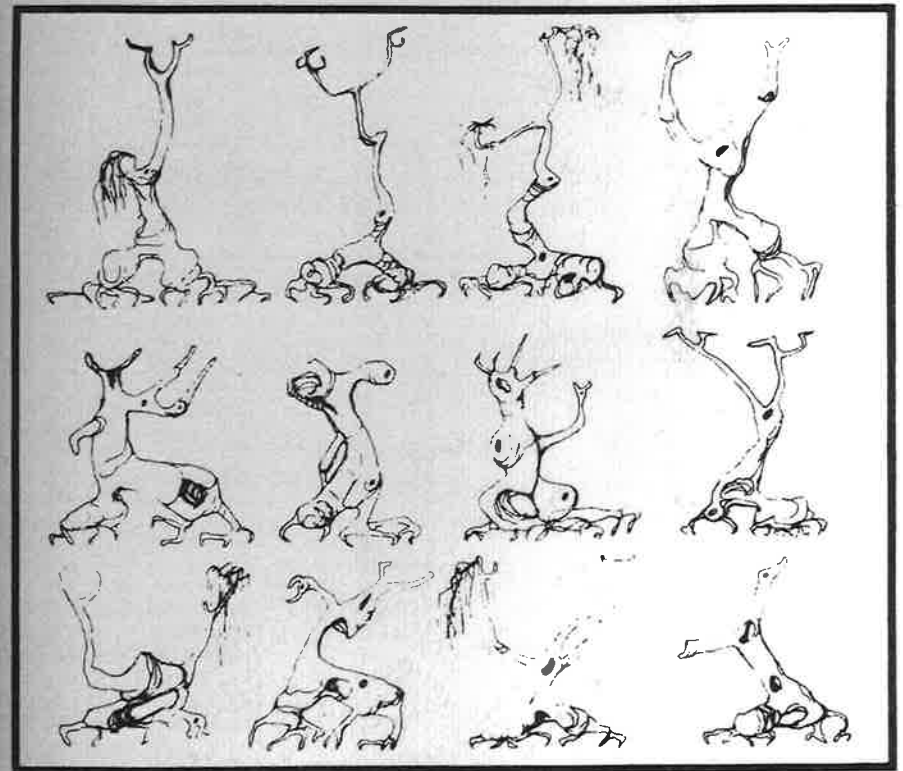


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## endnotes

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**W.J. Keith, *Canadian Literature in English*, Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1985, 287pp.**

Professor Keith's history is a relatively compact, but comprehensive, introductory historical survey. It is conveniently arranged and written in a lively and lucid way. He also offers a Select Bibliography of bibliographies and major critical studies, which gives very good guidance to 128 major writers. Another feature is a chronology of literary, cultural and political events which will be extremely useful to students concerned to get a feeling for the subject, its context and its apparatus. Too much Canadian criticism seems to operate in an historical vacuum.

Professor Keith prepares a similar point in his Introduction when he asserts that literature works within a set of socio-cultural experiences and values. But that point loses its momentum in what follows and is contradicted by some of it, which is a pity since it is essential to Keith's argument that there is a Canadian literary tradition — a set of continuities, not only thematic but formal, in which successive Canadian writers participate. He shows, for instance, how Jack Hodgins or Farley Mowat share assumptions about literature and the world with Davies and Hood or Leacock, 'Grey Owl', Seton, Roberts, and even Moodie. It is an important undertaking, and in Canadian criticism a mildly radical one, to attempt to put it all together, to see the literature as a whole, not as a mosaic of fragments connected only by thematic determinism.

But Keith's own determinism is in his account of the national literature's attainment of status in reaching for a masterpiece —

which, following the assumptions of European romantic nationalist literary history, turns out to be an epic. Thus, for instance, he finds in early Canadian prose, 'humourous didacticism, an ironic view of small communities, non-fiction on the verge of fiction, the genial rhythms of a personal voice [p. 23]: all promises of the epics to come. Wiebe and Pratt produce the goods.

In many ways, W.J. Keith's critical stance is analogous to that of the authors of the chapters on poetry and fiction in the *Oxford History of Australian Literature*. The careful, conservative weighing of value, the valuing of order and control, the careful insistence on the importance of voice, 'the control of voice that expresses a peculiarly Canadian sensibility [p. 159]' (a 'technical' problem to which he draws attention in most of the writers he discusses) — these are, by and large, concerns that he shares with those Australian critics in the *Oxford History*. That control of voice, Keith argues, is part of the Canadian tradition, an impulse to find the appropriate stance (or voice) in a world in which it is all too easy to be misunderstood or mistaken for someone else. In the *Oxford History*, the explanations are different but the pleasure in registering the subtle, formal anxieties and their reflections in the moral sensibility of the speaking voice are not at all dissimilar.

When valuation, 'who counts', is made such a central part of the enterprise, one is driven to quibble about the weighting, but one also wants to stand back and quarrel with its assumptions. This is not the place to

begin an argument about evaluative criticism — and Professor Keith is one of its most able defenders in Canada. But one can't help but notice how his ideological approval of order and control seems to lead him away from an unqualified sympathy with those writers who display some kind of split, some duality — a common enough post-colonial phenomenon. Birney is a worry; Purdy awkward; Klein a real problem; Godfrey absent. Just as significantly, he is distinctly

muted on women writers. Engel, Rule, Kogawa, Audrey Thomas are not even mentioned; Atwood and Laurence are played down since they do not appear to transcend politics, gender, national concerns. *They* do not find the controlling voice. Pardon me, your anxiety is showing.

**Alan Lawson**  
University of Queensland

**Duncan Cameron & Francois Houle (Eds.),** *Canada and the New International Division of Labour*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1985, 287pp. (Text in English and French).

The new international division of labour refers to an emergent system of transnational production, exchange and finance undertaken by global corporations. It involves a reallocation of production and employment; de-industrialisation of sectors of the advanced economies, semi-industrialisation of certain developing countries. Articles in this collection cover topics such as the internationalisation of Canadian capital, the concept of a world product mandate, political economy of imperialism and inter-

national capitalism, sectoral analyses (textiles and automobiles) and discussion of Canada's particular situation and recent policy initiatives.

This book is solidly within the tradition of the new Canadian political economy. Anglophones be warned, seven of the eleven articles are in French.

**Malcolm Alexander**  
Griffith University

**Brian W. Tomlin & Maureen Molot (Eds.),** *Canada Among Nations: 1984: A Time of Transition*, Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1985, 222pp.

This is a compilation of specialist articles on Canada's participation in world affairs. Produced from the Norman Patterson

School of International Affairs at Carleton University, it also includes a useful editorial overview of the year's events as well as a

relatively detailed chronology. 1984 is portrayed as a year of transition due to the emerging stabilisation of the economy, the lessening of superpower tension and, internally, the change of government in Ottawa. The articles cover international policies, security issues, international political economy, development policies and programmes and Canada-U.S. relations. Each is written by a major Canadian scholar in

the area.

It is planned to produce this as an annual volume and the standard of the first volume suggests it will be an authoritative publication in the field.

**Malcolm Alexander**  
Griffith University

**Sylvia B. Bashevkin,** *Toeing the Lines: Women and Party Politics in English Canada*, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1985, 222pp.

This is a major work on an important topic. Bashevkin has combined an historical study of women's political participation with detailed examinations of women's contemporary involvement in political parties at grassroots and leadership level. All the chapters are informed by reference to contemporaneous movements in the U.S., Britain and Europe and the book ends with a specifically comparative chapter (where Australia gets a couple of mentions) and a more general epilogue. The conflict between the desire to keep women's issues independent

of the 'corrupting' influence of party politics and the need to be active within parties to have a short-term influence is presented as the continuing dilemma for women's movements and forms the pivot of the book.

The comparative and historical scope of this book make it good reading for anyone with an interest in this area.

**Malcolm Alexander**  
Griffith University

**Micheal S. Whittington and Glen Williams (Eds.),** *Canadian Politics in the 1980s*, (2nd Ed.) Agincourt, Ontario: Methuen Publications, 1984, 454pp.

This second edition of an already good collection updates and improves upon the first. Only three years separate the two, but

the valuable first section, 'Political Agenda', now gives prominence to the Butler and McNaughton piece on the directions of and

debates about public sector activity. The essay itself is updated and made more topical. A new chapter by Patricia Marchak on renewable resource industries extends this opening section which, curiously, still lacks a chapter on welfare policy. The final section, 'Structure of Canadian Government', also has new articles dealing with the new constitution, cabinet organisation and decision-making and city politics.

The clear, logical ordering of materials is retained from the previous edition which makes this one of the best collections on contemporary Canadian politics and political issues.

**Malcolm Alexander  
Griffith University**

### **Interculture/Intertext: The Badlands Conference on Canadian and Australian Literatures**

The Badlands Conference on Canadian and Australian Literatures will be held at the University of Calgary between the 25th and 29th August 1986. The Conference Programme has been designed to make the most of the sense of place that Calgary's location affords. Robert Kroetsch (who will be one of the keynote speakers) will also be present on the conference excursion into the Alberta Badlands, the setting of his best-known novel (*Badlands*), and the main Reading of the week will be held in the newly completed Tyrell Museum near Drumheller; the Conference winds up in the Rockies.

The general plan is to have some comparative papers, some Australian papers and some Canadian papers, and possibly a panel on the development of particular indigenous publishing initiatives; the broad intention is to allow Australian and Canadian critics to see what sort of comparative interests or insights might emerge when the two are looked at in the same context. The intention is not, however, to be solely comparative: clearly there is a considerable and growing interest in each country in the literature and culture of the other, and the Organising Committee feels that this Con-

ference will provide an excellent opportunity for critics and writers from each place to make contact with each other while learning something more of the 'other' literature.

Conferences in the Humanities are never well-endowed, and the organisation of this one has been characterised by the usual search for enough money to cover basic costs. But at a time when Canada and Australia are once again discovering that they have common trade and diplomatic interests, the diverse sources of funding for this conference are themselves culturally significant. Grants have been made to the Conference by the Cultural Relations Section of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, the Canada Council, The Literature Board of the Australia Council, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Association for the Study of Australian Literature, several sections of the University of Calgary, and several Australian universities.

In many ways, the Conference is an outgrowth of activities that have been fostered by ACSANZ. It is a direct outcome of my visit to Canada on a 1985 Faculty Enrichment Award; most of the paper-givers from

Australia are ACSANZ members; the new series of *Australian-Canadian Studies* will be launched there; and the collection of essays edited by Gillian Whitlock and Russell McDougall, *Australian/Canadian Literatures in English: Comparative Perspectives*, will also make its first appearance at the Conference. More generally, the Conference represents the kind of comparative work on Canada and Australia that has been the hallmark of the three ACSANZ Conferences and which was part of the realistic assessment of the state of Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand made by the Association's founders.

One notable advance that the Conference programme reveals is the number of Canadians who are now attempting comparative papers, a feature that has been disappointingly absent from the three ACSANZ Conferences so far. Perhaps the home-ground advantage has given them confidence. The Organisers had hoped that maybe one-third of the papers would be comparative: in fact over two-thirds of the papers by both Canadians and Australians are comparative. This, I think, augurs well for the future of the discipline.

But one should be wary of pretending that this is a beginning. Certainly, it is the first conference ever dedicated solely to the two literatures, but comparative papers have found other forums (ACSANZ, ACLALS, ASAL), and the business of comparing the two literatures has been around since 1889. Since the 1950s there has been a small but steady stream of comparative articles and conference papers from both countries. Indeed, for all the apparent recent reluctance of Canadian critics to do this kind of criticism at ACSANZ conferences, the larger proportion of the comparative papers have

been by Canadians and the greater proportion among those by critics trained by Professor John Matthews at Queen's University. Indeed, it is John Matthews' book, *Tradition in Exile: A Comparative Study of Social Influences on the Development of Australian and Canadian Poetry in the Nineteenth Century* (published in 1962, and based on his 1957 University of Toronto Dissertation) that most effectively gives the lie to the impression that this is a new field.

In Matthews' hands, it is a field of study with a theorised comparative base — principally concerned with the impact of systems of social relations and, consequently, cultural experience. Until recently, the theoretical dimensions and implications of the field have not been taken up: most papers presume a comparative base and play a representative text from each tradition against each other — often with a curiously evaluative impetus. But it is clear from the programme of the Badlands Conference that several paper-givers are not satisfied with this. There is a sense in which the form of the comparative essay defines the kind of argument that will be pursued. The extent to which we may be determined by our discursive strategies is something to which we must be ever alert. The binaristic determinancy of the comparative project is equally affirmed in the search for parallels, in the assumption of the translatability of cultural terms, experiences and practices, and in the determination of significant divergences. This has implications for comparative work in all disciplines.

**Alan Lawson  
University of Queensland**

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**James Walter, *The Ministers' Minds*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986**

This book is a study of the role of the personal staff of Ministers, usually known in Australia officially as ministerial advisers and unofficially as 'minders'. Dr. Walter traces the growth in numbers and influence of this group of advisers, as well as analysing in detail individual career paths to illuminate their characteristics. He argues convincingly that advisers are differentiated from bureaucrats by having overt political commitment, and from politicians by their preferring

private influence to the public stage.

The growing importance of ministerial advisers, generally well-educated and upwardly-mobile, is seen as demonstrating a role for the intelligentsia in modern politics. As a lucid examination of a political development of universal importance, this book commands attention.

**Ian Lowe  
Griffith University**

**Trevor Barr, *The Electronic Estate*, Ringwood: Penguin.**

This book is an analysis of communications technology in Australia. The author attributes its origin to an overseas study programme which showed him that '[t]he key issues in communications policy are international'. Certainly the problems reviewed, such as ownership of news media, control of cable television and use of satellites, will be eerily familiar to Canadian readers. Barr argues that decisions in

communications policy have been ad hoc, lacking any semblance of social philosophy or long-term political analysis. While the specific examples are Australian, the message is international; the prospects for technological sovereignty in countries such as Australia and Canada are bleak indeed.

**Ian Lowe  
Griffith University**

**Stephen Hill & Ron Johnston (Eds.) *Future Tense?* Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1983.**

As is argued elsewhere in this journal, the political economies of Australia and Canada have much in common. This book analyses the effect of new technology and foreign ownership on Australia, arguing that Australia is 'increasingly becoming a colony exploited by foreign interests'. In examining the dynamics of foreign domination and the prospects for technological autonomy in the context of Australia, it probes issues of equal

relevance to Canada. The book's authors are mostly associated with the Centre for Technology and Social Change at Wollongong University; they have combined to produce an impressive multi-disciplinary examination of a subject of vital importance.

**Ian Lowe  
Griffith University**

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## notes on contributors

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**Stuart Smith** is currently the Chairman of the Science Council of Canada. Originally a neurologist, he moved into politics and was parliamentary leader of the Ontario Liberal Party before taking up his current appointment.

**W.H. New** is Professor in the Department of English, University of British Columbia, and editor of *Canadian Literature*. He has published widely on Canadian and Commonwealth literature and is presently editing the fourth volume of the *Literary History of Canada*.

**Bruce Hodgins** is Professor of History at Trent University. He has collaborated with Australian academics on two books on federalism in Australia and Canada and has written extensively on native peoples' issues and environmental concerns.

**Wallace Clement** is a Professor of Sociology at Carleton University. He is author of several books including *The Canadian Corporate Elite*, *Hardrock Mining* and, most recently, *The Struggle to Organize: Resistance in Canadian Fishery*. He is one of the leading figures in the contemporary revival of political economy in Canada.

**Arthur Kroker** is Associate Professor at Concordia University, Montreal. He is editor of the *Canadian Journal of Social and Political Theory* and author of, among other things, *Technology and the Canadian Mind*.

**Colin Campbell** is Martin Professor of Philosophy and Politics at Georgetown University. He is the author of *The Superbureaucrats* and *Governments Under Stress*, and is currently in the process of researching cabinet structures and procedures in Australia.

**Ian Lowe** is an Associate Professor in Science, Technology and Society at Griffith University and has been Director of its Science Policy Research Centre since 1980. He is the author of ten books, several book chapters and more than fifty published articles and conference papers. His research interests are in the areas of the effects of public policies on new technology, and future energy options.