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## table of contents

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<b>Editorial</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Feature Articles</b>		
David Elkins	Canada in the 21st Century	<b>3</b>
Gaile McGregor	Imitation and Resistance: The Differential Assimilation of American Popular Culture	<b>17</b>
Christine Prentice	Storytelling in Alice Munro's <i>Lives of Girls and Women</i> and Patricia Grace's <i>Potiki</i>	<b>27</b>
Jennifer Strauss	Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman: Cultural Contexts and the Quest for Identity in Alice Munro's <i>Lives of Girls and Women</i> and in Miles Franklin's <i>My Brilliant Career</i> and <i>My Career Goes Bung</i>	<b>41</b>
C. Michael Hall and John Shultis	Railways, Tourism and Worthless Lands: The Establishment of National Parks in Australia, New Zealand and the United States	<b>57</b>
Elsbeth Young	Marginal Lands and Marginalised People: The Potential Development Contribution of Indigenous People in Remote Australia and Canada	<b>75</b>
<b>Review Essays</b>		
John Atchison	The Murky Matter of Immigration	<b>99</b>
Brian Edwards	The Odd Sanity of Stones	<b>105</b>
	The Eloquence of Silence	<b>109</b>
<b>Taking Issue</b>		
Russell McDougall	Canadian Literature: 'Not For Sale!'	<b>115</b>
<b>In Review</b>		<b>121</b>
<b>Notes on Contributors</b>		<b>131</b>

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## editorial

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Colonialism, marginality and resistance. The papers in this issue of ACS show some surprising parallels despite their quite diverse origins, disciplines and subject matter. As explored in post-colonial literary theory, colonialism is seen as a process which builds a binary opposition between the coloniser and the colonised other; an other which is, in reality, many others, both peoples and environments. But colonisation also involves differences *within* the colonising groups; the differences between French and English Canadians and the position of English-Canadians (and Austraians) *via-a-vis* American colonisation are aspects of the total pattern as well. Colonisation also permeates the consciousness of the dominant culture. Its discourses seek to exclude the colonised others from the sensibility of mainstream groups. However, academic and scholarly examination of these others and their life-situations reveals forms of resistance and creative adaptation which the colonised invent to subvert the coloniser's inventions of them. There is struggle not only in material areas but also in the areas of symbolic, conceptual and imaginative thought as well.

This issue leads off with a paper by David Elkins which is the text of the keynote speech he gave to the ACSANZ '90 Conference at Armidale. In the immediate aftermath of the failure of the Meech Lake Accord he rehearses contemporary conflicts between French and English Canadians by giving a sharply pointed answer to the common English-Canadian question: *What does Quebec Want?* (The fact of resistance is registered but its meaning and form need to be examined.) But the bulk of the paper goes on from this point. If French resistance is accepted then previously accepted concepts of 'Canada' must be discarded; Canada is 'unbundled' and we can only speculate about the glue, mortar or string which may interconnect some repackaged entity in the future.

Other papers in this issue deal extensively with other forms of marginalisation. Elspeth Young's paper explores the position of indigenous peoples living in lands which are climatically and geographically marginal. The development of land rights claims for these peoples has rekindled and enabled forms of resistance not only to the physical presence of European settlers and exploiters of the land but also to their modes of definition of these lands and their peoples as 'marginal'. The successful organisation of these peoples, not only for survival but also in the promotion of profitable enterprises, challenges the concept of them as marginal and the devaluation of their lands as 'worthless'.

European concepts of land have figured in debates about the establishment of national parks in the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The intriguing history of these debates is explored in comparative perspective by Michael Hall and John Shultis. But these debates of the mid-nineteenth century have significant and important resonances for today. There is the contemporary question about

what happens to indigenous peoples' land rights when a 'national' park is 'reserved' for the use of the community as a whole. There is the material link between the tourism industry and the governmental management of the park asset. Finally there is the question of how concepts of conservation within the dominant political groups moderate policy and how good intentions may be subverted by the forms of management actually introduced. Concepts within the dominant culture are ambiguously involved in the appropriation and control of wilderness and the conservationists' attempts to resist its obliteration by material progress.

The articles by Strauss and Prentice consider another arena of marginalisation and resistance: the place of women. The dilemmas of feminist resistance and the construction of alternative self-definitions in a social world which imposes static conventions, is explored in Jennifer Strauss's comparison of Alice Munro and Miles Franklin. Alice Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women* provides the initial point of the contrast but this is then compared to the odyssey of Miles Franklin's struggles in turn of the century Australia. Christine Prentice's readings suggest that Alice Munro and Patricia Grace use story-telling to challenge patriarchal constructs of history, social life, education and even land rights. The emphasis of the two 'novels' *Lives* and *Potiki* is on the process (story-telling) not the product (stories) and the loose structuring of these works is a weaving; warp and weft each have their own trajectory but, intertwined, they imagine a new life for reader (and writer). In Prentice's analysis the resistance of women is intertwined with the related resistance of the Maori people.

Gaile McGregor's paper argues that resistance is not limited simply to antagonism. Working from a comparative base she analyses Australian and Canadian imitations of American popular TV shows. But are they simply imitations? Audience demands, the structuring of the narrative, the portrayal of the main characters all differ significantly from the original American models. Imitation may become subversion or adaptation. The imitations of a common American source therefore become significantly different in the two national contexts and McGregor explores this range of differences and contrasts.

But where does resistance (or adaptation) go? Elkins links the unbundling of Canada to the wider post-modern disintegration of homogenous political and national identities. In the post-modern political world multiple and overlapping identities replace the singular and coherent identities of the 'modern' national polity. The papers in this issue of ACS examine some of these alternative identities: indigenous peoples, environmental and conservationist ideals, feminist identities, national subcultures generated within a cosmopolitan popular culture. They give insights into the new processes which sustain and generate these identities and the stories and concepts through which they contest the older discourses. How they will operate in Canada's rapidly evolving political system is an intriguing question which Australian and New Zealander members of ACSANZ will watch with interest and empathy.