmare, most academic historians recoil in disdain, amusement or horror. As I suggested, most of us are sufficiently aware of the post-modern critique of our discipline. History is subjective and a prey to ideological fashion. In Montreal, I often ask students what Quebec's motto, "Je me souviens" includes. Few know that it was derived from Eugène Taché's line that continues, "né sous le lys, je croîs sous la rose." Did the Parti Québécois put "Je me souviens" on my license plate to recall that my province has been shaped by both the Lily and the Rose of old England?

Canada was a nation with frontiers where the inhabitants shared some experiences in common and many more which were different and, in consequence, Canadians came in many sizes, shapes and identities.

How to Make Our Own History?

How should we tackle the history of Canada or of Quebec? My answer would be ridiculously simple and utterly complex. We must proceed carefully and cautiously to record a history and what we know and can, painfully, grasp about the past. We must find room for all the participants, loud-mouthed and silenced alike, winners and losers and patient observers. We must even find patience for people, ideas and events we now denounce and deplore: true believers, for example.

In the process, we shall rediscover that History is adult entertainment, complex, many-sided and rarely flattering to the virtuous unless they are also arrogant - and therefore unvirtuous!

With Canada's history, we should most of all be reminded of a past that lacks a single viewpoint. Instead, we have many splendid ones, whether from the noble hill over Montreal, the steep bluffs overlooking the rivers which Winnipeggers again call The Forksor, even most controversially, the view from the CN Tower which extends over close to one in six who call themselves Canadian. Mine, unapologetically, favoured the town where I came to political consciousness at the age of ten, Regina, Saskatchewan, in the midst of this country's most sweeping social revolution.

Canada's history is dominated by material realities: the land, the climate, the need to earn a living and to survive the accident of a dominant, demanding and currently all-powerful neighbour. These realities shape our collective character as Canadians and, whatever our precautions, limit what we can probably achieve as a collectivity. But, as I often ask my students, is there anywhere else in the world where Canada would be better placed?

This is a land settled by losers because, if they were winners, would they ever have emigrated to this cold, remote land? But look how well the losers have done here! At the same time, the memory of losing explains our moderation and our caution. Like King Charles II, we don't want to go traveling again.

Historical knowledge is always a work in progress, and a selection of many distinct and contradictory trajectories. Historians practice the most evanescent of arts, as I have been reminded by the successive editions of the *Short History*. When neither I nor the publisher has energy or capital for new editions, the book will die and be replaced.

When historians claim God's right of the last word, we shall be destroyed, like any other graven image that claims to be truth and succeeds barely to be a human fantasy. If, in contrast, we know our limits, we shall help others to deepen theirs. Robbed of any grandiose claims, any national history turns out to be a photograph of our own brief age, speaking to us and our children, and discarded by them when they have no further need. It is worth doing well but it is not done forever.

ON THE TEACHING OF HISTORY IN CANADIAN SCHOOLS

ABSTRACT

Dawn Williams reflects on the importance of making visible all of the richness and complexity of those who contributed, and continue to contribute, to Canadian history. Her recent book of biographies, Who's Who in Black Canada, attempts to fill a gap in the visibility of important contemporary black figures. Our history is far from boring, she asserts.There is no need for Canadians to be enamoured of American history, ours is just as cruel, powerful, fascinating.

In the 1970s when I was in elementary then secondary school, the teaching of Canadian history did not include the past of people who were not white, and only to a limited extent, that of members of the country's native population. Outside of being told about slavery, for which a grade five teacher apologised to me beforehand, hoping, as she said, that I wouldn't find it "too embarrassing," my education about "real" Canadian history would not begin until I entered university. There, through independent readings, I began to find out, piece meal, about the richness and complexity of Canadian history. Perhaps things are different today but I think not: I still hear young Blacks say that they did not learn about Black presence in Canada until they got to university. And I think, well, if they don't know about Blacks being in Canada from at least early in the 1600's, what about their peers who may not be Black and therefore less motivated to find out about "the history of others" in Canada? Surely Blacks must appear as "invisible" in Canadian history to whites and other ethno-racial groups as they do to Blacks.

Yet, Blacks, to name just one group, are sprinkled liberally throughout Canadian history. Many people have not heard of Viola Desmond, a Black businesswoman who, in 1946 was arrested for sitting in the "whites only" section of a local movie theatre in New Glasgow, NS; fewer still have heard of Mathieu da Costa, a Black of Portuguese descent, who, in the early 1600s acted as interpreter between Samuel de Champlain and the MicMacs in Port Royal. Perhaps if I had heard the story of Marie-Josèphe Angélique—the Black slave in Quebec who, in 1734, upon hearing that she was to be sold, whether accidentally or deliberately, set off a fire which led to half of Montreal burning down, for which she was tortured, hanged, and her body burned—I would have found a Black Canadian female resistance fighter (perhaps as controversial as Louis Riel) to emulate instead of immersing myself in Black American literature in search of an identity which would help me see a place for myself in this society.

Canada has always been reluctant to mention the "less glorious" chapters of its past. Only in more recent years have we been hearing more openly about the internment of the Japanese living in Canada, during WWII, or been reminded that the Chinese – whose labour and loss of lives insured that Canadians would be connected "from sea to shining sea" way before the advent of air travel – built the railroad that traverses this great country. But these admissions have not come voluntarily. Rather, they are the results of years of pressure and mobilization by descendants of Japanese- and Chinese-Canadians who wanted to "set the record straight" in honour of their ancestors and for the sense of belonging of future generations.

But why this reluctance to tell the history of those who have contributed to making this country and to those who have made it great? Is it because the information is not known? Highly unlikely, since there is no shortage of books, from early elementary to post-graduate levels, dealing with the various influxes of people, weaving a rich tapestry, forming an attractive patchwork quilt called Canada.

Perhaps it is due in part, like my grade five teacher's embarrassment over slavery, to a misplaced sense of guilt for actions carried out by others and from which their descendants continue to benefit. But why should those in the present assume guilt for matters over which they had no control? Only by choosing to ignore the past or, at worst, to deny it, do we then become complicit in whatever wrongs of omission or commission were enacted by previous generations. Regardless of how controversial or even painful a past may be, we owe it to the memory of those who lived it to remember. If we remember, we grow, we evolve, we insure that their efforts were not in vain.

…Canadian History is Boring

Is Canadian history really boring or is it simply that we do not tell it well? If we were a nation of storytellers, of people who still embraced the richness of the oral tradition and who could add colour to the

DAWN WILLIAMS

Dawn Williams is a researcher and writer living in Toronto. Who's Who in Black Canada (2002) is her first publication.

happenings of the past and bring it to life, we would hold our young in thrall, fire their imaginations and stoke their curiosity about who, and how, and why. After all, Canadian history is as rich with rogues and heroes as that of the Americans! We admire their history but think nothing of ours. But what, outside of a Hollywood-type presentation, is so vastly different between American and Canadian history? Each had a large native population which was decimated by the greed and cunning of the newcomer, with both native populations ending up on reserves; they had buffaloes, which were killed for sport, we had beavers, which were killed for their pelts; they held Blacks in slavery, resulting in land cultivation and the accumulation of wealth for the white owners, we held Blacks in slavery for the prestige of showing chattel ownership; they had The Founding Fathers, we had The Fathers of Confederation; they had the Pilgrims, we had, *Les filles du roi*; they had gunslingers and cowboys who settled the Wild, Wild West—in Canada, we had them too; they did not allow women the vote until 1920, in Canada women were eligible to vote from 1916; they had Kennedy, we had Trudeau…characters, events, one as rich as the other, differing only in the telling! This is the stuff of which plays and great fiction are written. We have yet to recognize this in Canada.

…Teaching History Today:

Now, more than ever, it is imperative that Canadian history as it is taught in the classrooms reflect the history of those *in* the classroom, and situate them within the Canadian mosaic. According to Statistics Canada's 2002 Ethnic Diversity Study, "People of non-European descent accounted for 13% of the population aged 15 and over, or 2.9 million…(non-Europeans [originate from] Asia, Africa, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Australia and Oceania.)." Canada is proud to proclaim that it is home to one of the most multi-ethnic populations in the world, yet studies show that these various groups are being left to live on the fringes; foreign-trained professionals have difficulty being accredited here and their previous experiences are not considered relevant. What are the implications for the children of these more recent immigrants? Will they see Canada as "home," as a country that has adopted and embraced them and to which they want to contribute? Or, will they disengage, feeling that since their parents were not valued, their own efforts too will be wasted? This is a situation that Canada can ill afford: with the country's declining birth rate and rapidly aging baby-boomers, Canada needs a well-trained, highly productive and *tax-paying* population to maintain the social structure to which we have become accustomed and for which we are the envy of the rest of the world. To do this, the various peoples who inhabit this land need to feel they belong, they need to feel welcome, they need to have their experiences and their origins recognized, they need to see themselves reflected in course material and in those who teach this course material.

…My Story

When I embarked upon the writing of *Who's Who in Black Canada*, it was out of concern for the lack of visibility (*not* lack of presence) of Blacks in contemporary Canadian society as leaders, as achievers, and as role models. Having seen them in government, business, medical and academic settings, I knew they existed. My concern was that if I – a fairly well-educated and well-travelled individual about to enter my fourth decade – could find few examples of Blacks who were successful being portrayed in the media and public forums, it would be even more difficult and more disheartening for those in their first or second decade of existence. Recognising this omission and its possible detrimental effect on the self-esteem of young people – especially since Black presence in Canada has been documented since at least the 1600's – I felt it incumbent upon me to provide an educational reference which could be used by teachers, students, and those providing career counselling to help situate Blacks within contemporary Canadian society. Such a reference would be helpful to young Blacks looking for "identity" and role models; it would also serve to educate other students who are not Black. And ultimately, I would provide those in the teaching profession with examples of successful Blacks who could be identified as guest speakers, serve as research topics, or just offer additional reference points to complement the teaching of history or science or literature, or other courses in the classroom.

As it often happens with such undertakings, it was the initiator who was first impacted by this research. Indeed, my intuition and initial sense of justification were confirmed. Of the 700+ people identified and profiled in this book, many have fascinating stories and set inspirational examples. These include: neurosurgeon Dr. Renn Holness who was the first in Canada to carry out fetal transplants to treat Parkinson's disease; Dr. Olufemi Olatunbosun who has pioneered medical techniques in obstetrics and gynaecology; Dr. Daurene Lewis who, in 1984, became the first Black in Nova Scotia and the first Black woman in North America to become mayor of a city (Annapolis Royal); Charmaine Hooper, captain of Canada's women's soccer team; Mr. Justice Julius Isaac, the first Black to be appointed to the Federal Court of Canada; Lloyd Richards, director of the ground-breaking, *A Raisin in the Sun* who in 1959 became only the second Black ever to direct a play on Broadway; Prof. Chris Ross, in 1992, became the first Black Dean of a business school (John Molson, Concordia U.); award-winning writers, Émile Ollivier, George Elliott Clarke, and Lillian Allen; soil specialists Dr. Constantine Campbell and Dr. Valin Marshall; Willie O'Ree who in 1958 became the first Black to play in the NHL…And the list goes on to include journalists, engineers, ophthalmologists, business leaders, designers, judges, academics, elected government representatives, and many more.

Those who use a book like *Who's Who in Black Canada* recognize that history does not always need to be taught chronologically, from the past forward; that by beginning in the present one can inspire learners to *want* to look back and learn more. It is that motivation, that inspiration which needs to be captured and harnessed to encourage young people to ask *how* and *why*. There is a lot of rich material available and many wonderful stories to be told about how Canada was *and is* being made. If we can use our imagination as educators and as citizens to motivate young people, they will feel inspired to take their place in society and contribute fully, knowing that they too can achieve and succeed and that history will remember them.

THE CBC PEOPLE'S HISTORY:

Some Notes for a Teacher's Manual

ABSTRACT

Gerald Friesen praises the CBC People's History series as valuable resource in the history classroom, not only because of its high cinematographic quality, but also because of the fact that it appeals to students – it is impossible to ignore that television stands as a crucial communication tool in our postmodern era. Yet, Dr. Friesen's endorsement of these filmic representations of historical events and moments is not without critical analysis. Indeed, he cautions us that certain of the video's messages, such as their stereotypical representation of women as spectators rather than makers of history, or the videos' reliance on melodramatic techniques, "must be debated" within the classroom.

The praise and criticism have died down but the CBC *People's History* must not be allowed to disappear from the consciousness of teachers of Canadian history. This high-budget series can constitute a valuable resource in the classroom if it is used selectively and critically. Having employed it for two years in our department's first-year survey of Canada, I would like to comment on its strengths and potential shortcomings as a part of the daily classroom schedule.

Ours is a culture built on stories, especially stories about individual characters, whether they act on sitcoms or sports fields or government benches. However, it is fair to say that Canadian students do not know many Canadian stories. Unlike their counterparts in Britain, France, or the United States, to take just these few examples, they are exposed to relatively little Canadian content in their popular culture. The most significant aspect of their preparation for the survey class is not their failure to pass the Dominion Institute's annual test on Canadian history but their comprehensive ignorance of all nation-related myths. Teachers have to acquaint their charges with such myths before they can commence the process of undermining the prejudices and making more complicated the debates confronting every citizen of the world.

These narratives are most persuasively communicated by television and film. The great merit of the *People's History* lies in its quality as a film experience and in its focus on the stories of individuals. Recognizing the nature and quality of the competition – ER and Survivor and other shows of that ilk – Mark Starowicz and his team sought an appropriate budget, roughly one million dollars per televised hour, for their series. The key components of camera work, music, and script continuity received the attention that such high-budget work can command. And the forgotten partner in such Canadian enterprises, marketing, also received the kind of budget and critical support reserved for blockbusters. The hype, which endures for years, and the on-screen quality of *People's History* make it a winner in today's classrooms.

The teacher's task is to use the CBC series wisely. I believe that the films should be used only in limited contexts and only with a larger purpose in mind. A showing should never be more that ten to fifteen minutes of an hour-long class. Its purpose should be to establish that there are authentic national stories. By definition, in our culture, these are stories worth the expenditure of a million dollars to make their telling seem colourful and dramatic. The specific sequence for classroom presentation can be selected by going to the CBC website (http://history.cbc.ca/histicons), and clicking on "teacher resources" and then on either "elementary school" or "high school" and, finally, on "Episode Index." This time code and subject guide list the entire thirty-two hours by video chapter and thus permits a precise selection of video material.

What can the video do? It can make any Canadian subject seem important. "No sequence in Canada: A People's History" is better able to illustrate the impact upon students of quality, marketing, and film itself than the 1759 battle on the Plains of Abraham. The moment has been described so often and the actual film event has been advertised so frequently that we all know something about it: the red and blue of the uniforms, the white smoke of the guns, the calm measured recital of facts by the narrator. This was one case where, at least in my classroom, I had no doubt that the students' attention was riveted on the story. In the Plains of Abraham scene, we encounter a number of aspects of the *People's History's* distinctive 'screen grammar': the film presents not a Hollywood

GERALD FRIESEN

Gerald Friesen is Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Manitoba. He is the author of many books, including River Road: Essays on Manitoba and Prairie History (University of Manitoba Press, 1996), The West: Regional Debate, National Ambitions published by Penguin Books in 1999, and more recently, Citizens and Nation: An Essay on History, Communication, and Canada, published in 2000 by University of Toronto Press.

sequencing of shots but a documentary approach wherein cameras occupy only a few vantage points as if they were operated by news teams in the field (the 'embedded' tv crews in the Iraq war provide an appropriate comparison); the shots present high quality digital technology (new in 1998-2000); the content of the scene is provided by ninety-eight individuals, authentically-clothed re-enactors, who are then multiplied into two armies of 4000 men by means of computer technology.

What seized the attention of my students? First, as the camera zoomed in on individual soldiers, the narrator outlined their careers in capsule biographies, a form borrowed from the great 1960s documentary *Culloden* by Peter Watkins. The portentous music and clipped prose emphasize that these are individuals with whom one can identify and whose fate will soon be made plain. Second, the military strategy of the era is utterly shocking to today's students; though they claim to be worldly and to know how the past unfolds, my students actually gasped when the troops lined up, marched forward, and then fired directly into the opposing line from a distance of mere metres. Third, the power of a community's collective historical memory, as well as of present-day hype, should not be ignored: my students brought to this moment their unconscious recognition that an important turning point in history was unfolding in this brief sequence. The narrator reinforces this sense of drama by declaring that huge decisions are about to be made: empires are fighting for dominance in Europe and for advantage in world trade and, in northern North America, the fate of the French and English communities hangs in the balance. Thus, a film that puts ordinary individuals into an historic moment for just six or eight minutes can galvanize the viewer; it can create a sense of involvement and identification, and it can command not just interest but commitment. Herein lie some of the strengths of *Canada: A People's History.*

As everyone who has followed the professional historian's reaction to the series knows, however, there is much debate about whether the CBC has done the student any favours. The basic dispute is over the messages that viewers will take from the series and whether students, in particular, can discern the ways in which they are being manipulated by the movie makers. To illustrate, consider the presentation of the murder of Thomas D'Arcy McGee in 1868, which represents approximately seven minutes of the three hours on the Confederation era directed by Jim Williamson.

One should recall that the members of Starowicz' team decided to ignore a common feature of today's historical documentaries, namely the historian commentator. Instead, they chose to rely on a single synthesis-like narrative read by a female announcer – god's secretary, said one of the film makers – whose voice carries the entire 32-hour story. Moreover, in the 16 pre-photography hours, they hired actors to speak directly from historical documents. In the McGee sequence, several letters written by Agnes Macdonald, wife of the Prime Minister, about Sir John's learning of the assassination and about the trial of the alleged murderer, Patrick Whelan, provide the focal point for the narrative. The actor playing Lady Macdonald reinforces the shock of the moment and establishes that she recoiled from Whelan when she saw him in the courtroom. It is an effective believable account of history in the making and, of course, the actor is reading – or speaking, or emoting – from an authentic document written by an eyewitness.

As in any melodrama, the chapter on McGee's murder wins our attention by evoking an emotional response. My students reported in a questionnaire that the drama of such events – in all of the sequences in which actors appeared – was conveyed more effectively because the actor's emotions were so clearly on display. Being creatures of the television age, the students welcomed this kind of communication. And Starowicz knew it, referring often to his teenage daughters and to the viewers of the American television drama, *E.R.*, as his target audience.

These thoughts are enough to cause the historian and teacher to worry about the series. Is it properly critical or reflective? Why are there no historian-commentators to offer alternative viewpoints? True, the McGee assassination demonstrates that Canada isn't immune from such passions and tragedies. Moreover, the story is told accurately and the document is quoted accurately. The pictures of the funeral procession are a dramatic testimony to the very different nature of public culture in the centuries before mass media, a culture built on pedestrians and face-to-face encounters in the street. Moreover, this chapter introduces the crucial theme of Protestant-Catholic, Irish-English hostility, and demonstrates that terrorism is an old story. It also depicts American involvement in the Irish opposition to England. All this is positive.

On the negative side, one must ask about the messages that are never considered frankly by the film maker. For example, the chapter follows a too-common melodramatic pattern in reducing the lead woman to spectator rather than history maker. Agnes Macdonald emotes about the death by violence of a wonderful man but is not able to intervene in any way. By choosing her account, the film reinforces the common and sexist theme of women's passivity within a limited domestic sphere. Moreover, the conviction and execution of Whelan on the basis of circumstantial evidence and in the face of his strenuous denials are noted in passing but then are submerged in the drama evoked by Lady Macdonald's beautifully-reenacted words. And the top-down view of the conflict presented in this clip not only criticizes violence (an easy point to make), but it obscures the peoples' causes. Neither the Irish cause within the Empire nor the cause of the Métis resistance in Red River is treated with as much respect as is the Prime Minister's viewpoint. By talking about Sir John Macdonald's abhorrence of violence, the narrator seems to absolve him of any guilt in the rush to judgment in Whelan's case and even in his subsequent treatment of Riel in Manitoba; indeed, the last line of this chapter prejudges Riel's 1869 resistance movement. Thus, we are given not a people's interpretation of McGee's murder but the establishment's interpretation of popular violence.

The McGee episode is cloaked in the soothing words of the narrator who has explained the events of the preceding thousands of years and will continue to deliver judgments for the rest of the narrative. It is cloaked, too, in the powerful music that has accompanied every other

event and speech during the entire 32 hours. Thus, even this brief excerpt communicates a subtle but powerful message of national continuity without drawing attention to the claim through the use of an explicit comment. But this unspoken message gently leads the viewer into a path that is paradoxically comfortable and dangerous – a path leading away from education and toward propaganda, away from critical thought about nation and toward passive acceptance of community norms.

The Epilogue of *Canada: A People's History* should be required viewing in every classroom that uses any portion of the preceding 31 hours and 55 minutes as part of its instructional activity. It summarizes all that has gone before and, simultaneously, in postmodern style, reveals that the reality it has been at pains to construct is, in truth, merely another communication device. In this five-minute sequence, we are given the strongest national message of the series, as well as a declaration of the movie-makers' self-awareness and of their wish that we be similarly aware in approaching their art. This example of what is called reflexive thought in today's humanities classes does not dilute the powerful impact of the CBC History Project. Instead, though we are reminded that the entire series is merely a very long movie, we also revel in the impressive images that its film makers have accumulated.

What does the Epilogue convey? First, it celebrates the land itself. In a powerful series of landscape images, it declares that this is a nation-state linked irrevocably to a particular piece of the globe. Second, it suggests that the Canadian state is composed of local and regional societies that are quite different from one another at any particular moment, and yet strangely of a piece, linked over a very long duration – even thousands of years – by the similarities of the peoples' responses to a shared global context. Third, it asserts the independent authority of "history" as the authentic record of a national past. This claim is powerfully shaped by music, narrator, and screen grammar as well as by an explicit textual message; because the musical soundtrack, narration, and film strategies are so consistent and so effective, they declare a commonality of purpose as well as experience in Canada. Starowicz's directors and producers may have been hard-bitten documentary film makers but they were also romantic nationalists: their work echoes the famous dictum of the 19th century French writer, Ernest Renan, who defined a 'nation' as a body of people who had done great things together in the past and hoped to do great things together in the future. One of those great things, Starowicz's staff would undoubtedly reply, was to make a great filmic record of the national past.

We live in an age that stifles thought about citizens' community obligations, that slights politics, and that undermines the relevance of party platforms and even of voting. Our postmodern condition has been shaped by global communication, by an economy now dominated by cultural products, and by the rapid pace of material and technological change that makes the past and memory itself seem a waste of time. As Canadians, we also live next to the television and film giant of the world whose roars drown out our own conversations and whose wiles seduce us all. In such a circumstance, knowledge of and attachment to the Canadian nation-state are very difficult to sustain. Effective, emotionally involving, televised history is one important means of meeting the challenge.

Our postmodern condition has been shaped by global communication, by an economy now dominated by cultural products, and by the rapid pace of material and technological change that makes the past and memory itself seem a waste of time.

If Canada cannot exist without such instruments of communication as this CBC *People's History*, neither can it be a viable community unless its citizens recognize the dangers of national loyalty. The 32 hours, and more than 200 chapters, of this remarkable television series provide an unprecedented opportunity to cultivate both historically-informed patriotism and critical knowledgeable citizenship in our schools. But we must be aware of the *People's History*'s tricks; we must challenge its assumptions; we must re-make its vision of the past because that is what our culture requires. Instead of living in a "sort of permanent present lacking any organic relation to the public past of the times they live in," Canadians may use the series as a spur to consider the relevance of memory. Like Aboriginal narratives and the stories told by a family's eldest members, the CBC's remarkable production is a powerful statement about humanity and community. Like those other family stories, it is a work of art; like them, too, it draws its power from its apparent authenticity and its claim to communicate effectively a semblance of the past. It demonstrates that history is not dead and that memory has not lost its relevance. But, in a visual capitalist age, when the cultural condition of postmodernity and the technology of communication have changed the context in which messages are conveyed within a community, the *People's History* also illustrates why changes in communication technology demand new vehicles for these histories. Neither the past nor memory itself can be taken for granted. Rather, they have to be conveyed by the vehicles and in the idioms of the age. Today, the crucial vehicle is the television and film narrative. However, the contents of these messages also have to be debated – as they have eternally been debated – because their meaning is not entirely clear and is never definitive. That is the task of the teacher in the classroom. The *People's History* can open the student's mind to the wonders of the past, but the teacher in the classroom must still provide the spur to ensure that its meanings are debated.

WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE?

The State of Interest and Knowledge in Canada's History and Its Relationship to National Pride

ABSTRACT

Jack Jedwab offers a statistical look at the importance that the Canadian population attaches to knowing and understanding our history. While many studies suggest that Canadians know little about important historical moments, a closer look reveals that this lack of knowledge varies along generational, linguistic, and ethnic lines. Finally, the author compares our apparent lack of knowledge to a similar phenomenon taking place in the United States, concluding that Canadians are not so indifferent about, or ignorant of, Canadian history.

JACK JEDWAB
Jack Jedwab is executive director of the Association for Canadian Studies

How important is knowledge of history towards the effective exercise of one's citizenship? This question has been the focus of much attention both in Canada and abroad. Over the past decade academics and policy-makers in Canada have paid considerable attention to improving the population's knowledge of history. Celebrating our historical achievements and telling our stories have become central objectives in the ongoing effort to promote Canada's heritage and identity. Recently, those national institutions assigned with the task of preserving and promoting our heritage have significantly enhanced their educational mission so as to promote more public conversation about Canada's past. The education departments of most provinces have undertaken reviews of history teaching and in so doing have stressed the importance of transmitting such knowledge to future generations of Canadians.

Electronic and print media have also devoted more space to the issue of historic knowledge amongst the Canadian population. Since the past several years, nearly every July 1st comes with a reminder of the population's relatively low degree of knowledge about the time and place of some of the most important events in the country's past. Widely reported in the media, public opinion surveys appear on our country's birthday, giving Canadians a failing grade on the annual history quiz.

But the effort to enhance understanding of our national past is also connected to the idea that doing so will strengthen national pride and unity. No doubt, knowledge about history has become intertwined with debates over Canadian identity. Nationalists insist that knowledge of history is crucial to the understanding of their aspirations. It is something with which many English Canadian, Quebec and Aboriginal leaders concur. Such views, however, tend to be more closely related to content and interpretation of the historical narrative rather than to the more limited yet valid objective of improving historical knowledge to create informed citizenship. Underlying the nationalist perspective is the idea that those persons with a strong knowledge of history will possess a stronger national attachment. Jack Granatstein's book *Who Killed Canadian History* generated considerable controversy about the purportedly limited importance directed at our historical knowledge by academic and non-academic leadership alike, and the possible threat that this represented to national identity. Granatstein suggested that insufficient attention was being given to Canada's political and military history. While the book was the object of much criticism, it served as a useful reminder of the need to enhance knowledge about Canada through the teaching of its history.

Insistence upon the strong relationship between knowledge of history and patriotic feeling is often accompanied by a number of assumptions. The lack of emphasis on political and military history results in presenting the past in a manner that is uninteresting to the population. There is, however, a tendency to overestimate the extent to which the history recorded in learned journals is conveyed to the population outside the academy. There is also a belief that there is too extensive a focus on social history – women's history, labor history, and immigration and multicultural history. In sum, the presentation of Canadian history in a manner that is purportedly not interesting results in the population's lack of knowledge about our past. It is further contended that the large focus on social history detracts from the adoption of a common story or a national narrative. By dividing our attention between many stories about the past, the national fabric, some believe, is purportedly weakened. Those supporting this notion consider it so self-evident that they regard as unnecessary the presentation of empirical evidence to demonstrate its validity. In his recent publication on immigration, Daniel Stoffman (2002) maintains that: " In the name of multiculturalism, the achievements of Canada's founders have been all but eradicated

from school books. Multiculturalists believe that English-Canadian schoolchildren should not be allowed to have English historical heroes." Any serious examination of those history textbooks most widely distributed in Canada would permit us to dismiss this casual observation.

Examining the Relationship Between Knowledge and Interest in Canada's history?

When asked to evaluate their knowledge of Canada's history, some three-quarters of the population believe that they possess a good knowledge of the country's past (10% believe that it is 'very good' and 62% believe that it is 'good'). The biggest gaps in self-evaluated knowledge of our history are generational (82% of persons over 60 say they have good knowledge versus 69% between the ages of 18 and 29) and European (71%) versus non-European immigrants (48%). While public versus private sector employees similarly rate their knowledge of Canada's past, at 14% the former report the highest degree of 'very good' knowledge amongst all the sub-groups measured by the survey.

Do Canadians find the country's history uninteresting? According to a 2001 ACS -Environics survey, some 47% of Canadians were very interested in the history of Canada and another 42% declared they were somewhat interested. Only one out of ten Canadians stated that they were uninterested in the country's history. There remains a gap between younger and older Canadians in terms of the strength of their respective interest in Canada's history. Some 58% of those over the age of sixty said they were very interested in Canada's history as compared to 38% of our youth. But does this imply that the type of history currently disseminated to our youth is less interesting or that our appetite for history increases with age? The survey demonstrates that interest in history rises from one age group to the next. But perhaps the more relevant indicator in this regard is the strong correlation between knowledge and interest in Canada's history. Those describing their knowledge of Canada's history as 'very good' are to a significant extent 'very interested' in our past. Conversely those with less declared knowledge of Canada's history tend to indicate a considerably lesser interest in the subject matter. Interest in Canadian history also increases with education. Of those with a high school degree or less, some 43% say they are very interested in Canadian history.

When compared to other countries most here find Canadian history interesting. According to a 2003 ACS-Environics survey, nearly 40% of Canadians find the country's history very interesting and another 44% somewhat interesting. Younger Canadians are less inclined to describe Canada's history as very interesting with some 31% saying so amongst the 18-29 age category. A slim majority of those over the age of 60 find Canadian history very interesting

The findings below suggest that like fine wine, history is something one appreciates more with age.

Table 1

Compared to other countries, do you think that Canadian history is very interesting, somewhat interesting, not very interesting or not at all interesting?

By Age

	Total	18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 or more
Very interesting	39	31	34	42	51
Somewhat interesting	44	45	48	43	38
Not very interesting	12	17	12	12	7
Not at all interesting	5	7	5	3	3

English Canadians are more likely than francophones to say that the country's history is very interesting. In each case, more than eight out of ten said that the country's history was interesting when compared with that of other countries.

Table 2

Compared to other countries, do you think that Canadian history is very interesting, somewhat interesting, not very interesting or not at all interesting?

By Language spoken at home

	Total	English	French
Very interesting	39	41	32
Somewhat interesting	44	42	50
Not very interesting	12	12	13
Not at all interesting	5	4	5

Seeing Stars and Stripes

Those favorable to a national narrative emphasizing our political and military achievements tend to believe that the United States represents a model in fostering such thinking. They attribute the strong emphasis on that country's history and the existence of a national education department to the high level of patriotic feeling south of the border. Yet there is much evidence to suggest that when it comes to historical knowledge our neighbors to the south do not fare considerably better than Canadians. "American Teens Need a History Lesson," according to an analysis conducted by George and Alec Gallup. They observe that: "some basic facts of history are missing from the heads of a notable majority of American teens." These findings from a Gallup Youth Survey, conducted in the year 2000, showed just over four in ten teens surveyed (aged 13 to 17) aware that 1492 was the year of Columbus' discovery of America. An additional 22% gave some answer other than 1492; more than one-third (36%) said they do not know. For their part, most Canadians are unaware that the founder of Canada's first European settlement was Samuel de Champlain. In fact, only one out of four Canadians associate Christopher Columbus (13%) or Henry Hudson (10%) with Canada's first European settlement.

Less than four in ten teens (39%) knew that the Civil War dealt with issues of states' rights. About one in five (18%) gave some other answer, but a large minority (43%) said they don't know which war was fought over states' rights. The year of the United States' birth is apparently an even greater mystery to teens. Only one teen in four (25%) said that 1776 was the year in which the United States declared its independence. About one-fifth (19%) answered

with some other year. More than half of teens (56%) said they do not know the year of American independence. Boys are more likely than girls to know their country's birthday (30% of the boys know the year was 1776, compared to 20% of girls). When asked which document guarantees the right of a free press in this country, many teens are unsure about the answer to this question as well. Less than half (42%) gave some semblance of a correct answer, with 18% naming the Bill of Rights, 16% naming the Constitution, and 8% mentioning the First Amendment. Another 42% of teens said they don't know the answer.

Discovery, Exploration and War: The Areas of Canada's History of Greatest Interest

Canadians choose a diverse menu when they are asked about their preferred areas of Canadian history. Military history is the area of Canada's history that the younger segment of the population found most interesting; when asked what area of Canadian history they found most interesting, it was the first choice of those between the age of 18 and 29. Nearly one out of four persons over the age of 60 find discoverers and explorers the most interesting area of the country's history as compared to approximately one out of eight respondents between the ages of 18 and 29.

Table 3

What area of Canadian history do you find most interesting?

By Age

	Total	18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 or more
Discoverers and Explorers	19	13	19	20	24
Military – Wars	13	18	12	12	10
Early history / Pre-20th century	7	4	8	8	10
Aboriginal history	7	10	7	7	3
The first settlers – early development	6	6	6	6	7

Canada's discovers and explorers are of particular interest to francophones, whereas anglophones tend to be slightly more interested in settlement and aboriginal history.

Table 4

What area of Canadian history do you find most interesting?

By Language spoken at home

	Total	English	French
Discoverers and Explorers	19	17	30
Military – Wars	13	13	13
Early history / Pre-20th century	7	9	3
Aboriginal history	7	7	5
The first settlers – early development	6	8	2

European immigrants tend to show a great interest in discoverers and explorers whereas the non-Europeans show a slightly higher than average interest in aboriginal history.

Table 5

What area of Canadian history do you find most interesting?

By Non-British immigration

	Total	Europe	Other
Discoverers and Explorers	19	24	14
Military – Wars	13	6	11
Early history / Pre-20th century	7	6	5
Aboriginal history	7	4	10
The first settlers – early development	6	8	6

Leaving History Behind?

In Canada, popular history packaged for the population has achieved considerable success in recent years. Whether it is CBC's *People's History* or the History Channel, there is definite interest in the country's past amongst an important segment of the population. The runaway success of David McCullough's John Adams biography or the popularity of cable's History Channel confirm that interest in history has enjoyed similar popularity south of the border. In a commentary on the place of history in the classroom, entitled "Should History Class Be Left in the Past?" Gary Gordon (2002) notes that when American adults were asked in a Gallup Poll which school subject has been most valuable to them in their lives, only two courses, math (34%) and English/literature/reading (24%), scored in double digits. History came in a distant third place, with 7 percent.

According to the results of the 2003 Gallup Youth Survey*, math (23%) and science (14%) are mentioned most often as American teens' (aged 13 to 17) favorite courses in school. Yet according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), mathematics and science assessment results for tests conducted in 2000, 83% of 12th graders are not proficient in mathematics show that 82% of 12th graders are not proficient in science. Ray (2003) wonders why, if math and science top the list of teens' favorite school subjects, aren't more teens proficient in these areas? This raises the issue of whether liking something necessarily makes you good at it? Clearly, when it comes to the study of history in the United States, the level of interest does not correlate with strong proficiency. History is tied for third place with English/literature on the list of favorites – 10% of teens named this subject as their favorite. Unfortunately, American teens seem to be even less proficient in history than they are in math or science. According to the 2001 NAEP U.S. history assessment, just 11% of 12th graders score at or above the proficiency level.

Despite all the patriotic verve of the US, it does not appear to be putting the improvement of knowledge about

American history on the national education forefront. In 2002, the adoption of 'No Child Left Behind (NCLB)'– the federal legislation's adoption designed to increase student achievement in America's public schools – reinforced the perceived importance of English and math over other subjects such as history. NCLB mandated that all states establish achievement standards for reading, math and science, but not for history or social studies. Gallup polling shows that the majority of Americans approve of the legislation, and of the more standardized national curriculum that could result from it.

According to Gary Gordon, "[t]oo often, history is presented as a lifeless subject with no relevance. When asked to memorize names and dates that possess no intrinsic meaning, students frequently respond with a resounding chorus of "Boring!" History is too often a chronicle of political and military events with little discussion of the cultural context in which the events took place. Without meaning, it is easy to see why the American public sees little value in this brand of history." Such eminent American education theorists as E.D. Hirsch Jr. have stressed the need to teach history from a broader perspective that helps us understand present behaviors and events.

The Politics of History or the History of Politics

All this brings us back to our initial question. Those who believe that healthy citizenship is measured by the extent to which patriotic feelings are aroused may be unsatisfied by the impact of improving historical knowledge in pursuing this objective. Still, empirical evidence suggests that improving historical knowledge does indeed have an impact on generating better informed citizens without necessarily arousing such sentiment. Canadians reporting higher degrees of knowledge of the country's history were far more supportive of diversity, support for official language minorities, recognition of Aboriginal land claims and universal public health care. Moreover, 91% believe that it is important to have a good knowledge of Canada's history to address some of the previously mentioned issues. Of course, some may believe that a good knowledge of the country's history should lead to different conclusions about the aforementioned policy issues. Resolving that question will require determining the respective importance of the politics of history and the history of politics. Fortunately, space does not permit us to offer an opinion in this regard.

Sources:

Association for Canadian Studies-Environics Survey, August-September 2001

Association for Canadian Studies-Environics Survey, April/May 2003

Gallup, George and Gallup, Alec. Poll Analysis. Gallup News Service "American Teens Need a History Lesson," May 5, 2000

Gordon, Gary. "Should History Class Be Left in the Past?" Gallup Commentary September 24, 2002

Granatstein, Jack, *Who Killed Canadian History:* Toronto: Harper/Collins, March 1998

Ray, Julie. "A Report Card on Teens' Favorite Subjects," Gallup Poll Tuesday Briefing , April 22, 2003

Stoffman, Daniel. *Who Gets In: What's Wrong with Canada's Immigration Program and How to Fix It*, Toronto, Macfarlane, Walter and Ross, 2002

Library and Archives Canada

... providing access to countless primary sources
... working with teachers and specialists in Canadian Studies
... offering educational resources and activities for use in the classroom
... bringing its collections to teachers through the Learning Centre, available online in March 2004

Diaries · Photographs · Books · Articles · Videos · Films · Sound recordings · Letters · Portraits · Census records · Music

Bibliothèque et Archives Canada

... donne accès à d'innombrables sources primaires
... collabore avec les enseignants et les spécialistes en études canadiennes
... fournit du matériel éducatif et des activités pour utilisation en salle de classe
... met ses collections à la disposition des enseignants au moyen du Centre d'apprentissage en ligne à compter de mars 2004

Journaux personnels · Photos · Livres · Articles · Vidéos · Films · Bandes sonores · Lettres · Portraits · Recensements · Musique

www.nlc-bnc.ca www.archives.ca

National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada et Archives nationales du Canada
Canada

INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS CELEBRATE!

™ Rogers Broadcasting Limited

INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS ON OMNI

Name of Program	Language	Original Time	
Caribbean Vibrations	English	2:30 PM – 3:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Kontakt	Ukrainian	1:00 PM – 2:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Latin Vibes Television	Spanish	4:00 PM – 5:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Leben Malti	Maltese	10:00 AM – 10:30 AM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Macedonian Heritage Hour	Macedonian	5:00 PM – 6:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Magyar Kepek TV	Hungarian	12:30 PM – 1:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Morning Waves	Russian	7:00 AM – 8:00 AM (Sunday)	– OMNI.1
Noi Romanii	Romanian	12:00 PM – 12:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Pasqyra Shqiptare	Albanian	2:00 PM – 2:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Russian Waves	Russian	10:00 PM – 10:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.1
Adnas	Amharic (Ethiopian)	2:30 PM – 3:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Afghan Hindara	Pushto/Dari	1:00 PM – 1:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Ansantran	Bengali	12:30 PM – 1:00 PM (Sunday)	– OMNI.2
Arirang Korea	Korean	6:30 PM – 7:00 PM (Sunday)	– OMNI.2
Flip	Filipino-English	12:00 PM – 12:30 PM (Sunday)	– OMNI.2
Front Page Philippines	Tagalog, Visayan	4:00 PM – 4:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Iran Zameen Today and Pasargad Today	Persian	12:00 PM – 1:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Kala Kawaya	Sinhalese	10:30 AM – 11:00 AM (Sunday)	– OMNI.2
Malayala Shabtham	Malayalam	11:00 AM – 11:30 AM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Marawar at Arabia TV	Arabic	1:30 PM – 2:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Maxapolka Soomaalida	Somali	10:00 AM – 10:30 AM (Sunday)	– OMNI.2
Nor Hai Horizon	Armenian	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Ondes Africaines	French (African)	3:00 PM – 3:30 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
Planet Africa Television	English (African)	3:30 PM – 4:00 PM (Saturday)	– OMNI.2
TV Viet Tide	Vietnamese	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Sunday)	– OMNI.2

With the launch of OMNI.2, Rogers Media television set new records in diversity broadcasting. Combined, OMNI.1 (CFMT-TV) and OMNI.2 will provide quality programming to over 50 different communities.

Twenty-five Independent producers were introduced at the OMNI Launch and joined The Hon. Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage as she congratulated the OMNI team in numerous languages. Ted Rogers spoke of his 35 years of ongoing commitment to multilingual television in Canada.

Upholding this commitment to cultural diversity, Madeline Ziniak, Vice President and Station Manager, announced the production initiatives totalling $50 million, of which $30 million will be specifically dedicated to Independent Production.

Committed to Cultural Diversity!

ROGERS™

OMNI™
DIVERSITY TELEVISION