

**AUSTRALIAN-
CANADIAN
STUDIES**

VOLUME 13

NUMBER 2

1995

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

by

TRACEY SCHRAMM

L.-R.

CLAUDIA KARVAN & PAUL BISHOP

In the Sydney Theatre Company's production of

Brad Fraser's *Poor Super Man*.

Photo Courtesy of the STC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOL. 13, NO. 2, 1995

EDITORIAL

v

FEATURE ARTICLES

POST-COLONIALISMS

- DIANA BRYDON Canadian Studies: The Post-colonial Challenge 1
- REGINALD BERRY "If You're Reproducing the Aesthetic, How are we Cheating Anybody?": or, *Parallax* and *Open Letter*, Postmodernism and Post-colonialism 21
- ANNE NOTHOF The Post-colonial Abroad: Playing Canadian Drama in Britain and Australia 41
-
- ANNE CRICHTON Health Care in Canada and Australia: The Development of a Comparative Analytical Framework 59
- HEINO LILLES Canada's *Young Offenders Act*: Some International Perspectives for Reform 73

REVIEWS

from 115

- JOHN BORTHWICK *Writing Away*
- ALISON BROINOWSKI *The White Peril*
- BRIAN EDWARDS *Shoot!*
- ELIZABETH PEDERSEN *Anno Hominis*
- DENNIS DENISOFF *A Mother's Disgrace*
- DAVID DOWLING *The Rose Crossing*
Going West
- GAETANO RANDO *Echo: Essays on Other Literatures*
- DOUGLAS BARBOUR *Komninos by the Kupful*
The Nailing of the Right Hand
Hot Collation
Waving to Hart Crane
- ROGER CARTER *From Wooden Plows to Welfare*

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

159

AUSTRALIAN-CANADIAN STUDIES is the official journal of ACSANZ. It is a refereed journal of both the Humanities and the Social Sciences and focuses on comparative, interdisciplinary research in these areas. Its aim is to provide a forum for intellectual debate and information exchange in Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

EDITORS

Gerry Turcotte
Dept of English, University of Wollongong

Luke McNamara
Faculty of Law, University of Wollongong

Book Review Editor: Marvin Gllman
Dept of English, University of Wollongong

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Malcolm Alexander
Faculty of Humanities, Griffith University

Gillian Whitlock
Faculty of Humanities, Griffith University

James Wieland
Faculty of Arts, University of Wollongong

Bruce Ziff
Faculty of Law, University of Alberta

EDITORIAL BOARD

Reg Berry Dept of English/ Canterbury	Brian Galligan Federalism Research Centre/ ANU	Agnes Grant Native Studies/ Brandon
Coral Ann Howells Dept of English/ Reading	Beryl Langer Dept of Sociology/ La Trobe	Alan Lawson Dept of English/ Queensland
Peter Lyon Inst. of Comm. Studies/ London	David Staines Dept of English/ Ottawa	Helen Tiffin Dept of English/ Queensland

Subscriptions:..... See page 20 for information about subscription rates and membership of ACSANZ.

Contributions:..... Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate. A style guide, to assist in the preparation of manuscripts, will be forwarded on request. Material will be returned only if accompanied by an S.A.S.E. (or international reply coupon).

Copyright:..... © *Australian-Canadian Studies* and contributors.

Correspondence:.....

The Editor <i>Australian-Canadian Studies</i> Department of English University of Wollongong Northfields Ave., Wollongong, NSW, 2522	Tel. No. (042) 21-3737 Fax. No. (042) 21-4471
or The Editor <i>Australian-Canadian Studies</i> Faculty of Law University of Wollongong Northfields Ave., Wollongong, NSW, 2522	Tel. No. (042) 21-4415 Fax. No. (042) 21-3188

Acknowledgements:..... *Australian-Canadian Studies* gratefully acknowledges grants received from ACSANZ as well as the financial support of the Department of English, and the Faculty of Law, University of Wollongong. Founded as *Australian-Canadian Studies: a Multidisciplinary Review* at La Trobe University in 1983. Editors Vols. 1 - 3: G. Ternowetsky, A. Borowski, T. Puckett and B. Langer. Editors Vols. 4 - 9: Malcolm Alexander and Gillian Whitlock.

ISSN:..... 0810-1906

EDITORIAL

"I am sure there are Canadian novelists and Canadian painters but I have never heard of them and I don't suppose anyone else has."

Stephen Glover, *London Evening Standard*.

It is rare indeed for Canada to be discussed in the world's media, particularly in terms of its role as aggressor. Except for protests over the Quebec referendum or the Oka crisis, the image broadcast of the "True North" is usually one of tranquility, invisibility, or even of benign bumbling competence as personified, perhaps, by the stalwart mountie in *Due South*. So it shocked quite a few to see Canada's fisheries minister, Brian Tobin, seizing a Spanish fishing vessel. The move was portrayed simultaneously as illegal (the trawler was outside Canada's jurisdiction), and heroic (someone had to stop Spain's blatant breach of international law and rescue the undersized fish — and by extension world economies — from piracy). The fact that many First Nations people had raised similar ethical and jurisdictional concerns against the Canadian Government itself was not part of Tobin's rhetoric. Indeed, it seems fairly clear that part of the motivation for the minister's uncharacteristic militarism was meant to deflect attention from other more pressing issues.

It is this metonymic moment which Diana Brydon uses to begin her reassessment of post-colonialisms and their particular intersection with Canadian Studies. Indeed, a number of papers in this issue play a role in reassessing the assumptions around which majority discursive practices are established, reinforced and perpetuated. Brydon's paper, given as a

keynote address at the Canadian Studies conference in Birmingham in May 1995, is concerned with shifting "the paradigms through which we see Canadian Studies". Brydon suggests that it is time for a more critical interrogation of the field of Canadian Studies to take place, away from the "protectionism" of either a romanticised view of the discipline, a fear of fuelling anti-Canadianism, or an attendant discomfort at the possibility of endorsing pro-American views.

"What might we discover", Brydon asks, "if we were to interrogate these investments in a romanticised national identity and the kind of cultural production it privileges, through reading across the grain of Canadian Studies' foundational moments, instead of accepting them as our inevitable starting point? What would happen if we looked at Canadian studies through the lenses developed by post-colonial, feminist, multicultural, and cultural studies?" Her article, "Canadian Studies: The Post-colonial Challenge", sets out in some measure to answer such questions. More importantly, it sets out to *ask* these questions, reminding us in the process, of Marlene Nourbese Philip's observation that "in a racist, sexist and classist society, the imagination, if left unexamined, can and does serve the ruling ideas of the time". Left unexamined, our political interventions risk becoming the same sort of fishy rhetoric as Tobin's Spanish interlude: they look tough, they sound tough, but we're in danger not only of seizing the wrong vessel, we may be missing the boat as well.

Post-colonial procedures, like Canadian Studies, arose in part to ask questions about power politics and to address questions about exclusions which simply could not be left unexamined. In the process, perhaps inevitably, it was necessary for theorists working in the field to establish their ground, and to define it in opposition to competing forces — opposing agencies. Postmodernism has often stood on similar, contested ground as postcolonialism, sharing many strategies of expression and contestation, and using similar modes of play to disorient, fracture and interrogate. Reginald Berry questions the claims of many of the latter group that theirs was a non-hegemonic, and ex-centric phenomenon of resistance whilst postmodernism merely reflected or reproduced the centre.

"If You're Reproducing the Aesthetic" emerged in response to our editorial in Vol. 12, No. 1 (1994) calling for New Zealand contributions. By coincidence, the article's theme fits in well with Brydon's call for questions, although the target of the inquiry in Berry's case is slightly different. As well as resisting our own editorial demands through its expansive title (reminding us that even publishing templates

are not immune to fracturings of various kinds), "Reproducing the Aesthetic" reminds us too of the routines which critics can easily settle in to even when dealing with theories which are meant to challenge, resist and provoke.

Berry uses as his frame for considering postmodern and post-colonial implications, two small journals in Canada and New Zealand, *Open Letter* and *Parallax* respectively, and demonstrates the way these vehicles rewrote the postmodern so that it spoke of local needs, and produced the same sort of radical and contestatory function that post-colonial discourses are said to enable. The postmodern represented in these journals was "not simply a Canadian — or New Zealand — assembled product which could have come off the assembly line in the great metropolitan centres of international postmodernism.... The challenge was not to accept unquestioned the importation of an alien concept and not to refuse importation but to engage it actively, to work with it, interrogate it, adapt it, use it in the local scene, make it make sense in the local sense, and focus it to confront hegemonic interests".

Anne Nothof's "The Post-colonial Abroad" rounds off our feature on "Post-colonialisms" with a survey of the performances of Canadian plays in Britain and Australia. As well as providing an invaluable account of what shows were produced where, the article also raises fascinating questions about the sorts of choices which are being made overseas about Canadian material and how these particular choices might shape evolving perceptions about Canada. It is difficult not to wonder, for example, how plays by Brad Fraser, a favourite in both Britain and Australia, can do anything but establish a contestatory image of Canadian life in areas which still construct Canada as either non-existent or as an American afterthought.

The opening epigraph by Stephen Glover (cited in Brydon), and another by the British critic Christopher James that Canada is "a country who cultural heritage is usually measured in minutes rather than centuries" (cited in Nothof), remind us still how much work is yet left for post-colonial re-writings to effect. First Nations' critics, moreover, may well wonder about the denial of their culture suggested by the latter comment in particular.

According to Judge Heino Lilles of the Yukon Territorial Court, Canada stands at a crucial point in the evolution of the country's juvenile justice policy. There is a real danger that current perceptions that the system is "not working" and that crime is "out of control" will be used to justify a move towards even greater repression in a country

which already "has one of the most punitive criminal justice systems in the western world". In "Canada's *Young Offenders Act: Some International Perspectives*", Lilles argues that rather than turn reflexively to the United States for advice on how to "fix" the major problems in the criminal justice system's method of dealing with young offenders, Canadian policy-makers and legislators should cast their gaze a little further afield, and in particular, to Australia and New Zealand. He suggests that recent attempts in both these countries to move away from a simplistic, and ultimately ineffective punitive model of justice administration should be more closely examined with a view to considering similar initiatives in Canada.

Many in Australia might be somewhat taken aback by the depiction of current youth justice policy in this country as relatively "enlightened". For example, the recent reassertion by the Government of Western Australia of an aggressive "law and order" policy in relation to young offenders, and the obscene spectacle of the major parties during the recent New South Wales election attempting to "out bid" each other on crime control/law and order, demonstrate that there certainly has been no wholesale rejection in this country of punitive forms of social ordering and state administered justice.

Lilles does not contend that the juvenile justice systems currently operating in Australia and New Zealand are perfect. Rather, he argues, drawing on an examination of recent initiatives in the two countries — including innovative uses of police cautioning and family conferencing schemes — that there *are alternatives* to the "law and order" mentality which appears to have a stranglehold on youth justice policy in Canada. Lilles categorically rejects the idea that politicians have no choice but to "get tougher", asserting that "The experiences with cautioning and family conferencing described in this paper demonstrate that there are other viable responses to youthful offending that do not demand court processing and traditional punishment in every instance". It need hardly be said that this lesson is not for "Canada's ears only", but must be heeded in all countries which continue to support and expand punitive justice regimes, despite overwhelming evidence that this approach grossly fails the societies and communities in whose names it is routinely endorsed.

Anne Crichton's comparative analysis of health care in Canada and Australia is as valuable for the lessons it contains on the methodology of comparativism as for the insights which it offers on the factors which have shaped health policy and the delivery of health services in the two countries. In the former respect, Crichton's reflections on her own

experience as a "comparativist" will be of direct interest to *Australian-Canadian Studies* readers, many of whom have (and continue) to grapple with the core questions: "Why compare? What to compare? How to compare? What to take into account when comparing?"

In "Health Care in Canada and Australia: The Development of a Comparative Analytical Framework", Crichton offers an interesting account of her search for answers to these questions. As suggested earlier, the added value of this account is that it is not simply an abstract discussion of a particular research methodology, but an integrated analysis which examines the nature of comparativism, while illustrating, with reference to her research on health care systems, the sort of insights which the approach offers.

Crichton's comparative treatment of health care policy and system organisation in Australia and Canada yields some important insights. Not the least of these insights is the observation that in terms of the commitment to specified outcomes of health care delivery there is a sharp contrast between the social and biomedical models which distinguish the two countries. As Crichton concludes,

Outcome models in both countries are hardly developed yet but Canada seems to be as much concerned with reviewing the determinants of health (lifestyle, environment and biological risk factors) as well as focussing on clinical outcomes of medical treatment. It appears to put more emphasis on a social rather than a biomedical model of health care. So far as health promotion is concerned, Canada seems as much interested in the idea of reducing social inequalities and enhancing coping than in directly preventing disease, which is the primary concern of health promotion programs in Australia.

Findings of this kind (and of the kind yielded by Heino Lilles' analysis of youth justice) offers solid proof of the value of comparativism, particularly in the context of social policy reform. Comparativism offers alternatives, and highlights the contingent rather than inevitable nature of existing policy.

As always the editorial team would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members of our respective departments for their invaluable help with the production of this issue. We would especially like to thank Paul Campani and the University of Wollongong Printery who have contributed so much to the quality of the journal and its many covers. While the design and even the cover art has frequently been produced by the editors, Paul has transformed our at times unrealistic ideas into reality. We thank him for his patience and expertise.