

**WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE IN CANADA, 1965-2000:  
PATRONS, AUTHORS, AND CANADIAN LITERATURE**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the practicalities and policies surrounding the development of writer-in-residence programs in Canada from 1965 to 2000. Defined as appointments that are part direct funding for literary authors and part payment-for-service for writers' public duties (mentoring, delivering public readings, visiting university classrooms, etc.), author residencies were introduced by the Canada Council for the Arts in 1965 with the aim of assisting authors and heightening the profile of Canadian literature. Canada Council residencies have involved a significant number and range of authors and institutions across the country, primarily in English-speaking regions. Most appointments have been hosted by university literature departments, though, since the 1970s, they have also taken place in public libraries and community colleges. Such appointments have not only been materially significant in supporting writers, but have also inflected contemporary notions of authorship, and both constructed and contested Canadian literary canons.

Based largely on Canada Council and university archives and personal interviews with writers, professors, and program administrators, this study examines these programs from three perspectives. Chapters One and Two address patrons: Chapter One focuses on the development of the national Canada Council writer-in-residence program, and Chapter Two explores the emergence of publicly and privately funded residency programs in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Chapter Three examines the social and economic impact of residency programs on writers, discussing their contributions to the development of the profession of authorship, as well as their intersections with larger writing communities through resident authors' mentoring and other public activities.

Chapter Four turns to the literary impact of residency programs and investigates how they have reflected and influenced the study of Canadian literature at three regionally dispersed universities: the University of Toronto, Simon Fraser University, and Memorial University of Newfoundland. The dissertation concludes with a brief analysis of the depiction of writers-in-residence in Canadian fiction.

**Keywords:** writers-in-residence; authorship; Canadian literature; Canada Council; universities; public libraries

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

### **IS THERE A WRITER IN THE HOUSE?**

#### **THE STATE, PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, AND THE CANADIAN AUTHOR**

The position of writer-in-residence is very significant for the Canadian author. Between 1965 and 2000, the period examined in this study, the Canada Council for the Arts (est. 1957), an arm's length arts granting agency of the federal government, supported nearly 200 authors in over 300 such appointments in universities, colleges, and public libraries across the country. The most prominent names in Canadian literature – Margaret Atwood, Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, Michael Ondaatje, Mordecai Richler, and Michel Tremblay, to name a few – have been writers-in-residence at some stage in their careers. In addition to the federal program, recent years have witnessed the appearance of author residencies funded through provincial art boards and private patrons. That resident authors are such familiar figures in Canadian universities and public libraries is the reason behind this study. What is the history of writers-in-residence in Canada? What is the significance of the institutionalization of the author as literary artist and public servant?

The popularity of residency programs is useful in illuminating the state of the authorship today. A writer-in-residence is not an author with a day-job as a creative writing instructor. Nor is he or she simply an author with a patron. A writer-in-residence is an author who is provided with time and space to write in exchange for the adoption of

a public role. Taking on successive, short-term appointments, such a writer is positioned as professional freelancer, one with close ties to the academic community. His or her duties range from the specialized to the symbolic. The resident author acts as a mentor to aspiring writers and may also be a guest speaker in the classroom, a public lecturer, an organizer of literary events, an editor, an adjudicator, and, as a temporary staff member in a public institution, a visible presence at official functions. "In residence" suggests that the writer is integrated – more or less comfortably – in public life, performing a function that is culturally and socially significant. Moreover, he or she is "at home," a touchstone of the national culture, firmly ensconced within national boundaries, not languishing in a foreign garret or living it up as an expat in Paris, London, New York, or Los Angeles. A writer-in-residence, like a doctor in the house, is presumably a good person to have around; he or she has specialized skills to offer and a strong social obligation to put them to use.

A study of author residencies is also inevitably a story of universities, of the role of the arts in education, and of the assessment of literary value. Residency appointments may be seen to be crucial for writers' survival *as artists*, offering short-term financial support as well as the potential of long-term consecration for their work within and through the university. As a (transient) representative of the arts on campuses increasingly oriented toward technical and professional programs, or as a creator lodged (temporarily) among literary critics, a resident author has cause to reflect on the significance of his or her role in the educational environment and society at large. Eric Larrabee, writing in *Harper's Magazine* in June 1969, contended that such an artist must anticipate friction:

[T]o locate the artist in an academic context is to place him in a structural relationship, and one for which he may have no affection. Scholars are implicitly his critics, and he theirs. When the subject at issue is art, the artist is a standing rebuke to the non-artist; even with the greatest of tact, which he has little incentive to cultivate, he must express something of his contempt for his parasite, the scholar, simply to exist as a creative organism.<sup>1</sup>

Given Larrabee's claim that the relationship between artist and institution is at root an adversarial one, it is worthwhile to note how the term "writer-in-residence" has been exchanged for a number of epithets, coined by North American authors, which speak to the nature of that relationship. A decade before Larrabee wrote, during one of the highest profile writer-in-residence appointments in the United States, William Faulkner described his position at the University of Virginia as that of "a guest accepting and returning the amenities of guesthood."<sup>2</sup> As residency appointments have become less novel, Canadian writers have offered a variety of additional descriptive phrases for what the resident author represents in the academy: a travelling mountebank, a tamed poetic cat, a token artistic nigger, a cheap teacher, a showpiece, a placeman, an artist in performance of his art, a Court Jester, an Interesting Person, a real live author.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, nearly all of these phrases indicate feelings of hostility, defensiveness or overexposure. As one critic has observed of the continuing debates centring on the author in the academic world, "there is something rather irksome and absurd about this business of the writer and the university" that is not going away.<sup>4</sup> I suggest here that the issues raised by residency programs are perennial ones: they call attention to the social and economic positions of authors, which are often at odds with those of the university teachers and civil servants

with whom they work, and they are an interface between contemporary writing and its evaluation by potential consecrators.

Despite the tensions that exist in the writer-university relationship, over the course of my research I have observed that writer-in-residence programs are widely considered to be worthwhile, primarily for the economic support they provide to authors and secondarily for the institutional investment in Canadian writing they are seen to represent. As Canadian literature has established a foothold in the university's programs of teaching and research, especially since the 1970s, author residencies have been viewed as a vital part of this development.

A personal testimony provides a useful illustration of the multiple functions of author residencies in this period. In 1975, Greg Hollingshead returned to Canada from his studies in Britain to become a new assistant professor of eighteenth-century literature at the University of Alberta (U of A). Assigned to teach classes in a number of fields which he had never studied, including Canadian literature, Hollingshead found a reprieve from his massive program of self-education by befriending U of A's first writer-in-residence, Matt Cohen, whose example and encouragement launched Hollingshead on a second, simultaneous career in creative writing. In a lecture delivered in 1997, the author/professor offered his observations on the value of both this encounter and writers-in-residence in general:

Matt Cohen, to me, here, at that time, was what, I think, many of our Writers-in-Residence have been over the past twenty-two years to our students and to writers throughout the province: a living lifeline to the life of writing in this country. A model, an editor, a critic, an advisor, an immediately present human being, a

mentor. For 22 years now I've seen our Writers-in-Residence arrive and move in and pass through the year, posting office hours, continuing with their own writing, giving readings and talks, both within the University and around the city and the province, and I see their varying degrees of bemusement at this academic culture of ours, their varying degrees of creative participation and creative alienation; I see them trying to figure us out, to figure this place out, some of them more allied with their student writers than with the professors, some as professorial as we are, but all a pure breath of fresh air: literary people as we are, but from away, from outside the city, often the province, and certainly the institution, who help us to see ourselves as nothing else could, whose actual ongoing literary endeavours often provide a challenge or rebuke to our scholarship or our theories, whose perspectives meld and clash in very often fascinating ways with the rich commotion of ongoing debate that is the lifeblood of this place.

I'm talking about our Writers-in-Residence now in terms of what they bring to us as professors and scholars and critics and writers within the Department and the University. There is also what they do for the University within the larger community. ... [T]eaching people how to write – and write well – that is something that most everyone will assent to the immediate importance of. This is obviously about expression, about communication, and about creating something of cultural and social value, in a way that teaching critical and aesthetic response to literature may not – to the man in the street – appear to be. Our Writer-in-Residence is the community connection of this English Department, and to a large degree this university, like nothing else.<sup>5</sup>

Hollingshead's comments intimate reasons for the perceived large-scale success of residency programs in Canada. They speak to the vastness of the country and the efficacy of the writer-in-residence in overcoming isolation – between writers, between literary communities and those potential writers who have few exemplars in their everyday worlds, between literary and academic groups, and between the universities and the communities in which they carry out their work. As “a living lifeline to the life of writing,” the writer-in-residence is a flesh-and-blood reminder of what in 1951 the Massey commissioners called the “spiritual” life of the nation<sup>6</sup>; he or she helps us “see ourselves” and is a conduit, a “community connection” between all those who value “expression” and “communication” – in short, a writer-in-residence is a valuable contributor to the national culture in both the widest and the more narrow sense of the word.

Hollingshead's remarks, given in a public lecture nearly fifty years after the Massey Commission (the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1949-51) embarked on its landmark study, serve as a reminder that the arts continue to be viewed as a socially cohesive force, a “nation-building” activity. Author residency programs represent a nexus of disparate interests – those of working writers, university critics, and state patrons – and yet have flourished amid very little controversy for over forty years. Although other models have more recently emerged, this tripartite formulation has given rise to the patterns and aims of most residency programs in Canada. Before examining them in detail, I will turn to a discussion of the international context of writer-in-residence programs, in order to illuminate the particularities of the Canadian system.

## **Writers-in-residence in other English-speaking countries**

While writers-in-residence are by no means unique to Canada, their enduring structure in Canada – consisting of author-mentor, university-consecrator, and state patron – is distinctive. The two closest international comparisons are offered by New Zealand and Scotland. Long after New Zealand's first residency, the Robert Burns Fellowship, was established through an anonymous private donation to Otago University in 1959, its state-supported programs were launched at three other universities between 1978 and 1981, with others to follow over the next decade.<sup>7</sup> The Scottish Arts Council, which also introduced its residency program in the 1970s, based in universities and eventually extended to libraries, additionally launched a resident author exchange with Canada in 1978, offering a nearly mirror image to the Canada Council's programs, although the Canada Council's domestic author residency program was established first, in 1965. In other countries, residency programs have developed along very different lines, providing valuable points of comparison and contrast between national contexts that help illuminate the particulars of the Canadian situation.

Writers-in-Residence in the United States. In English-speaking countries, the United States is considered the originator of the artist-in-residence concept. The first writers-in-residence were Percy MacKaye and Robert Frost at American universities in the early 1920s. At the time, these appointments were lauded by interested parties as illustrative of the integral role of the arts in a democratic society. While the writers lent a "spiritual" element to the educational atmosphere, the university helped to foster a national literature, which in turn enriched American culture generally. Raymond B. Hughes,



president of Miami University, Ohio, where MacKaye took up residence, was particularly impressed with the cultural implications of the arrangement and advocated the university system of patronage, which he argued was conducive to the spirit of American individualism:

History shows, I believe, that the greatest arts have been under the patronage of the nobility or the rich, or, occasionally, the state. It is certainly repugnant to the American spirit, either to the people or the artist, to be under the patronage of individuals. It would seem to me, as our country is constituted, that there is no institution more eminently fitted to be patron of art than the universities and colleges.<sup>8</sup>

As the American post-secondary student population had more than doubled in the first twenty years of the century, the expanding and diversifying universities and colleges were seen as a democratizing force, and both MacKaye and Frost were able strategists in constructing roles for the artist on campus which benefited both author and community. MacKaye's poetry, plays, and masques, most of which were "rooted in American history and legend," were populist in approach, while Frost's informal educational methods as writer-in-residence – which he also introduced to Canada during a visit to Queen's University, Kingston, ON, in the early 1920s<sup>9</sup> – underscored his notion of the "balance between institutional life and individual freedom" which he believed was sought by all citizens, including artists.<sup>10</sup>

Critic Philip K. Jason has noted that although the perceived need to encourage American letters was a factor in the universities' establishment of author residencies, the early decades of the century were in fact a particularly rich epoch for literature, "a second

[American] literary renaissance” distinguished by the appearance of works by Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Carl Sandburg, and with the luminaries Fitzgerald, Cummings, Hemingway, and Faulkner waiting in the wings. While the literary marketplace was thriving with the addition of new periodicals and publishers, the universities’ anxiousness to create, seemingly *ex nihilo*, contemporary American literature suggests, Jason argues, that the universities were distanced from this activity.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of the Second World War, however, the situation had changed. In the post-war boom, many American universities began establishing writer-in-residence positions, creative writing programs, and little magazines, investing, on a grand scale, in the training and employment of writers and the production and dissemination of their work. The overlap between academic and literary spheres became a cause for concern for some critics, resulting in a flood of publications addressing the theme of the creative writer and the university that appeared through the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>12</sup> The commentators most critical of this development focused on the real or perceived advent of “the closed, self-seeking world of literary politics in the university setting,” which boded ill for the “independent writer.”<sup>13</sup> Others were reluctant to see the campus writer as either a positive or negative development, observing that the institution of the university, as well as the field of literary studies, had undergone radical shifts within a generation. Such critics suggested that “the university was [not] the narrow, remote, elitist outpost that it once may have been” and challenged the assumption that the academic setting shielded writers, to the detriment of their art, from so-called real-world experience.<sup>14</sup> Entering into the fray, William Van O’Connor, writing in the *Texas Quarterly* in 1960, argued that the

discipline of English studies had also changed focus, having shifted its emphasis from historical scholarship to analytical criticism, in part as a result of the publication of the influential textbook by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Understanding Poetry*, in 1938. Pointing to the high number of poet-professors publishing in literary journals and anthologies, Van O'Connor observed, "English departments nowadays look at literature pretty much as writers do" and asserted "the university is now one of the *creators* of culture as well as the custodian of it."<sup>15</sup> In the United States, as in Canada, the university's involvement as a producer and promoter of literature became more firmly entrenched as the 20th century progressed.

Long-term poet-in-residence Theodore Weiss, whose forty-year university career from the 1930s to the late 1970s "roughly coincided with the remarkable growth of creative writing in the university," has observed that the arts had a "gradual, backdoor entrance" into the American university. Creative writers were first hired by the small, progressive colleges, whose "cultural experiments and educational innovations [gradually] found their way into the more orthodox schools."<sup>16</sup> The creative writing program at the University of Iowa, which traces its roots to 1896 and awarded its first master of fine arts degree in creative writing in 1941, became the "prototype" for such programs which proliferated over the next decades.<sup>17</sup> The institutionalization of creative writing as an academic subject resulted in the shift, observed by Philip K. Jason in 1983, from the appointment of authors in patronage positions as "writers-in-residence," to their hiring as creative writing instructors.<sup>18</sup> The growth of creative writing programs in the United States means that the term "writer-in-residence" today just as often refers to a creative writing instructor or to an English professor who is also a recognized creative

author, as it does to a creative writer hired in a non-teaching position. However, private American universities continue to offer luxurious residency appointments, which signal the special status of the visiting creative author. Hollins University (est. 1842) in Roanoke, Virginia, for example, has hosted Canadian writers David Adams Richards (1992) and Wayne Johnston (2002) in recent years. At the university, where Johnston taught a writing workshop, the author found the climate for creative writing, “an established and respected major,” exhilarating. Hollins paid Johnston \$150,000 US for the semester and provided free lodging in the house on campus, as well as an ample budget for literary events and catered receptions.<sup>19</sup>

While private foundations, notably the Carnegie Corporation, under the presidency of Frederick P. Keppel (1923-41), supported artist-in-residence programs at colleges through the 1930s,<sup>20</sup> government patronage for the arts in the United States was slow in arriving. When the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was established in 1965, it did not immediately concern itself in any significant way with writing and publishing, which it classed as commercial activities.<sup>21</sup> Grants to non-profit organizations developed first. The NEA launched a poets-in-the-schools program in 1970 and, as the appropriations for literature grew modestly through the decade, introduced a residency program, which was not extensive. In 1974, for example, the NEA spent just \$43,000 (compared to the Canada Council’s \$56,725 the same year<sup>22</sup>) on “poets and writers in developing colleges.”<sup>23</sup> Neither the national patron nor the state governments were highly concerned with supporting the universities. This was due to number of reasons. First, the universities received government aid through other institutions, including the National Endowment for the Humanities,<sup>24</sup> and were also the beneficiaries of other sources of

revenue. Secondly, government funding in this area appears to have been by and large directed at benefiting the social institution over the artist; the unique role the universities played for writers' careers was therefore not of primary concern. Most states by this time also had developed residency programs aimed at diverse institutions and artists working across the spectrum of the fine and performing arts. In 1981, alluding to the "success" of artists-in-schools programs (administered by the NEA, all fifty states, and five special jurisdictions), the Arts Task Force of the National Conference of State Legislatures recommended the continuance of support to artists-in-schools and artists-in-communities, which brought the arts to "hospitals, prisons, youth camps, geriatric homes, and psychiatric facilities" with the "basic purpose [of raising] clients' levels of self-esteem through the exposure to the creative process."<sup>25</sup>

Writers-in-Residence in Britain. In Britain, as in the United States, the state patron was slow to concern itself with literature. The Arts Council of Great Britain, which emerged out of the CEMA (the war-time Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts) in 1945, offered modest support for poetry between 1951 and 1965 and did not form its literature panel until 1965.<sup>26</sup> Shortly thereafter, the council used funds acquired from the estate of John Compton, the council's first chair of poetry, to create a residency for poets. The inaugural grant from the Compton Fund was awarded to the University of Hull (est. 1927), to appoint Cecil Day-Lewis, in 1968, followed by a grant to Scotland's University of Dundee (which had become independent from the University of St. Andrew's in 1967) to hire American poet Jay Wright in 1971.<sup>27</sup> In 1974, the council began using its own money to support such residencies, opening up the program to writers other than poets,

and supporting its first two Fellows at the University of Cardiff and the University of Hull.<sup>28</sup>

The inspiration for the council's program appears to have come from the University of Leeds, where philanthropist and publisher E.C. (Peter) Gregory had created residencies for poets, painters, and sculptors in 1950. At the launch of the program, the Gregory Fellows were chosen by a small group of the patron's friends, the champions of modernism Herbert Read, Henry Moore, T.S. Eliot, and professor Bonamy Dobrée. The first residency program in the UK, the Gregory Fellowship debuted in the decade that the Oxford Chair of Poetry went to W.H. Auden, one of the most distinguished yet least academically qualified poets to hold that post.<sup>29</sup> The Gregory Fellowship lasted until the mid-1970s, when it expired due to lack of university financial support.<sup>30</sup> The collapse of this program, just as its publicly funded counterparts were gaining momentum in North America and the UK, illustrates the scepticism with which British writers, critics, and university teachers have approached such arrangements. In 1978, J.A. Sutherland, writing in response to current debates centring on "the relative merits of the American 'free enterprise' system of patronage via the university, and the semi-socialist British Arts Council," noted that British universities remained dubious "about the teaching of living literature, whether as a subject or skill."<sup>31</sup> Sutherland observed that while "[n]o survey of American authorship can ignore the all-importance of education dollars in the writing of modern American fiction and poetry," the British university would probably continue to withhold its support from all but "a smallish number of supremely ambidextrous writer-critics" for the foreseeable future.<sup>32</sup>

Sutherland's predictions were accurate. In the early 1980s, the increasing state

support for artist residencies was directed away from the universities. At a public meeting held by the Arts Council of Great Britain in London in February 1983, the Writers' Guild of Great Britain, while noting the universities' occasional hostility to the presence of writers, demanded an expansion to the residency program.<sup>33</sup> The following year, the arts council announced that, while in the past it had funded residencies mainly in educational institutions, including universities, polytechnic schools, teacher-training colleges, and adult-education institutes, it was "keen to expand to other venues," such as "libraries, community centres, cathedrals, hospitals, borstals, prisons, department stores, factories and other work places," in short, "*any* type of organisation interested in hosting a residency whether or not such an organisation has previously been involved in the scheme." Many of the twelve regional arts associations were noted to have established programs that were also heading in these directions.<sup>34</sup> However, seeing the widening base of support and facing a reduction in its own funding for literature, following this ambitious declaration of expansion, the Arts Council of Great Britain discontinued its assistance to resident authors in 1985. When such fellowships were slowly reintroduced in the 1990s, they had a decidedly different emphasis. The Writers in Prisons residency program became the largest such program directly administered by the council, one which attracted more external funding than the council itself contributed.<sup>35</sup> In 1997, the London-based Poetry Society, an organization whose operating budget relied on grants from the council, also introduced a two-year program called Poetry Places, which posted writers in "a wide cross-section of venues – from zoos to schools, parks to libraries." In the words of the society's director, the program was aimed at changing "the nation's perception of poetry from something ... highbrow and intangible to an artform that really

adds to our quality of life.”<sup>36</sup> Both the prison program and Poetry Places succeeded in attracting media attention. Poets in residence in prisons, the Kew Gardens, the Barnsley Football Club, the Great North Run Half-Marathon, a hairdressing salon, the Imperial War Museum, and a Marks & Spencer department store resulted in regular notices in the *Times Literary Supplement* and in (very often humorous) profiles in *The Guardian* newspaper.<sup>37</sup>

Writers-in-Residence in Australia. A final point of comparison to the Canada Council Writer-in-Residence program is offered by Australia. The Australia Council introduced its Writer-in-Residence Program for Tertiary Institutions in 1974. Similar to the Canada Council program, which had preceded it by nine years, the Australian program’s initial aims were to “[buy] writers time and [stimulate] a critical interest in the reading and writing of Australian literature.” Unlike the Canada Council program, however, the Australian scheme was open to Australian, expatriate Australian, and international writers, and was focused on generating both local exposure and overseas contact for authors.<sup>38</sup> In subsequent years, the Australian Council oriented its efforts increasingly towards international contacts. Overseas residencies sponsored by the council include those in Europe and in Asia, the later co-ordinated, from 1997, through the Asialink Centre, a non-academic department of the University of Melbourne, which is sponsored by the university and the Myer Foundation, a philanthropic organization.<sup>39</sup>



## Patronage for writers in Canada since the end of the Second World War

A.M. Klein's poem "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape" (1948) explores the silence of the poet in modern times, a stillborn voice lost amid the general indifference and the cacophony of new media:

Not an editorial-writer, bereaved with Bartlett,  
mourns him, the shelved Lycidas.  
No actress squeezes a glycerine tear for him.  
The radio broadcast lets his passing pass.  
And with the police, no record. Nobody, it appears,  
Either under his real name or his alias,  
Missed him enough to report.<sup>40</sup>

The timing of Klein's poem is significant, coinciding with the roots of the most expansive examination into cultural expression Canada had ever undertaken. The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, commonly known as the Massey Commission after its chairman, Vincent Massey, was appointed in 1949 and published its landmark report in 1951. Directed to investigate broadcasting, federal cultural institutions, government relations with voluntary cultural associations, and federal university scholarships, the commission, according to historian Paul Litt in *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission* (1992), "parlayed these instructions into a crusade for Canadian cultural nationalism," becoming in and of itself "a celebrated chapter in Canadian cultural history,"<sup>41</sup> not least for its recommendation of the creation of the Canada Council for the Arts, a feat eventually accomplished in 1957, and one which would radically change the artistic landscape of the country. Eager to promote high art

and guard against the influence of American mass culture (commercial print media, broadcasting, music, and film), the commission espoused a cultural nationalist ideology in which scholarship and the arts were cast as “the spiritual foundations of our national life,”<sup>42</sup> and sought to foster, as Litt summarizes, “a creative culture that would reflect a unique Canadian social culture.”<sup>43</sup>

With regard to writing, the Massey commissioners envisioned the development of a distinctive, heterogeneous “national literature.”<sup>44</sup> Echoing (with a difference) Robert Frost, who in 1921 expressed the hope that America would not “pass like Carthage (great in war and trade) and leave no trace on the spirit,”<sup>45</sup> the commissioners cited the opinion of the Canadian Authors Association that Canada should foster the creation of “a native literature commensurate with Canada’s physical, industrial, scientific and academic stature, and with the proved character of its people.”<sup>46</sup> Although other informants, notably some English-language small presses, contended that “English-speaking writers have finally succeeded in bridging partly the gulf between Canadian literature and Canadian society,”<sup>47</sup> the commissioners ultimately concluded that government support was needed to complete the process. By recommending the introduction of grants to artists and writers, the commission was responding to the demands articulated in briefs and public hearings as well as to those voiced during the artists’ historic “March on Ottawa” in June 1944.<sup>48</sup>

Running through the Massey Report is the notion that the situation of *the artist* must be improved if the arts are to attain the prominence they deserve. Duly noting that some associations demanded that something must be done to counteract “the deluge of the less worthy American publications ... [that] threaten our national values, corrupt our

literary taste and endanger the livelihood of our writers,”<sup>49</sup> the commissioners presented a utopian vision of a future in which mutual recognition between artist and country were achieved:

Immunity from alien influence would not, of course, be sufficient in itself to create a national literature; but it would at least make possible a climate in which the Canadian writer would find himself more at home, where he would be better understood, and where he would find the opportunity for more frequent spiritual contacts with a society which would be more fully Canadian.<sup>50</sup>

To make the writer feel “at home” was to ameliorate the working conditions for writers and to make inroads in improving the cultural environment that was at present “hostile or at least indifferent to the writer.”<sup>51</sup> Doing more, presumably, than simply reading their work, the Canadian people must make an effort to redress the “loneliness” of writers:

If we have properly understood what we have been told, the Canadian writer suffers from the fact that he is not sufficiently recognized in our national life, that his work is not considered necessary to the life of his country; and it is this isolation which prevents his making his full contribution. It seems therefore to be necessary to find some way of helping our Canadian writers to become an integral part of their environment and, at the same time, to give them a sense of their importance in this environment.<sup>52</sup>

This call demands perhaps more than “educating” the public to appreciate the products of high culture; it would also mean fostering the recognition of the Canadian author as an elite producer, according elevated status to the artist working in Canada, with or without the presence of international cues.

Litt comments that the liberal humanist nationalism and high culture elitism endorsed by the Massey Commission has rendered it an unpopular subject in recent years, as “Canadian cultural discourse has become less obsessed with the themes of national unity and independence and increasingly concerned with issues of gender, class, ethnicity, regionalism, and social justice.”<sup>53</sup> Ironically, as Litt notes, the dismantling of liberal humanist traditions was already well underway among the artists the Massey Commission was striving to recognize. Modern art’s attack on established high art conventions was in full swing and “marginal and discordant voices” were problematizing the supposed inheritance of a “wholistic Western culture.” Even as the commissioners sought to bolster an infrastructure to support high culture, high culture “was being transformed in ways that the commissioners would neither recognize nor sanction.”<sup>54</sup>

The Canada Council. The creation of the Canada Council in 1957 was regarded by the Massey commissioners as “the single most important proposal to come out of their work.”<sup>55</sup> Looking to the Arts Council of Great Britain as a model, the St. Laurent government created the Canada Council as an arm’s length organization, opting against the creation of a ministry of culture and the pitfalls that might accompany it, the threats of “totalitarianism, politicization, patronage, excessive nationalism, or artificiality.”<sup>56</sup> With a mandate “to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in the arts, humanities and social sciences” (the reference to the humanities and social sciences would be dropped upon the separation of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council in 1978), the Canada Council was launched with a dual focus on scholarship and the arts that paved the way for its public acceptance. Although

education was a provincial jurisdiction, the economic plight of universities was widely recognized as a serious problem; only the Duplessis government of Quebec, jealous of provincial control of educational and cultural affairs, presented any opposition to the injection of federal funds.<sup>57</sup> While the council sought to encourage, rather than direct, cultural activity in its multiple regional manifestations, national recognition for grant recipients whose work met “professional standards” was the ultimate goal. As the second chairman of the council, Claude Bissell, expressed in 1962, “We believe that our resources should go to the support of full-time professional artists and organizations that are likely to achieve some degree of national prominence and to efforts to create an audience for first class performance.”<sup>58</sup> While professional criteria for performing artists were somewhat easy to ascertain, for creative artists, who were not explicitly linked with institutions, they were less straightforward.

Authors and public institutions. A writer-in-residence program would be in many ways a logical outcome for a council doubly committed to supporting cultural creation and arts education, “professional” producers and arts organizations. The new government funding allowed the universities, already deeply committed to the literary arts, not least as employers of writers and educators of audiences, to extend their support to literary creation. The shift in the universities’ role was indicative of, and often went hand in hand with, an intensifying academic emphasis on contemporary writing.

An early example of artistic patronage through the university demonstrates this relationship. In 1945, A.M. Klein became what could be viewed as the country’s first writer-in-residence. Montreal industrialist and philanthropist Samuel Bronfman had

observed that the practice of law was taxing on the poet and wanted to encourage his writing. When Bronfman's efforts to support Klein directly proved unsuccessful, he earmarked a portion of his donations to McGill University for the creation of a position for Klein.<sup>59</sup> Through an unfortunately awkwardly managed appointment process, whose suddenness and novelty contributed to friction within the department, Klein was named visiting lecturer in poetry. His hastily drawn up course on modern poetry was the first such offering in the conservative McGill English Department and was instantly popular with students. After three years, however, Klein found teaching repetitive. Nominating his successor, poet Patrick Anderson, Klein resigned from the academic environment in 1948.<sup>60</sup>

While Klein's case would seem to suggest the desirability of non-teaching positions for writers within the university structure, some writers were reluctant to accept the patronage of universities. Several years before becoming professor of English at McGill, Oxford-educated Hugh MacLennan was approached by American universities who hoped to secure his services as writer-in-residence. Following the huge successes of his novels *Barometer Rising* (1941) and *Two Solitudes* (1945), MacLennan's reluctance to take on such positions at American institutions is partly accounted for by the author's contention, often expressed in articles published through the 1940s, that Canadian writers had a patriotic duty to stay at home; however, his reaction also signals the novelty of institutional and public patronage for a writer of MacLennan's generation.<sup>61</sup> In 1968, the author recalled:

Toward the end of the 1940s I was offered two [American writer-in-residence] jobs, but I feared the Greeks, and still do, when they bear me gifts. ... I remember

one prospective employer was so liberal that he told me I would have no regular duties at all; I would simply have to 'talk about literature in an informal way with interested students.' This didn't seem to me a job, but a place.<sup>62</sup>

Although MacLennan's aversion to functioning as a "placeman" is rarely publicly echoed by the Canadian writers coming after him, many writers have been not a little wary of the symbolic aspects of their appointments as state- and university-supported authors, and have struggled to "earn their keep" and provide services for salary. Margaret Laurence, for example, would be particularly determined to demonstrably contribute to the University of Toronto during her residency of 1969-70, despite the assurances of her friends beforehand that such a methodical approach to her duties was uncalled for. "[Y]ou seem to have some misconceptions regarding what will be demanded of you," wrote Adele Wiseman to Laurence in 1967, as the latter prepared for her appointment. "It's your presence that they want, so don't worry."<sup>63</sup>

Writer-in-residence positions in Canada, however, were, from the beginning, both forms of recognition and paying jobs in public institutions, funded in part by these institutions: universities at first and, later, public libraries. In 1965, before anything similar was devised by its foreign counterparts, the Canada Council supported its first writer-in-residence position at the University of New Brunswick (UNB), a non-teaching position which carried light duties of mentoring and giving public talks.<sup>64</sup> At this time, the council expressed optimism that the "experiment" would promote its goals of fostering literature and promoting community development and interest in the arts. UNB, which also contributed to supporting the resident author, had an admirable track record of encouraging the arts, especially the literary arts, in Fredericton and the surrounding

region (see Chapter 1). The first appointed writer was Norman Levine, a non-academic author, who had a greater critical reputation in Europe than in Canada. The appointment would bring him from England to his native soil and materially support his ongoing work. From all angles, the residency appeared to represent a happy ménage à trois of author, university, and state patron.

Canada's first resident author and public controversy. On 3 August 1965, before he had even arrived on campus, Norman Levine found himself engaged in damage control. The soon-to-be writer-in-residence wrote to UNB president Colin Mackay to notify him that an article about the author had recently appeared in the Toronto *Telegram*, one which Levine contended was “factually wrong” and “slanted in such a way that I find distasteful.” Stressing the insignificance of the piece, Levine offered his assurance that he was eagerly anticipating his appointment in Fredericton.<sup>65</sup> Mackay’s response on 13 August was cheerful and conciliatory: claiming to be no stranger to seeing himself misquoted, he admitted he had not yet seen the offending article, but expected that someone would send it his way.<sup>66</sup>

Mackay need not have waited by his mailbox. The article, by Du Barry Campau, was reprinted in an Atlantic publication under the title, “New Man Comes to UNB: ‘Let Your Son Travel – Don’t Send Him to University.’” The article presents a purported interview with Levine, held at his home in England. (Levine contended that the piece did not emerge from an interview situation.) In it, Levine is said not to identify himself as “a Canadian writer.” His own university experience – a McGill education obtained through a veteran’s government grant – has taught him not to “have any respect for academics”;



nonetheless, he has accepted \$6,000 from UNB (the actual amount was \$1,000) in return for which he “won’t have to do anything.” Fredericton locals could also look forward to the writer’s non-services: having been approached by the editor of the *Atlantic Advocate* to buy his articles for \$75 apiece, the writer is said to have flatly refused to write anything new for that price, but has offered reprints of older work. The Canada Council is identified as kicking in \$2,000 in travel funds (in reality the amount was \$5,000), which is more than adequate for the author, who will be travelling alone. His wife will remain in St. Ives with their daughters, pining for the cultural life of London she had known in her girlhood, with only “the bank manager, the milkman and the postman” for conversation, all of whom “[bore] us.” Confined as life is in a “provincial town,” Mrs. Levine is said to prefer it to travelling to Canada, a destination in which she “hasn’t the slightest interest.”<sup>67</sup>

It is difficult to imagine an article, which might easily have been titled, “Mercenary Writer Visits Cultural Backwater, Dupes Patrons,” that undermines more devastatingly the aims of the inaugural writer-in-residence program for author, university, and Canada Council. Feeding into anxieties about the legitimacy of “Canadian culture,” or indeed, Canadian pretensions to high culture, the article subverts the conception of the university as a site of intellectual, cultural, and social exchange, and insinuates the frivolity of state support for the arts and education. Despite Levine’s irritation at the journalist, Campau’s attack on the feasibility of a co-ordinated cultural effort pursued collaboratively and disinterestedly by government, university, and artist is not dissimilar to some of the social criticisms in Levine’s own work.

Having left Canada in 1949, Levine was arguably best known for *Canada Made*

*Me* (1958), a travel-memoir depicting the young writer's return to his native land. In this work Levine himself undermines the celebratory rhetoric of Canadian nationalism in the post-war period. Published by Putnam and Sons in London and by McClelland and Stewart in Toronto (though not, significantly, under the McClelland and Stewart imprint<sup>68</sup>), the book manuscript is said to have so displeased Jack McClelland that he printed only 500 copies of it to honour his contract.<sup>69</sup> While few Canadians had read *Canada Made Me*, especially before 1979 when it was reissued in a more substantial edition by Ottawa's Deneau and Greenberg, many more were familiar with its reviews. Of these, UNB's Desmond Pacey's was relatively positive.<sup>70</sup> Claiming to have been unimpressed with Levine's earlier fiction, Pacey judged *Canada Made Me* to be "a lively performance," which, though "biased, distorted, [and] deliberately unfair," was a "pleasant change" from the usual boosterism of travel literature. Pacey rationalized the book's subject matter by explaining that the author was short of cash during his travels and so was forced to avoid the country's crowning cultural achievements, such as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and fashionable clubs, giving us instead "a view of Canada that we do not ordinarily get," including descriptions of "seedy cafés and rooming houses" and "the more sordid areas" of every major city in the country. What Pacey's review (among others<sup>71</sup>) completely eclipses are the people Levine depicts and the circumstances in which they live. Many are working-class new immigrants; nearly all are of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds other than those of the dominant Anglo-Canadian culture. Levine's focuses in this work on Displaced Persons, ethnic ghettos, both flagrant and internalized racism, and the debilitating effects of poverty, all of which he sets against the backdrop of the political and corporate rhetoric of national progress, which conflates

national identity and capitalist ideology, as typified by the recurring Seagrams poster campaign exhorting the viewer to “Be a Good Canadian.”<sup>72</sup> Far from being an insular and optimistic young nation, Levine’s Canada is a bleak, world-weary, and icy international theatre, implicated in and characterized by the legacy of the Second World War. The marginality of artistic, cultural, and intellectual pursuits is underscored by the narrator’s own difference as an author and a Jew, differences that are sometimes invisible to the people he encounters on his travels, often with unsettling effect. ““Too many Yous here,” a German immigrant confides in a Winnipeg bar. ““We must have another war. Too many Yous.””<sup>73</sup>

Because of the force of his social critique and his self-imposed distance from the Canadian literary scene, Levine was a provocative choice for the first state-supported writer-in-residence. Neither a popular nor academic success in Canada, Levine arrived in New Brunswick to find his books out of print, although the local bookstores had latterly received “a flood” of requests for them.<sup>74</sup> The author immediately became a regular contributor to the *Atlantic Advocate*, writing a review column and publishing his own poems and short stories. He delivered one public lecture, appeared on radio and television, and most likely began work toward editing his Canadian anthology, *Canadian Winter’s Tales*, which would appear in 1968. In short, UNB’s choice of Levine, along with other Canada Council support for the author,<sup>75</sup> offered a point of entry to the Canadian literary scene to a writer whose connection was otherwise tenuous. From a distance, Levine remained involved with Canadian literature and criticism until his death in June 2005. *Canada Made Me*, as noted in the *Globe and Mail*’s obituary of the author, is remembered as a “controversial work” known for being “not complimentary to a

country then stumbling awkwardly toward its cultural and national adolescence.”<sup>76</sup>

In his essay “The Political Economy of Poetry,” American Ron Silliman asks “Should government patronage be seen as a metaconsumption, in which what is purchased is not textual, but simply the existence of poets and poetry as an ornament to the national culture?”<sup>77</sup> This question is relevant to the Canadian context, as the Canada Council laid claim to writers like Levine to bolster the national “stable” of authors, whether or not those authors problematized, or even attacked, the nation-state. The council’s publicly declared determination to support “artistic excellence” over political interests has been most visibly illustrated through its awarding of Governor General’s Literary Awards to Québécois authors who support Quebec separatism.<sup>78</sup> In the case of writers-in-residence, however, few comparable public debates have materialized. The lack of controversy surrounding such support – in itself not necessarily a cause for celebration – may be partially explained by the public trust invested in universities and libraries, the institutions which nominate and promote resident authors and thereby the primary authorities deciding who will receive such support. The significance of these institutions in materially and symbolically producing literature is explored further in the following chapters.

Other author residency programs in Canada. This historical study of writers-in-residence is called for in part by the ubiquity of writer-in-residence programs in Canada today. Two generations after the first author residencies were put in place, the popularity of the writer-in-residence concept indicates a perception of its value among cultural policy makers, public institutions, professional writers, and general public alike. By the 1990s,

the council's program was active in all ten provinces and the Yukon, and its original parameters had been extended to include placements in public libraries and short-term writer residencies in diverse (and sometimes, remote) venues. The growth of provincial and institutional support in this area is also significant, as are the contributions of national and regional authors' organizations. Several of the country's largest and most prestigious universities – including the University of Toronto and the University of Alberta – had begun fundraising for endowments to supplement or indeed fully support the continuance of their residency programs. Provincially funded Writers-in-the-Schools programs have been active in many provinces since the 1970s, encouraged most recently by support by the League of Canadian Poets. In 1988, educators at York University launched into cyberspace with the creation of Writers-In-Electronic-Residence (WIER), an on-line residency program “linking Canada's writers with Canada's schools” that is still in existence.<sup>79</sup> The first provincial resident artist program aimed at adults was Saskatchewan's Resident Artists Program, which brings writers into small communities across the province (see Chapter Two); Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario, and British Columbia have also created writers-in-libraries programs. In 1994-5, the Manitoba Arts Council supported its first residency for rural/northern Manitoba, hosting novelist Armin Wiebe in Dauphin for a period of ten months.<sup>80</sup>

Residency programs have also been created by authors themselves, writers who have made their marks working in diverse genres and emerging from disparate milieus. In 1993, five years before launching her magazine *Alberta Views*, short-story writer and editor Jackie Flanagan, in partnership with oil executive Allan Markin, established the Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme at the University of Calgary to

celebrate and enrich the Calgary arts scene (see Chapter Two). In Ontario, Edna Staebler, the journalist perhaps best known for her best-selling books on Mennonite cooking, donated \$100,000 to the Kitchener Public Library to begin a residency program, which was launched as the Edna Staebler Writer-in-Residence Program in 1996. Having published her first book, *Food that Really Schmecks* (1968), at the age of sixty, Staebler is said to have intended the program to “provide writers with the information and encouragement necessary to ‘keep at it’ and succeed in a challenging profession.”<sup>81</sup> In 1999, a donation from the estate of poet, editor, and English professor Ralph Gustafson (1909-95) was given by his widow, Betty Gustafson, to Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo, British Columbia, in order to create the Ralph Gustafson Chair of Poetry, a residency position in the Creative Writing Department with the purpose of “advancing Canadian poetry and supporting deserving poets.”<sup>82</sup> In 2005, the family of the late Carol Shields similarly donated \$100,000 to the University of Winnipeg to create a writer-in-residence position named after the author, who had served as the university’s chancellor from 1996 to 2000.<sup>83</sup> With the exception of the Gustafson chair, these residency programs are intended to benefit the communities these authors called home, strengthening an association between writer and place, and encouraging others to follow in the writers’ footsteps.

Such programs created in the 1990s imbue cities and smaller communities with a sense of a distinct literary identity. They are good for culturally enriching a city such as Calgary, which is stereotyped as an industrial and corporate centre, and for bolstering communities where primary industries fail. Berton House in Dawson City, Yukon, illustrates the multiple aims and significations of writer-in-residence programs. In 1989,

non-fiction writer and broadcaster Pierre Berton donated \$50,000 to the Yukon Arts Council for the acquisition of his childhood home in Dawson, which opened as Berton House, a writers' retreat, in 1996.<sup>84</sup> Located near Robert Service's cabin and the Jack London Centre, the house contributes to Dawson's constructed literary past and its cultural present, becoming at once a tourist draw and a focal point for current literary activities. At the opening on 14 August 1996, Berton was credited with the concept of bringing professional writers to the North so that they might experience that part of the country and, perhaps, write about it in the future.<sup>85</sup> Several writers have done so, including Julie Lawson, who in 1998 conducted research while in residence for her children's book, *Destination Gold!* (2000). In 1999, novelist Julie Brickman worked towards a memoir of her three months at the Berton House, *A Writer-in-Residence in the Yukon* (forthcoming), a title which echoes that of Amy V. Wilson's popular *A Nurse in the Yukon* (1966) and so builds on a Northern literary tradition.

Since its establishment, Berton House has attracted a growing number of public patrons. By 1997, the Klondike Visitors' Association (KVA) and the Yukon Arts Council had spent over \$100,000 on the house's restoration.<sup>86</sup> The retreat is maintained by the Berton House Writers Retreat Society (based in Whitehorse), in co-operation with the KVA and the Dawson City Libraries' Association. In 2001, in honour of Berton's fifty-year career in writing, the Canada Council pledged \$100,000 for the program, to be given over the following three years in the form of a monthly fellowship of \$2,000 for visiting writers, as well as a stipend for air travel.<sup>87</sup> The residencies are also aimed at attracting private support through the incorporation of mutually promotional activities for writers and community. Authors at Berton House are encouraged to take on a high-profile role in

Dawson, to publish and talk about their work in the local media, to organize community workshops, and to enhance and disseminate northern culture through their writing. The authors are also promoted through the Berton House web site, which provides illustrated bibliographies of their works and links to Amazon, the on-line bookseller.<sup>88</sup>

Such public monuments to individual writers are perhaps one indication that the status of the author is changing, as are the perceived cultural centres of Canada, traditionally Toronto and Montreal. A final example illustrates the profound social and cultural significance of residencies for authors. The campaign to save the Joy Kogawa House in south Vancouver has resulted in a proposal to make the house a centre for writers-in-residence. The house, from which Kogawa and her family were removed by the Canadian government in 1942 during the internment of over 20,000 Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War, represents, in the words of a local politician, both “a monument to Japanese Canadian history” and “a celebration of the life and writing” of the author of *Obasan*.<sup>89</sup> Ten writers’ groups, representing thousands of members from across the country, including the Writers’ Union of Canada and PEN Canada, have supported the campaign to preserve the house for the future use of their members.<sup>90</sup> International writers will also have the opportunity to visit and write there, in order to learn a dark lesson from Canada’s past, as well as to work towards contributing to positive social change. If the current plans materialize, Joy Kogawa House will “[enable] new and emerging writers to create new works focusing on human rights issues and Canada’s evolving multicultural and intercultural society” and will “be open for public and school tours to educate people about the Japanese Canadian experience during World War II.”<sup>91</sup> In June 2006, the receipt of half a million dollars from an anonymous



British Columbian company ensured the preservation of the house from demolition.<sup>92</sup>

The perceived benefits of writer-in-residence programs – cultural, social, and economic – are testified to by the proliferation of residencies across the country.

### **Background to this study**

Critical evaluations of author residencies, or, more generally, of state support for writers, are rare in Canada. While there have been several books written on the Canada Council, their number pales in comparison with those on the British Council<sup>93</sup> or the National Endowment for the Arts,<sup>94</sup> which take the form of historical overviews, analyses, and personal memoirs. Few such works, however, discuss literature, which usually accounts for a small piece of the patronage pie, in any detail.

Writers are nonetheless acutely aware of the significance of the Canada Council to the literary field and have produced critiques, indictments, and apologies that reflect the political climate of the day. In 1976, in the heyday of Canadian cultural nationalism, Susan Crean questioned the council's perceived preferences for international high art over indigenous production, and exposed the Americanization of Canadian education and mass culture.<sup>95</sup> In 2004, Max Wyman's *The Defiant Imagination: Why Culture Matters* offered an impassioned defence of the Canada Council and made a case for the continued desirability for government patronage, along with increased private and corporate support of the arts, as well as continued volunteerism on the part of the public. Wyman takes a wide view of the benefits of a strong cultural sector, calling culture "a catalyst for economic prosperity, social health and national identity," which helps "develop a nation of vision, innovation and generosity."<sup>96</sup> While Wyman's work is quite general, he is one

of the few critics to have outlined developments at the Canada Council through the 1990s.

Other critical evaluations include Bernard Ostry's *The Cultural Connection: An Essay on Culture and Government Policy in Canada* (1978), which describes the political climate during the years of planning and establishment of the council, with a particular emphasis on Quebec's interaction with federal institutions. George Woodcock's *The State and the Arts in Canada* (1985) offers an historical, international overview of arts patronage and chapters on the Massey Commission and the founding of the Canada Council; however, his primary focus is the current plight of the creative artist. David Helwig's *Love and Money: The Politics of Culture* (1980) offers valuable essays, including "Seed Money," by Michael Macklem of Oberon Press, on the need for government support of literary publishing, and Frank Milligan's "The Ambiguities of the Canada Council," which discuss the council's relations with artists, Parliament, and the public. To my particular satisfaction, Helwig's collection also includes "The Musical Ride," an excerpt from John Metcalf's campus novel, *General Ludd* (1980), which has a writer-in-residence as the protagonist and which I discuss further in my Conclusion.

Feminist critiques of the Canada Council include Sharon H. Nelson's *Bemused, Branded, and Belittled: Women and Writing in Canada* (1982), which examines the council's support of women authors within the larger context of Canadian literary culture. One of Nelson's important contributions is her outlining of the "academic connection" of the Canadian literary world. Noting Brian Harrison's survey, conducted in 1978 for the Research and Statistics Directorate of the Department of Communications, which revealed that a full 38 per cent of Canadian freelance writers were employed as teachers,

many in the university system,<sup>97</sup> Nelson offers additional numbers to illustrate how women writers figure into this literary-academic continuum: in 1980-81, only 11 per cent of tenured academics in all disciplines were women; that same year, only 12.5 per cent of university creative writing teachers were women; and, between 1978 and May 1981, only 29 per cent of university writers-in-residence were women.<sup>98</sup> While residency programs appeared to offer women authors increased access to the academy, it was hardly a large-scale success, especially considering women's equally poor showing in other literary grant competitions: between 1978-9 and 1980-1, Nelson reveals, across granting categories, less than 30 cent of Canada Council grants in support of writing and publishing went to women or to works by women.<sup>99</sup> Locating a source of the difficulty for women in breaking into grants competitions as the "invisible colleges" which make up the "peer" juries ("the experts, the authorities, the academics, the very same people who already control editing, publishing, and criticism"<sup>100</sup>), Nelson calls attention to, among other things, the overlap between creative and academic spheres and the ongoing importance of the universities in shaping Canadian letters, issues which I will explore further in the following chapters.

With the exceptions of Paul Litt's study of the Massey Commission, cited earlier, the full-length works which offer historical analyses of state patronage of the arts post-Second World War have emerged from francophone critics. Laurent Mailhot and Benoît Melançon's *Le Conseil des arts du Canada, 1957-1982* (1982) presents an overview of council support during its first twenty-five years. In their chapter on writing and publishing, Mailhot and Melançon trace developments in Canadian literatures in English and French in the 20th century, outline the range of grants introduced for writing and

publication, and touch on various council-related issues that made the newspapers, such as Governor General's Awards controversies and the several occasions when grant winners have been accused of obscenity.<sup>101</sup> While the authors note that literature presents a special case to the council – occupying a “position mixte, intermédiaire” between artistic and university circles, a position they contend is specific to the Canadian national context<sup>102</sup> – they do not delve into the inner deliberations of the organization, basing their work entirely on published sources.

A work that more closely examines the impact of state patronage on literature, Robert Yergeau's *Art, argent, arrangement: Le mécénat d'État* (2004), which examines the arts grant programs of the Canada Council and Quebec's ministère des Affaires culturelles, uses publications by both organizations, archival documents, and items in the popular media to present case studies, largely dating from the 1960s onward, of numerous Quebec authors and their intersections with state patrons. Tackling the “taboo” subject of arts council juries and their practices, Yergeau asks penetrating (and largely unanswered) questions regarding how arts council peer jurors are selected (and by whom), the role civic representatives play in juries' deliberation processes, and what values and biases these jurors and civil servants bring to the table. For Yergeau, the Canada Council's apparently rigorous criteria for jury selection (most recently and publicly revamped in 2000), which seek to make juries “representative” in terms of discipline, medium, artistic or intellectual school, language, gender, ethnicity, and region, justifies “tout et ... rien,” and merely underscore an assumption that jurors act on biases stemming from their personal circumstances.<sup>103</sup> The thrust of Yergeau's argument is that juries, “expert” consultants, and the civil servants who select them constitute “académies

invisibles,”<sup>104</sup> whose choices, positive and negative, constitute the inescapable context for all authors working in Canada. Citing Marcel Fournier’s observation that, since the Second World War, as the intervention of state patrons has become increasingly evident, artists have increasingly emphasized “professionalism” and independence, resulting in the contemporary situation in which the state is more involved and artistic and intellectual circles are more jealous of their autonomy than ever before,<sup>105</sup> Yergeau asserts that artists and patrons in Canada enjoy a marriage of convenience “où chacun essaie de se servir de l’autre pour en arriver à ses propres fins, qui ne sont pas nécessairement complémentaires.”<sup>106</sup> Both those writers who submit their proposals to the scrutiny of arts juries and those who claim independence cannot escape “le rôle d’imposition et de récupération de l’État”<sup>107</sup>:

Ils produisent des discours en fonction de la logique d’un univers régularisé dont ils dépendent, qu’ils le veulent ou non. Ils ont beau prétendre dénoncer tous les pouvoirs, ils rament et rament encore sur la galère du mécénat d’État.<sup>108</sup>

Yergeau’s lively and detailed work is the first to use archival documents generated by the arts granting bodies (the fraction to which the researcher is permitted access at Library and Archives Canada and the Archives nationales du Québec) in order to explore the rough terrain behind the smooth prose of annual reports, the largely unknown ground of heated ideological battles and “la violence symbolique” that reveals the archive as “un palimpseste de la littérature québécoise contemporaine.”<sup>109</sup> While Yergeau’s work focuses on Quebec authors, his insistence on the centrality of the paradigm of state support for contemporary writers is also significant for writers in English Canada.

## **Outline of the dissertation**

In the chapters that follow, I also examine the archival palimpsest, along with oral history and published sources (notably, Canada Council publications, authors' biographies, and collections of correspondence), in order to chart the development of writer-in-residence programs in Canada. From the 1960s to the present, the history of writers-in-residence represents an intriguing nexus of the main lines constructing the author in contemporary Canada. The evolution of public patronage for writers, the professionalization of authorship, the institutionalization of creative writing as an academic discipline, and the symbolic production of Canadian literature all converge in this topic.

This dissertation approaches writer-in-residence programs from three perspectives. Chapters One and Two examine patrons. Chapter One discusses the Canada Council's writer-in-residence program from 1965 to 2000, giving a detailed overview of the writers and institutions it has supported and discussing issues that have resulted from the program's policies. Chapter Two offers a comparative analysis of residency programs in two western provinces, the federally and provincially supported library and community programs in Saskatchewan and the publicly and privately funded university-based programs in Alberta.

Chapter Three considers writers and how the proliferation of residency programs has affected their social and economic situations. While my emphasis is on "professional" writers in Chapter Three, I also examine the broader writing communities which the programs foster.

Chapter Four, along with the Conclusion, focuses on literature. Chapter Four explores how writer-in-residence programs at three regionally dispersed universities, University of Toronto, Simon Fraser University, and Memorial University of Newfoundland, have contributed to the construction and contestation of Canadian literary canons. The Conclusion analyzes the figure of writer-in-residence in two satiric novels, *General Ludd* (1980) by John Metcalf, and *Muriella Pent* (2004) by Russell Smith.

As I write this, both the University of Alberta and the Saskatoon Public Library are commemorating the anniversaries (thirty years and twenty-five years, respectively) of their writer-in-residence programs. As similar celebrations are being planned and carried out across the country, the time has come as well for a critical evaluation of this extensive and culturally significant phenomenon.

# 1

## **THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM, 1965–2000**

The Canada Council for the Arts is by far the most significant patron of writers-in-residence in Canada. With the aims of supporting authors and raising the profile of Canadian literature, the council began funding resident authors at universities in 1965. The program, which would eventually extend to other public institutions including colleges and public libraries across the country, created a public role for writers, nurtured community involvement in the arts, and consciously constructed a “national literature” characterized by cross-fertilization between regions and by literary production in specific genres.

The Canada Council’s Writer-in-Residence Program, though small (averaging around 1.4 per cent of the monies granted annually to writing and publishing), is significant in that it simultaneously addresses diverse aspects of the council’s mandate “to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts.” It is a direct grant to established artists that requires additional financial support from partner institutions, benefiting aspiring writers at all stages of apprenticeship through the resident authors’ consultations and workshops, and exposing both specialized and more general audiences to authors and their work through the authors’ visits to



university classrooms, public readings, and media interviews. In the words of one Canada Council administrator, the writer-in-residence program has been, from the moment of its launch, “a little program with a big bang.”<sup>1</sup>

The contradictions of the program’s scope – its nearly negligible financial cost to the council versus the real money value it represents to writers; the relatively small number of grants awarded (307\* between 1965 and 2000) versus the large and complex nexus of people implicated in each award – make the program an important site for the study of the council’s contribution to literature within the larger context of Canadian culture. The writer-in-residence program is among the most visible forms of support the council provides to literature. While coverage of block grants to publishers and awards to writers may be detailed in the pages of the book-trade journal *Quill & Quire*, writers-in-residence are often profiled in the mainstream media. On CBC radio and television, as well as in local and national newspapers, under such titles as “A Literary Doctor with City-wide Practice,” “Library’s Writer in Residence Star on Schoolgrounds,” and “Imagine! A Regular Salary!”<sup>2</sup> these largely positive (and, often, promotional) news items draw attention to the council’s and the writers’ activities in the day-to-day business of cultural enrichment and its social impact. If, as noted by the Massey commissioners, authors have felt excluded from the fabric of Canadian society,<sup>3</sup> residencies have done much to weave their contributions into a larger tapestry of public service, beyond simply supporting the perceived elite vocation of writing. “I feel very happy,” one author-in-residence told the council, “to have given as well as taken.”

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\* Throughout this chapter, numbers associated with residencies include both full- and half-year appointments, unless otherwise specified.

Since its inception, the council has been concerned with maintaining the separation of cultural from political and social aims and with serving the needs of the creative artist. These issues find a focal point in author residencies precisely because residencies situate working writers in the social sphere. The program relies more heavily on the consensus of arts professionals than do many other grant programs: before reaching the council's appointed peer juries and the council itself, residencies must be vetted by university committees or library boards, which, very often, comprise other interested parties, including representatives of local writers' collectives, academics from disciplines other than literary studies, and community leaders, such as elected officials and business people. It is reasonable to assume the appointment of writers-in-residence may often provide a site of interplay between competing, if not incompatible, rationales. Recognition of a local celebrity, promotion of a particular region, event or institution, and encouragement of a specific community, such as the university student body or an ethnic group, are some factors which could peaceably coincide with the council's stated goal of fostering literature. The writer-in-residence program, then, may be seen to serve many masters.

Residencies offer an opportunity to evaluate the council's continuing effort to provide a kind of patronage that is non-prescriptive and intended primarily for the benefit of active, nationally significant artists. In the discussion that follows, I identify four issues which the council has had to navigate in the delivery of this program in accordance with these principles: the significant cultural influence of Canadian universities as co-patrons and consecrators in the field of literature; the many facets of "community outreach" and their relationship to the support of professional authorship; regionalism;

and “representation,” the challenge of fostering the development of diverse writing communities and multiple literary activities through a single national program.

### **Overview of the program**

The Canada Council provided artist-in-residence grants in disciplines such as music and visual arts from the late 1950s and supported its first writer-in-residence, Norman Levine, at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) in 1965-6. The program was formalized in 1967 under Naïm Kattan and a decade later was supporting approximately a dozen appointments annually, of which the majority were full-year positions. By 1984, the program’s profile had increased to the extent that the council could no longer fund all applicants, and the number of residencies reached a plateau. The numbers peaked in 1988-9, however, when the council funded twenty-four residencies, including fifteen full-year posts. In 1993, Parliament drastically reduced its appropriation to the council, resulting in an \$8.7 million cut to its grants budget, \$1.8 million of which was absorbed by the Writing and Publishing Section.<sup>4</sup> Programs were reduced, and some were “suspended,” including the writer-in-residence program. It was reinstated in 1997-8 on a smaller scale, though the number of appointments crept upward to more familiar levels by 1999-2000, when seventeen residencies (three full-year) were funded. A complete list of Canada Council author residencies (1965-2000) is supplied in Appendix A.

The impetus for the writer-in-residence program originated with the host institutions, which were, at the outset, universities. Although the council had debated the author residency concept in its early years of operation, it was UNB’s Desmond Pacey, who approached the council with an outline of proposed duties and a list of potential

candidates, who set the program in motion. Since then, it has been the host institutions that have chosen the writers, prepared the grant applications, and, for the most part, negotiated the parameters of the appointments. In 1978-9, as a project to celebrate Regina's 75th anniversary, the Saskatchewan Writers Guild and the City of Regina, in co-operation with the Regina Library Board, secured a council grant to host Eli Mandel at Regina Public Library and opened the door for library writers-in-residence, a concept that quickly gained popularity, especially in the Prairie Provinces. The "community outreach" component of residencies, which had always been present (a factor in UNB's favour in 1965 was Fredericton's perceived lack of access to the arts), came to be more in evidence in the council's discourse through the 1980s and '90s. Between 1981 and 1993, and from 1998 to the present, the council has also administered a program of short-term residencies of four to ten days, with which it hopes to encourage increased community involvement of writers during reading tours, as well as cultural exchanges between regions.

The 192 poets, prose writers, and playwrights<sup>5</sup> who were involved in the program to 2000 represent key figures in contemporary Canadian literature. Residencies, offering up to a year of financial security, an opportunity to write nearly full-time, and the prestige of association with a cultural institution, quickly became desirable for writers, though issues of eligibility criteria, remuneration, and workload were sometimes concerns for individual authors and their new professional association, the Writers' Union of Canada (est. 1973). A major issue for the union was the exclusion of non-fiction writers, who were not eligible for residency grants until 1997.

Although Canadian authors working in Canada have been the primary focus of the Canada Council and are the subject of this chapter, something must be said of the

council's involvement in international author residencies. While only Canadian citizens and permanent residents are eligible for support under the domestic writer-in-residence program, foreign authors have been "in residence" in Canada through participation in two international exchanges. The Canada-Scotland Writer-in-Residence Exchange, a joint effort of the Canada Council and the Scottish Arts Council, operated between 1978 and 1997, involving twenty-six Canadian and Scottish writers (see Appendix B). From 1994, the Canada Council also administered, on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Canada/United States/Mexico Creative Artists' Residences Exchange, which operated in conjunction with the U.S. National Endowment for the Arts and Mexico's National Council for Culture and the Arts. The trilateral program involved sixty artists annually, including a handful of writers crossing the Canadian border.<sup>6</sup>

### **Universities as partners in and recipients of patronage**

Even before its creation, the Canada Council was envisioned as being particularly significant in supporting post-secondary institutions. Despite falling under provincial jurisdiction, universities became a focal point of the Massey Commission due to the central role they played in Canadian culture as "local centres for education at large." According to the commissioners, for decades, the universities had been "patrons of every movement in aid of the arts, letters and sciences" and "the fountain-head of a stream of communal activities," representing to communities throughout Canada "every aspect of cultural life, from 'grass roots' to 'ivory tower.'"<sup>7</sup> The council's mandate – which included supporting academic scholarship and research until the creation of a separate Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) in 1978 – was sufficiently

wide so as to contribute to all aspects of this spectrum of activity.

Having seized upon the momentum of universities' established involvement in arts and culture, the council sponsored artists-in-residence working in the fields of music and visual arts in the late 1950s. Placed at specific universities "where facilities for study in the arts are not highly developed," these appointments were thought by the council to illustrate "how furthering the interests of the artist himself can also aid the community at large."<sup>8</sup> In the case of *authors*, however, the universities' multiple roles in relation to the literary arts were reason to proceed with caution. As employers of writers, publishers of literature and criticism, organizers of literary events, and educators of audiences, Canadian universities were already indisputably influential patrons, promoters, and disseminators of literature, roles which I discuss more fully in Chapters Three and Four. A writer-in-residence program would serve to strengthen an already strong and multithreaded connection.

Not all writers, to begin with, were keen on the idea of the state patron partnering with academic institutions. The council floated the idea of a writer-in-residence program as early as 1961. At a meeting reviewing the literary arts on 2-3 May 1961, council representatives, including council chairman Claude Bissell (president of the University of Toronto) and supervisor of the arts program Peter Dwyer,<sup>9</sup> consulted with a panel of fourteen individuals, including publishers, journalists, academics, visual artists, and the writers Earle Birney, Irving Layton, Jay Macpherson, Len Peterson, Gilles Hénault, and Leonard Cohen. Irving Layton raised the topic of a "residence for writers," proposing that the council establish something similar to the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference of Middlebury College in Ripton, Vermont, which Robert Frost had helped to found in

1926.<sup>10</sup> By the 1960s, Bread Loaf was, according to Layton, a place where “writers could ... meet one another and exchange ideas.”<sup>11</sup> The initial responses to Layton’s suggestion were indicative of a keen awareness of the council’s competing priorities and limited budget. Would such a residence accommodate painters and musicians, as well as writers? Did the panel feel that funds should be diverted from academic fellowships to support workshops for the arts? However, as the discussion turned to the foreseen value of residencies for authors, the recorded comments reflect an engagement with fundamental questions surrounding the impact of public patronage on the development of Canadian art:

[Visual artist] Mr. [Alex] Colville thought that young artists should come through on their own and that the weak shoots should be cut off at an early stage. Mr. Cohen thought that centres such as these were a great mistake and that writers should not thus isolate themselves from society. M. Hénault and M. [Guy] Sylvestre agreed that French Canadians would not be interested in such a project.<sup>12</sup>

The first two points – Colville’s fear that patronage of the untried would encourage and sustain mediocre talent, and Cohen’s assertion that a writer’s sensibility should be honed through direct experience in the real world and not through apprenticeship in an institution – had already, to some extent, been resolved to the council’s satisfaction.

While acknowledging that every seedling would not bear fruit, the council at this time offered a modest program of arts scholarships and bursaries (for applicants “of promise”) along with its arts awards (for applicants “of experience”).<sup>13</sup> Despite Cohen’s objection to the cloistering of artists, the council supported at least one institute of formal training, the

National Theatre School, and that year sponsored the first artists' retreat at Stanley House, an estate on Baie de Chaleurs which had recently been donated to the council. As of this date, however, the council had not involved itself in the training of writers. The third point, Hénault and Sylvestre's categorical rejection of the American model, makes claim to a Québécois literary culture distinct from that of English Canada – a consideration that the Canada Council as a national funding body had continually to negotiate.

When Peter Dwyer next proposed the idea of a poet-in-residence at a university, the reaction was “mixed,” and a consensus on the value of such a position was not forthcoming: “To be successful such an arrangement would have to permit complete informality,” the minutes record. “Mr. Layton felt that there was already too much academicism in Canadian literary life.”<sup>14</sup> Irving Layton's concern that the literary and academic communities were too enmeshed perhaps stemmed from his observation that so many Canadian writers were already employed in the university system. Both Layton and Earle Birney were (at times, reluctant) university instructors, and Birney was particularly outspoken on the subject of the academic life as a hindrance to the creative one. A professor of English and catalyst behind the creation of the Creative Writing Department at the University of British Columbia, Birney was in spring 1961 “visiting professor” or “writer-in-residence” at the University of Oregon, a post that involved teaching creative writing and giving lectures and readings.<sup>15</sup> The idea that a successful residency must allow for “complete informality” was probably informed by Birney's experience in the United States.

Due to the mixed reaction to the idea of poets-in-residence, pursuing the



establishment of author residencies was not among the resolutions emerging from the meeting. However, despite the reservations expressed, within several years, a number of the participants were directly involved in fledging residency programs. In 1965, three such positions were launched simultaneously: Birney was named poet-in-residence at the University of Toronto, a post he created through direct negotiation with president Claude Bissell (see Chapter Three); Irving Layton became poet-in-residence at Sir George Williams University in Montreal; and Peter Dwyer gave his stamp of approval to the first Canada Council writer-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick. With the exception of Layton, who conducted a weekly poetry workshop, the writers had no teaching duties. For the first time in Canada, universities were supporting authors solely to write fiction and poetry.

The council's reasons for welcoming the participation of universities in supporting writers and risking increased "academicism" were as practical as they were ideological. As the prosaic epigraph to the *Annual Report* of 1962-3 asserted: "The Canada Council is only one partner in the enterprise of patronage." The corporate language was indicative of the council's general mood: its declared priority that year was generating money for artists. Seeking matching grants from other patrons was just one method of securing revenue; stimulating markets was another. Another initiative of the early 1960s, the Council's Policy for Creative Artists, sought to do just this. Under the policy, funds were dispersed to organizations to showcase the work of creative (as opposed to performing) artists; they enabled the council "to permit the commissioning of new music and new pieces of sculpture, to enable new plays to be written and performed, to make matching purchase awards to be given to art galleries, and to provide some aid to

publication.”<sup>16</sup> Artist-in-residence grants were also awarded under this policy. It is clear that the council envisioned a promotional role for the host universities, who became at once patrons and promoters of literary authors through the new program.<sup>17</sup>

Patronage and promotion were, however, only two aspects of the university’s multifaceted role in relation to literature. In terms of the council’s mandate, the university’s established functions as arbiter of taste and “fountain-head ... of communal activities” were potentially more problematic. Whereas the council maintained a role as a disinterested patron, its “partner in patronage” was not bound by the council’s criterion of artistic considerations before all others; more specifically, in choosing authors to support, the university was not bound to prioritize *writing* (creation) over *producing literature* (consecration), the latter being its more accustomed function. As well, unlike the council, a university provided its support to writers with an expectation of service in return. In terms of the writer-in-residence program, universities were both partners in and beneficiaries of the council grants.

Peter Dwyer’s proposal of poets-in-universities notwithstanding, the real impetus for the council’s author residency program came from a professor of English at UNB. In the years preceding the formalization of the council’s writer-in-residence program in 1967, the council, in the course of its grant-by-grant support to UNB, quickly confronted the complex questions surrounding the objectives and intended beneficiaries of residency grants.

UNB’s spearheading of the program was due to the efforts of New Zealand-born Canadianist and author Desmond Pacey, who throughout his thirty-one-year tenure at the university enriched its reputation as a locus for literary activity, in all its aspects, from

“grass roots” to “ivory tower.” The alma mater of Charles G.D. Roberts and Bliss Carman, by 1965 UNB was home to the Bliss Carman Society, which in 1945 had launched a publication that had given birth to both the literary magazine *The Fiddlehead* (est. 1953) and Fiddlehead Poetry Books, a long-running series which published 300 titles between 1955 and 1981 under the editorship of professor Fred Cogswell. Several faculty members, including Pacey, taught creative writing long before the English Department introduced a formal specialization in the subject. Pacey himself was a short-story writer and poet, as well as a literary critic, publishing, among many other titles, the seminal study *Creative Writing in Canada: A Short History of English-Canadian Literature* (Ryerson, 1952; rev. eds, 1961, 1967). In part due to Pacey’s influence, the UNB English department was also a rare example of a literature department supporting graduate research in Canadian literature in the 1960s.<sup>18</sup>

UNB was thus both a nationally significant site for the Canadian literary institution and a focal point for the arts community in New Brunswick. Since 1958, it had been host to Canada Council resident musicians and artists, and, in his efforts to secure a writer-in-residence position, Pacey would assure the council of the value of its contribution in maintaining the university as a centre for the arts in the region: “Each [artist-in-residence position] seems likely to become a permanent feature of our university life, and each has certainly enhanced the appreciation of the arts among students, faculty, and citizens of the province.”<sup>19</sup> Council support for resident artists had, in several cases, served as a catalyst for the university to maintain such positions with its own funds.

In October 1964, Pacey, then head of the English department and dean of graduate

studies at UNB, approached Canada Council director A.W. Trueman at a National Conference of Canadian Universities meeting in Ottawa to discuss the possibility of establishing an author residency, a non-teaching position, at the university. Upon his return to Fredericton, Pacey made a formal request to the council, offering a short list, devised by an English departmental committee, of seven potential poets and prose writers, including Norman Levine, Leonard Cohen, Alden Nowlan, and Ernest Buckler.<sup>20</sup> Pacey requested a grant of \$5,000, which would be supplemented by \$1,000 from UNB to aid in the writer's travel and incidental expenses.

Levine, who had been living in England since 1949, was at the head of the list in every sense of the word. Pacey, an enthusiastic reviewer of his work,<sup>21</sup> knew him personally and had in fact already approached him with an outline of the proposed duties:

The arrangement would be roughly as follows: the writer would live in Fredericton, would give two or three public lectures or readings during the year, and would mingle with students and staff, but would have most of his time free to get on with his own writing.<sup>22</sup>

By the beginning of November, Levine had agreed to the terms, and both the writer and the university awaited the council's decision, which was to be made at the next convening of the council in the spring. Despite UNB President Colin Mackay's concern that the application might suffer due to a lack of New Brunswick representative on the council,<sup>23</sup> Levine's appointment for 1965-6 was approved at the meeting of 15-16 March 1965. The council, which looked upon the appointment as an innovative way to benefit both artist and audience, offered the following rationale for the grant:

The present suggestion ... represents the first time that the University has proposed to appoint a writer and we think the application therefore deserves to be considered something of a fresh approach. The Resident Writer is a fairly familiar figure on university campuses in the United States but the experiment has not, to our knowledge, been attempted in Canada. One reason may be that so many of our writers are actually university teachers. None of [the shortlisted writers], of course, holds an academic appointment.

We are sympathetic to this proposal as an interesting experiment, and we think that the kind of people under consideration merit such an appointment and would have a stimulating effect on university life.<sup>24</sup>

The council, however, remained cautious, noting in the minutes that arts program officers “should assess the usefulness of this project before entertaining any future application for its continuation.”<sup>25</sup> The news was relayed to Pacey, along with a request for “a full report on the programme” upon its conclusion.<sup>26</sup>

On 3 December 1965, Pacey reported that the residency was progressing well and emphasized Levine’s contributions to the university and surrounding community, mentioning the residency’s effect on the author’s creative work almost as an afterthought:

Mr. Levine has been here since September 1 and has so far given one public lecture and is scheduled to give two more. The University library has arranged a special display of his books and manuscripts. Mr. Levine is available for student interviews two days a week, and there is a constant stream of students in and out of his office on those days. He has spoken on two occasions to my class in Creative Writing and many of them have shown him samples of their work. Mr.

Levine has also been active in cooperating with the *Atlantic Advocate*, the magazine published here in Fredericton, and is contributing a monthly column to it and acting as its literary advisor. In many ways, then, Mr. Levine has been a stimulating presence here, and I believe that he is making much progress on his own novel.<sup>27</sup>

It is worthwhile to note that Pacey used a very different emphasis when describing the residency to prospective poet-in-residence Alden Nowlan three years later: “Norman Levine used the post almost exclusively as a means of getting on with his own writing: he made himself available to students two or three mornings a week, but he did not build up much of a student following.”<sup>28</sup> It is clear that Pacey’s assumptions about his audiences’ respective interests affected the emphases of the differing descriptions.

Pacey was already thinking of the upcoming academic year and had invited Levine to stay on in Fredericton. Apparently satisfied with the shape the residency was taking, the council readily agreed to renew the appointment, but, upon learning of Levine’s decision to return to England, requested a new application for Levine’s replacement. Once again, Pacey provided a short list, this time consisting of (in order of preference): Brian Moore, Earle Birney, Gabrielle Roy, Ernest Buckler, Yves Thériault, and Phyllis Webb.<sup>29</sup>

The council again looked favourably on UNB’s application. The Project Grant Application of 21 February 1966, an internal document, summarized Levine’s activities, added a comment that the writer had appeared on both radio and television, and provided UNB’s history of supporting resident artists. On 1 March 1966, the council notified UNB of the approval of a \$5,000 grant for “one of the persons mentioned in Professor Pacey’s

letter of January 24th or some equally distinguished Canadian author.”<sup>30</sup>

At this point, however, the easy confluence of the council’s and the university’s ideas about the purpose of residency grants evaporated. Pacey’s short lists, characterized by senior, internationally established writers (Levine and Moore, in particular, were arguably better known outside Canada than within it) and younger, emerging writers (Nowlan, Cohen, Webb) from far-flung regions and both major language groups of the country, indicated a desire on the part of UNB to perform the university’s consecrating function and recognize, or perhaps lay claim to, those authors who could serve as touchstones in the construction of the national literature – a goal which seemed to fit snugly with the council’s aim of supporting the ongoing work of Canada’s best talents. However, whereas in both 1965 and 1966 the council had assiduously assessed UNB’s qualifications to hold residency grants, it had never made explicit its criteria for suitable writers. Moreover, as the documentation illustrates, the council had never overtly prioritized the benefit to the writer over that to the institution. While the *terms* of the first writer-in-residence appointments at UNB, whether by accident or design, became the models for later residency positions (no teaching duties, considerable free writing time, and light obligations in the university and/or community), the *objectives* of the program for both the writer and the institution were not so easily determined.

Pacey’s efforts to secure a new author had not gone as smoothly as they had the previous year. Brian Moore and Earle Birney were unavailable, so Pacey drew up what appears to have been an alternative short list, retaining Gabrielle Roy, Ernest Buckler, and Yves Thériault, and adding Raymond Souster, Miriam Waddington, Dorothy Livesay, and Alden Nowlan. (It is unclear if Phyllis Webb was ever contacted.) Nowlan

was reported to be too ill to take on the position, and the other writers, with the exception of Livesay, declined the nomination.<sup>31</sup> On 21 April 1966, Pacey notified the council officers of Livesay's availability and requested final approval to proceed with the appointment.

The council's arts staff, however, balked. Their initial displeasure at Livesay's nomination was compounded with irritation at Pacey for having copied his letter to the council to the author, in effect presenting the appointment as a *fait accompli*: as one staff member observed, "Professor Pacey is not giving us the right to decide why we are doing this and what priority should be established."<sup>32</sup> The existing documentation on the council's negotiations with Pacey, though limited,<sup>33</sup> is important for illustrating the council's then implicit aims for the program, as well as the potential for conflicting agendas of the participating institutions and individuals.

The recorded objections to Livesay do not take the form of a negative evaluation of her body of work, nor do they hinge on the author's lack of current literary activity: as Pacey's original application made clear, Livesay was still actively writing and publishing. Nor could ageism completely explain the council's reluctance to support the poet, as several of the authors on Pacey's approved list were also in or beyond their fifties. Livesay's birth year was 1909, as was Gabrielle Roy's; both Birney (b. 1904) and Buckler (b. 1908) were her seniors.

The council's objections seem to focus on Livesay's apparent lack of relevance to the directions of contemporary poetry. A two-time Governor General's Award winner (1944, 1947) and recipient of the Lorne Pierce Medal of the Royal Society of Canada (1947), by 1965, Livesay, author of eight monographs, was in what now could be seen as



the intermission between the two acts of her career. Carl F. Klinck's *Literary History of Canada*, which appeared in 1965, included over a dozen references to the writer, though it contextualized her as a member of the older generation of practising authors, those still "occasionally creative," according to Munro Beattie's essay on poetry from 1950 to 1960,<sup>34</sup> and, in Desmond Pacey's own contribution, one of the "holdovers from the previous decade."<sup>35</sup> Pacey had edited a retrospective collection of her poetry, *Selected Poems of Dorothy Livesay (1926-1956)*, which had been published by Ryerson Press in 1957, and her poems were included in the major Canadian anthologies of the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>36</sup> While her socialist and women-centred themes were not fashionable in the cold war, pre-second-wave feminist era, Livesay was actively involved in the literary community as a poet, mentor, writing instructor, and editor through the 1960s and beyond; some of her landmark poetic works, including *The Unquiet Bed* (1967), had yet to make an appearance. Counteracting her considerable activity, however, critics were constructing her place in Canadian letters as a member of the early 20th-century modernist cohort – a slightly ironic legacy, given Livesay's exclusion from the landmark *New Provinces* (1936) – or as a social protest writer of the Depression and the 1940s. Pacey's qualified praise in his introduction to her *Selected Poems* said it best: "Dorothy Livesay is one of the most important poets of her Canadian generation – of that generation which came to maturity between the two World Wars."<sup>37</sup>

Reluctant to appoint Livesay, yet in the unusual position of having already approved the residency grant, the staff consulted with council director Jean Boucher and contacted consultants in the arts field, formally and informally, for their opinions regarding the appropriateness of Pacey's choice. Here as well, clearly articulated grounds

for suitability are not reflected in the respondents' documented comments. Earle Birney (member of the council's Advisory Arts Panel) credited Livesay with a continuing regional importance, which he indicated might not be obvious outside British Columbia. Robert Weaver (no official connection to the council) – with whom Livesay was currently embroiled in a protracted battle over poetry reading practices on CBC Radio<sup>38</sup> – juxtaposed Livesay with Margaret Laurence and pronounced the latter a better choice. Laurence, then living in England, was engaged in journalism (“which she hates”) and was said to be considering returning to Canada. Her recommendation met with excitement from the council staff, but received a cold reception from Pacey. Disappointed but undeterred, the staff sent a letter to Pacey providing Laurence's address in England.<sup>39</sup>

Pacey was annoyed by the hesitation to approve Livesay and frustrated by suggestions of alternative writers. In response to another name proffered “as an example of someone who was ... a very creative and active writer [and one] who needed money,” Pacey countered that the author was known to drink too much and was “not the right kind of man to have in the student environment since students drink enough as it is.”<sup>40</sup> Seemingly unsure as to the council's specific objections, he offered reasons why Livesay was an appropriate choice. In a letter of 27 April 1966, he explained the lead-up to the appointment and added, “It would seem to be good policy to follow a male writer of prose with a female writer of poetry.” He summarized Livesay's literary qualifications, outlined her proposed program of work, and added, apparently on the council's cue, “she badly needs an income for next year.” By highlighting UNB's effort to fairly represent artists by gender and genre, providing evidence of Livesay's literary activity, and alluding to her financial need, Pacey thus endeavoured to address all possible bases of the

council's objections – all except the unspoken one, that Livesay was not on the forefront of contemporary letters. Again, it appears that the staff did not explicitly raise this objection, and, sidestepping the presentation of Livesay's current literary work, suggested that Laurence's financial need was greater. Insisting on his present obligation to Livesay, Pacey responded that he would be willing to consider Laurence for the following year.<sup>41</sup>

There is no indication that Laurence was made aware of these efforts on her behalf; however, Livesay was growing concerned about the council's silence surrounding her appointment. On 8 June 1966, she wrote from Toronto requesting that the status of her grant be clarified:

You will understand that it is now too late for me to apply to teach creative writing anywhere else. My writing projects are all in order and the Ryerson Press has confirmed that they are interested in publishing the three different books I have in hand – two of them nearing completion and one to be written.<sup>42</sup>

That same day Peter Dwyer had written to Pacey, formally approving the funding for Livesay's residency, but conveying a sense of dissatisfaction with the process of awarding this grant:

I understand that you did not entirely appreciate the council's intentions in awarding grants of this kind. ... Its intention was to provide a year of security to artists who *need* such support to continue their creative work unhampered by financial worries and other duties. We welcome of course the benefits that accrue to students through such an arrangement but we consider these to be secondary to the main purpose. Since few awards of this kind are made, the council naturally expects that those selected *should have a particular need* and should be at a

particularly productive stage in their career.

I know you will understand that our hesitation in this matter implies no disrespect for Mrs. McNair [Dorothy Livesay]. We felt simply that this nomination appeared to stray from the council's original purpose in making such grants to the extent that the choice may have been dictated more by the interest of the students than *the need of the author*. We also felt that there might be other writers of substance who might be *in greater need* of such an opportunity at this juncture.<sup>43</sup> (my emphasis)

Here, for the first time, the council articulated an intention for the interests of the writer to supersede those of the university. While a degree of disingenuousness may be noted in its handling of this affair – financial need has never been a criterion in the award of arts grants; the suggestion that Pacey was thinking primarily of his students similarly distracts from the central issue – the council may be said to have had a case for refusing Livesay in the spring of 1966. It is useful to consider the use of the word “need” in Dwyer’s letter: beyond financial need, it denotes the need of time in which to write, the need to build an audience, the need to attract the attention of literary critics. To the eyes of the literary establishment, Livesay had none of these needs. Her place, built on her work to the end of the 1950s, had been assigned.

Pacey, however, would not allow the crux of the Livesay debate to be explained in Dwyer’s terms and reasserted the relevance of the university’s own judgment and interests. He responded on 10 June:

I do not think there is any real conflict of opinion as to the purpose of this award.

When I originally discussed the appointment of a writer in residence with Dr.

A.W. Trueman, it was our thought that such an appointment would benefit both the writer and the university ... Both of these purposes were served by Mr. Norman Levine's term here and I feel sure that they will also be served in the case of Dorothy Livesay.<sup>44</sup>

From the point of view of a Canadianist, the appointment of Livesay, a writer associated with the previous generation, may not appear markedly different from the appointment of Nowlan or Cohen, writers approaching the height of their powers, or Roy or Buckler, established authors whose cultural impact was still resounding loudly in academic and literary circles. Whether or not Pacey anticipated further significant work from Livesay, as it turned out, UNB's support for Livesay set the course for the second half of her career and fresh critical approaches to her work as a whole, to which Pacey himself contributed through his reviews of the late 1960s.<sup>45</sup>

Livesay completed her term as writer-in-residence at UNB and stayed on for a second year, on salary from the university, as visiting professor of creative writing. Her involvement in fostering the Fredericton writing community has been well documented.<sup>46</sup> Livesay's prolific literary output from the mid-sixties until her death in 1996 resulted in a steady stream of new critical assessments of her body of work. The interest of feminist critics in Livesay's career and oeuvre, which began in earnest in the 1980s, has continued to the present day; Di Brant's essay examining *The Husband*, a novella written during Livesay's tenure at UNB, is one of the more recent examples of this sustained academic interest.<sup>47</sup> Significantly, UNB's support of Livesay would lead to more residency offers. Livesay's appointment in New Brunswick would be her first of five Canada Council-supported residencies, the last of which was at the University of Toronto in 1982-3.

For the council, whose guiding philosophy is to nurture rather than prescribe activity in the arts, the Livesay debate represents perhaps an embarrassing moment. However, both the resolution of the situation and the council juries' decisions in subsequent years indicate a reluctance to override the judgment of applicants, that is, the host universities. Perhaps the most salient point to be gleaned from the Livesay debate is that it provided an early opportunity for the council, if it so chose, to precisely define the parameters of its writer-in-residence program. However, although the situation resulted in the fuller articulation of some of the program's goals, specific criteria for eligible writers, not to mention desired outcomes of residencies, were left open.

The universities' prerogative to choose resident authors based on the institution's own criteria was fully in evidence within a decade. In the early years of the program, the council considered as potential writers-in-residence those authors who qualified for "Senior" (later "A") arts grants, the eligibility criteria of which were loosely defined. In 1976, senior-level artists were deemed those "who have made a significant contribution over a number of years and are still actively engaged in their profession. ... Writers should have had a significant number of works published."<sup>48</sup> By the close of the 1970s, however, even these guidelines seemed unduly restrictive. When lesser-known writers were proposed, council staff sought out expert opinions to strengthen the nominations or supplied them themselves, in every instance supporting the university's original applicant, or, in the occasional event of a last-minute change of plans, the proposed substitute.<sup>49</sup> While the worthiness of each individual could be, and indeed was, argued, more to the point is the sway of the applicant institutions. As Marian Engel, writing in support of a non-senior-level writer proposed as a residency candidate in 1979,

categorically stated, “The [university] ought to have the writer it wants.” The implication was that university English departments were also in a sense “juries,” not dissimilar in composition to the council’s own appointed juries, equally knowledgeable about contemporary writing, and more attuned to the literary culture of their own region. The council evidently agreed with Engel’s statement and had in fact already dropped the criterion. The staff member replying to Engel reported that appointments were no longer decided on the “simple and at times erroneous question of level.”<sup>50</sup>

In 1980, Frank Milligan observed that there were two fundamental concepts on which the Canada Council based its operations: the arm’s length principle (the council’s autonomy from government) and the jury system. Contending that “artists judging artists, though far from a perfect system, is the best there is,”<sup>51</sup> the council annually appoints juries, typically consisting of three or more “arts professionals” working in the language (English or French) of the applicant. While the council’s process has been characterized as a peer adjudication system, it has also sometimes come under attack: in 1985, George Woodcock observed that the council drew its arts jurors from a “close circle of ‘safe’ figures,” predominantly male, middle-aged (with an average age of fifty-nine), established “member[s] of the literary establishment,” and speculated that such juries might not be in tune with new artistic experiments.<sup>52</sup> Sharon H. Nelson, quoted earlier, contended that “invisible colleges” permeated the juries and penalized applicants, notably women, who were outside the largely university-based literary institution; in 2005, Robert Yergeau also posited the existence of “académies invisibles,” drawn from juries, consultants, civil servants who staffed the council, and the council itself, and the interactions, largely unknown, of these agents.

Until 1985, when juries specific to the writer-in-residence program were established, decisions for these appointments rested with the Senior (later, “A”) Arts Grants juries. These literature juries were composed of academics, publishers, broadcasters, and professional writers. An examination of the Canada Council’s annual reports reveals that, while there was a high percentage of academics on these juries to the 1980s, after this time, they were fewer in number, as the presence of authors who had writer-in-residence experience became more pronounced and the gender balance more even. In the case of writers-in-residence, where the academic perspective is redoubled through the point of view of the council’s co-patron, the juries’ increasing orientation toward self-employed writers may be seen as offering a more broadly based perspective.

Although, for writers-in-residence, the dominance of the academic community in choosing authors was to be somewhat mitigated in the 1970s when public libraries began their own residency programs, the influence of universities in shaping the writer-in-residence concept has been paramount. The continuing ties and overlaps between academic and literary communities are also in evidence through the profile of the authors supported by the program, a topic to which I will return at later point in this chapter.

### **Artists and audiences**

The council’s recognition of universities as co-patrons and beneficiaries of writer-in-residence grants was one factor that ensured the program would be dually directed toward author support and community enrichment, despite some efforts to give priority to the artist. Over the next few decades, the council would examine its obligations to diverse “communities” – regional, social, and artistic – both for their own interests and for the



interests of working authors.

The year 1967 saw an expansion and reorganization of the Canada Council. Departments for music, opera, dance, theatre, visual art, and writing were established. To head the Writing Section, council director Jean Boucher approached Naïm Kattan, recently of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, a writer who was sensitive to both English and French literary traditions, as well as to international contexts of contemporary literature. Kattan, who would head the section for 23 years and become associate director of the council in 1990-1, was a key figure in the development of programs in support of literature, which witnessed substantial growth, especially through the 1970s. In a recent telephone interview, Kattan recalled the excitement of the era and explained that he viewed the council's offerings holistically, seeing each new program – author residencies, public readings, aid to publishers, and grants for translations – working in concert “to make Canada know itself through writers.” While building the infrastructure to support a living literature was paramount, for Kattan, the writer represented the key personage around which the council's offerings configured.<sup>53</sup> Observing the centrality of the university as a formative and supportive environment for North American authors, Kattan formalized the writer-in-residence program immediately upon his appointment.<sup>54</sup>

Despite Kattan's contention that the council's proliferating programs created a support network, over the years the council has faced accusations that it has neglected the needs of the individual author.<sup>55</sup> Within its own operations, as well, the council has demonstrated a certain ambivalence regarding the artist's priority. The council celebrated the Centennial and Expo 67 with an emphasis on supporting the creative artist, and in

1967-8, bursaries and awards, which “help writers to write,” were said to represent the “most important assistance the Council can give” to literature.<sup>56</sup> In 1969-70, however, awards for senior-level artists were suspended, delivering a particularly hard blow to the writing program, which was the only section to suffer a loss in total funding from the previous year. Although the grants were reinstated the following year, over the next decade, high inflation rates meant that the real monetary value of awards was decreasing.

Despite the Trudeau government’s austerity measures and the resulting financial constraints on the council, the writer-in-residence program continued to expand, as the council juggled the competing responsibilities of supporting artists and increasing public exposure to the arts. While defining its own role in national development in the arts, the council was also striving to situate its position in a field of multiple current benefactors and potential benefactors from all levels of government and the private sector.<sup>57</sup> Artist-in-residence programs, then, met many of the council’s expressed goals, from cost sharing to diffusing arts support across the country, from directly supporting writers to promoting their work to targeted readerships. Although on an application-by-application basis the council continued to emphasize the creative needs of the writer over other considerations, in its publications writer-in-residence appointments were routinely paired with the rapidly expanding Public Readings Program as examples of “artist-audience communication subsidized by the Council.”<sup>58</sup>

It is in this divide between the artist-focused language of the council’s correspondence and the audience-focused discourse of its publications that the writer-in-residence program sailed through this tumultuous period of projected expansions and unforeseen contractions in the council’s sphere of activity. In 1977, the council’s

academic section prepared to separate to become its own granting council. Foreseeing its future as an institution fully devoted to the arts, the council published a discussion paper, *Twenty Plus Five*, which combined an overview of the work accomplished in its twenty-year history with ideas to stimulate policy discussions that could form a five-year plan. *Twenty Plus Five* did not recommend any radical departure from the council's mandate or basic forms of support, but explored potential "new directions" to build on the existing framework. One question it posed was "to what extent [is] the art reaching people?"<sup>59</sup> It pondered the idea of expanding its artist-in-residence programs to include artists-in-the-schools and specially trained "community artists,"<sup>60</sup> noting that such "encouragement of regional development ... and the support of ... the arts in education" would require collaboration with other government agencies.<sup>61</sup> In its sections focusing on arts outreach, *Twenty Plus Five* conflated audience and amateur, arguing that in order to encourage a wider population to appreciate and financially support art, the public must have some personal investment in the artistic enterprise. The discussion paper quoted council director Charles Lussier's contention that in order to "popularize or democratize culture it is not sufficient to make high-quality cultural 'products' available. It is also necessary that people themselves participate in the *process* of cultural creation." New or expanded arts education programs, Lussier continued, should "foster the creative process and not merely provide information; [they should] promote personal enrichment through art, not merely acceptance and appreciation of the art created by others."<sup>62</sup> The mentorship elements of author residencies put the writer-in-residence program in line with the policy directions explored in *Twenty Plus Five*. In light of the economic realities of 1977-8, however, the document was a dead letter.<sup>63</sup>

The first federal review of cultural policy in Canada since the Massey Commission, the Federal Cultural Policy Review (Applebaum-Hébert) Committee, created in 1980 and issuing its report in 1982, approved of the council's programs in support of authors, with their mix of direct grants and promotional and educational programs. The report maintained that writers continued to be "under-remunerated" for their contributions, but noted "[f]inancial reinforcement ... is not the only issue at stake: we would also like to see increased exchange between our two literatures and expanded professional development opportunities for writers."<sup>64</sup> Like the Massey commissioners, the writers of the report sought to integrate *the authors themselves* into the social milieu. Writer-in-residence programs helped to "offset the Canadian writer's isolation and to bring authors closer both to their readers and to each other." Both the Canada Council residencies and the provincial artists-in-the-schools programs were said to be "highly beneficial activities for all concerned"; the commission recommended their continuation and, if financially feasible, expansion.<sup>65</sup> Like *Twenty Plus Five*, the Applebaum-Hébert report viewed greater audience involvement as being ultimately beneficial to artists themselves. In the council's annual report of the following year, incoming chairman Maureen Forrester picked up a related point when she argued that arts advocacy was as valuable to artists as money: "People need to understand that being an artist is a noble profession – not just an indulgence. Artists interpret society to itself. ... People need to see connection between art and their own lives."<sup>66</sup>

In the early 1980s, the most discussed initiative for direct support of authors was the Public Lending Right (PLR) Commission, a program that recompenses authors for the use of their books in lending libraries. In the planning stages for several years, PLR was

implemented under the aegis of the council in March 1987, making Canada the thirteenth country to establish a public lending rights program.<sup>67</sup> Meanwhile, other initiatives of the Writing and Publishing Section focused more widely on promoting authors and fostering audiences. In October 1981, the council announced the creation of the Short-term Writer-in-Residence Program, which grew out of its popular Public Readings Program. The latter program paid airfare for writers on reading tours,<sup>68</sup> and the short duration of their stops had led some event organizers to ask the council to help them “make maximum use of a writer’s presence” in their communities.<sup>69</sup> Short-term residencies of four to ten days were thus introduced to allow time for touring writers to participate in “community events, such as readings, speeches, formal or informal discussions with residents of the community, and for the reading of manuscripts.” Unlike long-term residencies, no part of the stipend was intended to support the author’s own writing.<sup>70</sup> Originally envisioned as a program of special interest to isolated communities, the short-term residency program was open to all organizations eligible for hosting public readings, including post-secondary institutions, galleries, museums, and libraries. Because the local organizer paid one third of the writer’s stipend, the council advised that up to a third of the writer’s time could be spent in school visits. The program tripled in size in its first three years in operation, from twelve residencies in 1981-2 to thirty-six in 1983-4. Just as the Public Readings Program had been less popular in French-speaking Canada, short-term residencies were also slow to get off the ground in Quebec, resulting in a special promotion to francophone residency hosts in the fall of 1985.<sup>71</sup>

Another community-oriented program that gained popularity in the 1980s was the library writer-in-residence program. In 1978, the council launched another “pilot project”

by matching the City of Regina's grant for Eli Mandel's residency at the Regina Public Library (see Chapter Two). Between 1978 and 2000, 52 appointments (nearly 17 per cent of the total number of residencies) took place at public libraries, of which 37 were located in the Prairies. There were also five writers-in-residence based out of the Whitehorse Public Library in the Yukon, to date the only territory to have hosted a Canada Council resident author.

Library appointments, due to the promotional machinery behind them (library public relations staff), length (longer residencies tend to gain momentum), and institutional purview, bring with them a calendar of public obligations for resident authors which can be exhilarating or onerous or both. Some library residencies have met with an immediate and immense demand. In 1981-2, the first writer-in-residence at the Saskatoon Public Library, Anne Szumigalski, for example, fielded 350 enquiries and conducted 242 consultations, in addition to delivering readings, visiting schools, and leading creative writing workshops.<sup>72</sup> Council staff responding to library residency reports sometimes expressed mild amazement that participating authors had managed to do any of their own writing, but did not request that libraries scale back the public service component. The libraries' community emphasis and the council's seeming acceptance of this direction for the residency program caused some concern in both literary and university communities. One author encouraged the council to strike a committee to review library appointments, arguing that stricter guidelines for these residencies might be necessary.<sup>73</sup> (It is uncertain whether this committee ever materialized.) As the author residency program grew competitive in the 1980s, universities sometimes felt that their applications suffered due to their perceived lack of a community component and hastened

to highlight their writers' services to both town and gown.<sup>74</sup> In response to suggestions that the council favoured library programs over university ones, the council staff maintained that juries evaluated each residency application on "the strength of the proposed candidate and the programme of activities drawn up by the host organization."<sup>75</sup>

While this expansion was taking place, the economic health of individual authors-in-residence was steadily declining. In 1978-9, when the median income from all writing sources for professional writers in Canada was \$7,000,<sup>76</sup> a full-year residency provided a salary of \$17,000, of which half (\$8,500) came from the Canada Council. In the same year, by comparison, the median salary for assistant professors in Canada was \$28,829; the median salary for lecturers and instructors, however, was more comparable at \$18,000.<sup>77</sup> In principle, the total salary of a writer-in-residence was to remain on par with a "Senior" or "A" arts grant, even after the parallel eligibility requirements had been dropped. Between 1980-1 and 1987-8, however, the council's contribution to residencies remained frozen at \$9,000, despite the increase of the "A" grant to \$30,000 in 1987-8. In contrast to the \$18,000 salary of a full-time writer-in-residence in 1987-8, the median salary of an assistant professor in the humanities was \$37,006, and that of the rank "next below" assistant professor was \$32,011.<sup>78</sup> While the council had the option of increasing the writer-in-residence stipend to keep its levels of support parallel, it chose to fund more residencies (and secure more matching grants) instead of raising the value of the grant for a smaller number of writers.<sup>79</sup> The stipend was increased to \$12,000 in 1988-9, where it remained until the program's suspension in 1993. When the program was reinstated three years later, the council's contribution to a full-year appointment jumped to \$20,000, although it is perhaps significant to note that a smaller percentage of full-year positions

were being funded than in previous years.

In 1993, an \$8.7 million decrease in the council's arts budget led to the "suspension" of the writer-in-residence program, as the council reassessed its programs both "globally" and within each section. The Writing and Publishing Section was especially hard hit, suffering a \$1.8 million loss that represented 13 per cent of its 1992-3 budget. In an effort to minimize damage to its grant programs, the council declared two priorities: first, the support of individual artists for the creation and production of new work, and, second, assistance to arts organizations that "perform, produce, publish, and exhibit the arts."<sup>80</sup>

Support for continuation of the writer-in-residence program was strong from within the Writing and Publishing Section, where officers were prepared to redistribute administrative costs of the promotion-oriented National Book Festival to keep the program alive. Section head René Bonenfant's rationale for doing so was based on the cost-sharing aspect of the program, its heightening interest among francophones, and the lack of provincial patrons outside Ontario to continue the program in the council's absence. If the program were to be cancelled, he concluded: "C'est l'écrivain qui sera le premier perdant."<sup>81</sup> When the program's suspension looked certain, the officer directly in charge of it wrote, "I am enough of an optimist to believe that this programme will, as it should, be re-instated promptly as it is first and foremost a programme of direct assistance to writers." As if to underscore the strength of her optimism, at the same time the officer recommended a new budget allotment of \$225,000 (a \$93,000 increase from the current year) to allow for two "long overdue" steps: the increase to the council's level of support and the creation of five positions for non-fiction writers.<sup>82</sup>



The suspension of the writer-in-residence program provoked media attention and letters of protest which highlighted multiple and diverse aspects of the program.<sup>83</sup> The Writers' Union of Canada publicly "deplored" the council's decision, pointing out that the program's cancellation meant "writers will lose not only the Canada Council funding but also the matching funds from the hosts."<sup>84</sup> Paul Gaudet, chair of the English Department of the University of Western Ontario (UWO), also made this point, adding that even an interruption in federal grant monies jeopardized the preservation of internal university funding.<sup>85</sup> Despite these concerns, a number of hosts, including UWO, Concordia University, University of Alberta, UNB, and Regina Public Library, maintained their programs in the council's absence, through provincial and/or institutional funds.

Despite the testimonies by writers and administrators that the program's primary value was to authors, when the writer-in-residence program was reinstated in 1997, it was with a narrowed emphasis, no longer on the writer, but on the writer's public. A news release stated that host organizations "will be encouraged to involve communities not normally exposed to Canadian literature and to develop innovative ways of fostering a public appreciation for Canadian writing." The benefit to writers was described, in the words of Gordon Platt, head of the Writing and Publishing Section, as a chance to "expand their market opportunities."<sup>86</sup>

Following this call for the involvement of new "communities," however, between 1997 and 2000, many familiar institutions continued to take part in the program, including some of the most frequent hosts, Concordia, UWO, and Saskatoon Public Library (see Table 1.1), several of which had increased stipends to offer salaries above

the council's minimum requirement. Provincial and institutional support was also in evidence, in some cases allowing for residencies that extended beyond the period funded by the council. In this aspect, the council's strategy of democratizing and decentralizing the program had been successful – a wide array of institutions across Canada now valued writer-in-residence positions, and more patrons were available than ever before.

**Table 1.1**  
**Canada Council for the Arts Writer-in-Residence Program:**  
**Institutions hosting highest numbers of residencies, 1965 to 2000**

Rank	Institution	Total	Full	Half/ Other*	Full Equiv
1	University of Ottawa/Université d'Ottawa	36	0	36	18
2	Concordia University (incl. Loyola College & Sir George Williams U.)	27	17	10	>22
3	University of Western Ontario	25	17	8	21
4	University of Toronto (incl. Erindale College)	24	19	5	21.5
5	University of Alberta	20	18	2	19
6	Saskatoon Public Library	16	13	3	>14.5
	Université de Québec à Montréal <sup>87</sup>	16	10	6	<13
7	Regina Public Library	14	12	2	>13
8	University of New Brunswick	13	11	2	12
9	University of Waterloo	10	10	0	10
10	University of Windsor	9	9	0	9

Source: Canada Council for the Arts, Annual Reports, 1965/6-1999/2000.

Note: \*Includes one-quarter and three-quarter appointments.

In applications and residency reports of the late-1990s, the participating organizations stressed the community and/or interdisciplinary activities of their invited writers. Authors were typically described as serving or linking “communities,” whether regional, cultural, social, or professional. Regions, such as Newfoundland, Yukon, and

French-speaking Quebec, that had previously had minimal involvement, were now more in evidence, as were, as I discuss further below, resident authors of diverse linguistic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. While many residencies were still based in universities, some were located in untraditional faculties and schools. Biologist/poet Harry Thurston's residency at Acadia University in the spring of 2001, for example, attempted to "cultivate dialogue between the Arts and Science communities in environmental fields traditionally perceived as the exclusive domain of the Sciences,"<sup>88</sup> while social worker/poet Glen Downie's residency in Medical Humanities at Dalhousie University in the fall of 1999 was intended to focus on such things as "conflicts and complementarities of language (medical language, literary language, patients' language); the therapeutic use of writing ...; writing poetry and diaries as a method of expression by medical professionals; and writing for private use and writing for publication."<sup>89</sup> Significantly, the media response to Downie's residency revealed a fascination with the mixing of what were perceived as separate worlds. Since the medical school's artist-in-residence program had been in existence since 1992, the administrators admitted feeling "overwhelmed" by the extent of the media interest in the first poet-in-residence,<sup>90</sup> which included a profile on CBC Television's *The National*.<sup>91</sup>

To summarize the author residency program's contributions to artists and audiences, author residencies have expanded to involve a widening array of host institutions and residency activities, in an effort to create greater awareness of and a wider support base for working authors. A disadvantage to this expansion is that individual council-sponsored authors have suffered economically through smaller baseline salaries, even as their employment opportunities have increased. This

“community” outreach has endeavoured to extend the program so as to penetrate diverse regional, cultural, social, and educational milieus. However, while many of the community-oriented initiatives of the 1980s, such as library placements and short-term residencies, gestured toward serving smaller centres, in practice the programs continued to be concentrated in larger urban areas and universities.

### **National and regional literatures**

The Canada Council has long maintained that, as a federal funding body, it has special powers and responsibilities, and that provincial support, though also necessary, has different priorities. In the case of the writer-in-residence program, the national perspective of the council may be seen to manifest itself in an effort to reach all regions, as well as to reinforce linkages between regions through the country’s artists. Recalling his arrival at the council in 1967, Naïm Kattan reflected, “I observed that the country was different countries” in terms of the literature it produced. The writer-in-residence program for him represented “a way for a writer to know the other regions. Not for him to betray his region, but to put it in [the context of] the whole.” Although I can find no records documenting this goal as part of the council’s official policy, Kattan confirmed he conceptualized the program as one that encouraged cultural communication between regions.<sup>92</sup>

The aim of encouraging cross-pollination, however, met with some practical impediments. To begin with, the regions did not share in the council’s offerings equally. While *Twenty Plus Five* asserted in 1978 that “artistic excellence” was not incompatible with “democratization and decentralization,” it noted that further efforts were needed to

promote the council's services more evenly across the country: "In principle, every region has equal access to Canada Council support, but it has become increasingly obvious that many areas are unaware of the programs available to them."<sup>93</sup> Tabulation of writer-in-residence appointments by province (see Table 1.2) shows that more university residences have taken place in Ontario (home to the greatest number of universities) than any other province, while the library program has been highly concentrated in Saskatchewan. Nova Scotia has hosted surprisingly few appointments; the city of Halifax, though home to a number of universities and colleges, has hosted only three, albeit highly innovative, residencies: Glen Downie's at the medical school of Dalhousie University (1999), and two earlier appointments at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (1987-8, 1988-9). It is probable that lack of awareness of the council's programs and shortages of financial resources in some provinces have together led to the clustering of appointments in Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and Alberta: when the data are broken down by full-year and shorter appointments to show residencies in terms of full-year equivalent appointments, in most cases, the provinces advantaged by population base, wealthier institutions, and provincial support clearly emerge as the centres of residency activity. The low standing of British Columbia may be partially explained by the late entry of province's largest university, University of British Columbia (UBC), to the program, in 1999.

**Table 1.2**  
**Canada Council for the Arts Writer-in-Residence Program:**  
**Residencies by province and territory, 1965-2000**

Province/Territory	Number of Author Residencies*			Full	Half/ Other <sup>o</sup>	Full Equivalents
	<i>Univ./College</i>	<i>Library</i>	<i>Other</i>			
Ontario	114	9	1	58	66	91
Quebec	52	1	2	34	21	34.5
Saskatchewan	2	31		33		33
Alberta	25	2		21	6	24
New Brunswick	16			11	5	13.5
Manitoba	12	4		9	7	12.5
British Columbia	15			1	14	7.5
Nova Scotia	6			4	>2	>5
Newfoundland	5			2	3	3.5
Prince Edward Island	5			2	3	3.5
Yukon		5			5	2.5
Northwest Territories						0

Source: Canada Council for the Arts, Annual Reports, 1965/6-1999/2000.

Notes: \* Includes full, half, and other appointments. A full-year appointment split between two authors, then, has been counted as two appointments.

<sup>o</sup> Includes one-quarter and three-quarter appointments.

The cost of travel alone has been a significant hindrance in bringing writers to less populated areas. The council requires hosts to pay for writers' travel expenses, a challenge that is more pronounced for universities situated at Canada's geographic extremities. The University of Prince Edward Island, one of the few universities in the Atlantic Provinces participating in the program, raised this point several times with the national body.<sup>94</sup> In some cases, authors themselves have shouldered the financial burden of travelling cross-country, many of them financing two households for the period of their residencies. Some writers have reported just breaking even or even losing money by accepting appointments.

Despite the financial obstacles, the mobility of some authors who have held several or more appointments is remarkable: it would be difficult, for example, to identify Patrick Lane and Sandra Birdsell as western writers judging by their residency histories: both Lane (with six appointments) and Birdsell (with seven) have worked in no fewer than five provinces. The appearances of Atlantic writers in the West and British Columbian writers in Ontario and Quebec have been due in part to the habit of some hosts of “auditioning” authors through the Public Readings Program. While it is difficult to specify the current provinces of residence for the participating authors, a study of their birthplaces reveals nearly sixty per cent of the writers were born outside Ontario and Quebec, the provinces hosting the lion’s share of residencies.

Residencies for French-speaking authors have been fewer in number and less widespread, largely concentrated in Ottawa and Montreal. In supporting francophone authors, the bilingual University of Ottawa was for many years unique in the country. Beginning in 1971, the university’s French and English literature departments made a joint application to the council, splitting a full-year appointment between two writers. There is no indication, however, that any interdepartmental or other collaborative events resulted from these appointments. Meetings between the two literary cultures were occasionally encouraged at Concordia University, when Michel Tremblay’s residency in 1981-2 resulted in mutually appreciative reports by writer and university. Reflecting on the opportunity to observe and to work with a new generation and a different culture within his own city, Tremblay wrote, “Je suis très heureux de cette année passée chez les anglophones que je connaissait en fait très peu.”<sup>95</sup> Ten years later, Gail Scott, “an anglophone writer with close connections to the francophone writing community,” hoped

with her residency at Concordia to teach young anglophone writers “new ways ... of perceiving what it means to be a writer in Montréal today.”<sup>96</sup> More recently, Scott has also had the distinction of becoming the first writer-in-residence in an English department at a French-language institution, Université de Montréal, in 2000-1.

Francophone writers represent just over 19 per cent of the council’s 192 writers-in-residence. These 37 writers account for 44 appointments (just over 14 per cent) over the program’s history. One reason for the slow acceptance of the program in Quebec has been suggested by Naïm Kattan, who contends that there is a lack of tradition in the French-speaking cultures worldwide for residencies and public reading tours.<sup>97</sup> Unilingual French-language institutions did not begin hosting residencies until 1984; since this time, 22 appointments have taken place at French-language institutions, the vast majority of these based in Montreal. The council has supported only one francophone library residency, in Sherbrooke, Quebec, in 1991-2, and in recent years has supported residencies at the Camp littéraire Félix, a writers’ retreat, the first in the province, established in La Pocatière, Quebec, in 1990. A higher percentage of francophone residencies continued through the 1990s (between two and four yearly from the late 1980s), indicating a growing level of interest in Quebec, in particular, at Université de Québec à Montréal, which has maintained its program, since 1984, through various sources.<sup>98</sup>

Beyond the Canada Council’s support, provincial and other sources of funding have been important for residency programs, at first, especially for the hiring of local writers, and later for the creation and maintenance of stable programs. UNB’s practice of supporting local and out-of-province writers dates to the 1970s, when the university



supported both a “permanent” writer-in-residence, Alden Nowlan, and other writers on a yearly basis. Nowlan, who began his tenure at UNB with three years of council funding, relied on university and provincial government backing to continue his residency from 1971 until his death in 1983. While Nowlan’s personal relationship with then premier Richard Hatfield appears to have been the catalyst for the inauguration of this support, the New Brunswick government continued to support the university’s writer-in-residence program through the 1980s and ’90s, with its alternations between Atlantic writers and writers from other regions. In the West, the University of Alberta, from the launch of its residency program in 1974, augmented its share of the writer’s stipend with funds from the alma mater fund and private donations. The hiring of Prairie writer-in-residence Maria Campbell in 1979-80 secured an additional grant from Alberta Culture; and, as in the case in New Brunswick, the province continued its contributions to out-of-province writers from this date. Two other Western universities, the University of British Columbia and the University of Calgary, launched residencies through private endowments in the 1990s. The University of Calgary’s Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme, as well as the provincial programs of Saskatchewan, is discussed further in Chapter Two. The significance of public and private sponsors became increasingly evident in the 1990s, when a number of institutions supplemented or replaced Canada Council funding with other financial sources. Several new, “regional” programs, including Markin-Flanagan and Berton House in Dawson, Yukon, have adapted a national focus in their conceptualization and an international one in the writers they have chosen to support.

## **“Representing” the national literature**

A final significant aspect of the council’s writer-in-residence program is the issue of “representation”: which authors and literary works has the council supported since 1965, and what does this portrait reveal about how the “national literature” has been constructed? Both a form of recognition and a means of support for future creation, the program has helped shape the literatures that have emerged from Canada in the second half of the century.

With few exceptions, the program has favoured active writers in early- to mid-career. The median age of first-time Canada Council writers-in-residence is forty-five, and instances of older generation writers are rare. The residencies of Morley Callaghan at the University of Windsor in 1971-2 and F.R. Scott at Concordia University in 1979-80 are exceptions, and, as the archives reveal, neither residency resulted from a developed plan: Callaghan was a last-minute substitution for Margaret Atwood, and Scott for Gary Geddes. Reflecting the contemporary interests of many literature departments (see Chapter Four), residency programs have been largely focused on the here and now.

That being said, the program has been used as a form of recognition for Canadian literary stars, especially those who have achieved international success. The writer-in-residence program has fortified the construction of the national literature by repatriating Canadian writers who made their mark abroad. In addition to Norman Levine, discussed earlier, from Europe the council program also lured Mordecai Richler, Margaret Laurence, Mavis Gallant, and Elizabeth Smart. While the “test years” of Richler and Laurence foreshadowed their eventual return to Canada, Gallant and Smart continued to reside overseas. The appointments of Gallant and Smart, at the University of Toronto and

the University of Alberta respectively, were framed in terms of building Canadian recognition of these authors. Smart's residency in 1982-3 coincided with the first Canadian edition of her 1945 work, *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept* (Deneau, 1982), while Gallant's appointment in 1983-4 followed the donation of her papers to the University of Toronto in 1981 and her receipt of the Governor General's Award for *Home Truths* that same year. Both writers toured extensively while in Canada. Other writers returning to Canada for residency appointments have included Robert Kroetsch, Brian Moore, Clarke Blaise, and Janette Turner Hospital.

Although the council recognizes that the market does not support all forms of literature equally, its program has not been especially geared toward supporting work offering high symbolic but low economic returns. Many resident authors have worked in a range of genres, both commercial and literary. Creative prose (novels and short stories, including work in popular sub-genres, such as science fiction) is the largest category, accounting for some of the activity of 115 authors (nearly 59 per cent). One-hundred-and-three writers-in-residence (over 53 per cent) wrote poetry, perhaps the least lucrative genre, while only 47 authors (less than 25 per cent) wrote plays. Twenty authors wrote for non-print media, including radio, television, and film. Sixteen authors in total wrote for children or young adults, with the majority of the appointments of authors working primarily in these fields taking place in the 1980s and 1990s, in both library and university settings. The increasing level of inclusion of children's authors indicates both growing public recognition of the importance of books for young people, and the emergence of juvenile literature as a field of study.<sup>99</sup>

The exclusion of non-fiction writers from arts awards and writer-in-residence

grants was perhaps the greatest point of contention emerging from the Writing and Publishing Section's policies to the 1990s. Despite the recommendation of the Applebaum-Hébert Commission in 1982 that the council "put assistance to professional nonfiction writers on the same footing as assistance to fiction writers, without diminishing support to the latter,"<sup>100</sup> the council resisted acting on this recommendation, though it did initiate a two-year program for non-fiction writers the following year.<sup>101</sup> Naïm Kattan has contended that the reluctance to open the door to non-fiction was the council's effort to uphold its mandate to support art over academic or scholarly writing.<sup>102</sup> Maintaining this distinction appeared to be particularly significant for the residency program. Once non-fiction writers became eligible for arts awards and public readings in the 1980s, the Writers' Union of Canada mounted pressure on the council to similarly open up the residency program to non-fiction writers.<sup>103</sup> However, their inclusion for residencies was not finally approved until 1993, the moment the program was suddenly suspended.

The residency program had, however, already supported non-fiction writing. Authors such as Austin Clarke (University of Western Ontario, 1982-3), Samuel Selvon (University of Alberta, 1983-4),<sup>104</sup> Irving Layton (Concordia University, 1990), and Elisabeth Harvor (Carleton University and Ottawa Public Library, 1993) openly expressed their intention to work on memoirs or family histories while in residence; Silver Donald Cameron wrote books and booklets on the Fortress of Louisbourg while at the College of Cape Breton; and Geoffrey Ursell wrote "Distant Battles: 1885," a script for a CBC television program about the Northwest Rebellion, while at the Saskatoon Public Library in 1984-5. From 1965 to 2000, 54 resident authors (28 per cent) were

writing and publishing non-fiction. Beginning with Norman Levine, many such authors were engaged in literary criticism and editorial work, producing essay collections and literary anthologies. The program has thus supported many forms of literary activity directed toward both popular and specialized audiences.

The “academicism” of many writer-in-residence activities reflects the educational background of the authors favoured for these positions. Many of the writers chosen from the late 1960s also had academic careers: George Bowering interrupted his doctoral program at the University of Western Ontario to become writer-in-residence at Sir George Williams University, where he remained for several years as lecturer in American poetry; Michael Ondaatje had been teaching at Glendon College, York University, for two years when a Canada Council grant allowed him to drop his classes but remain at the college as writer-in-residence from 1973 to 1975; Robert Kroetsch left his tenured appointment at the State University of New York, Binghamton, for a series of three residencies in the Western provinces held between 1975 and 1977. While Bowering and Ondaatje, both in their early thirties, were just embarking on dual creative/academic careers, Kroetsch and others were firmly established in the overlapping professional spheres. Of the 192 authors holding writer-in-residence positions between 1965 and 2000, at least 135 had a minimum of some post-secondary education.\* At least 66 writers (34 per cent) held graduate degrees, and many of these authors alternated residencies with teaching appointments at the post-secondary level. The handful of self-educated resident authors, those without high school diplomas, commented, at one time or another, on the seeming irony of their university positions. Upon his appointment at UNB in 1968, Alden Nowlan wrote to Desmond Pacey requesting that Pacey ensure “that the PR man, in any

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\* I have been unable to find data on the educational backgrounds of 40 writers.

official announcement, doesn't emphasize my lack of formal education. I'm neither proud nor ashamed of it, personally, but to some people, in the circumstances, it would make me sound like a bit of a freak."<sup>105</sup> Nowlan, whose background was in journalism, represented an increasing minority of Canadian literary authors who emerged from this professional sphere.

The preference for highly academically qualified authors may also have had an impact on the gender division of the authors the program has supported. The significant gender imbalance in the residency program documented by Sharon H. Nelson in 1982<sup>106</sup> has been adjusted over the years. Of the total number of writers participating in the program between 1965 and 2000, 110 (over 57 per cent) have been male, a margin of difference that is equally pronounced when we examine the number of overall residency appointments held by men (57 per cent). More significant, however, is how this division breaks down: while half-year and shorter appointments are almost evenly split between the sexes, 105 of the 168 full-year grants awarded (62.5 per cent) have gone to men. Moreover, the gender division in the prestigious Canada-Scotland Writer-in-Residence Exchange has been much more pronounced: only two of the thirteen Canadian authors taking part in the exchange were women (as were three of the thirteen Scottish writers). Correspondence between officers at the Canadian and Scottish arts councils reflects discomfort with these numbers, but also indicate that the awards reflect the applications received. Despite pressure to correct the gender imbalance in the exchange, the Canada Council refused to introduce a policy to do so, noting that the annually appointed juries were free to act at their own discretion.<sup>107</sup>

Encouraging the development of non-traditional writing groups, including writers

from diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, was voiced as a consideration in the 1980s. In *The Canada Council in the 1980s: The Applebaum-Hébert Report and Beyond* (1983), the council noted that “diversity ... is a principal and desirable characteristic of Canadian culture” and that “federal arts funding must recognize and respect the diversity of the Canadian population.”<sup>108</sup> From the 1980s, the council was especially concerned with promoting cultural diversity “both within the organization and in its response to the cultural community.”<sup>109</sup> Having established an Equity Coordinator and an Advisory Committee for Racial Equality, as well as a First Peoples Secretariat and a First Peoples Committee on the Arts, the council confirmed its commitment to supporting artists from culturally diverse backgrounds and, in particular, Aboriginal artists in its strategic plan of 1995.<sup>110</sup> In the 1990s, several Aboriginal names appear on the writer-in-residence juries, and of the few Native and Métis writers participating in the program, such as Maria Campbell, Tomson Highway, Daniel David Moses, and Eden Robinson, the majority were involved in this decade. Host universities have also identified a need to bridge the gap between their traditional spheres of cultural activity and those of minority groups. At the University of Windsor in 2000-1, for example, Lillian Allen was said to be “an extraordinary high-profile figure both on campus and off, forging links amongst the campus community and between the campus and the broader community, in particular the Afro-Canadian and Afro-American community in this our broader region, and the local arts community.”<sup>111</sup> Allen, working in a non-traditional genre (dub poetry) and new multimedia formats, also enabled the entry of new literary forms to the academic forum.

Overall, the composite portrait of the Canadian resident writer – male, cosmopolitan, university educated, and engaged in a range of traditional literary activities

aimed at general and specialized audiences – that has emerged from this study may be said to reflect and reproduce a particular image of Canadian authorship. As I discuss further in Chapter Three, however, as cultural diversity in contemporary authorship is increasingly reflected in residency appointments, there is evidence to suggest that such appointments will encourage the emergence of new voices through the authors' mentoring of local writing communities.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has traced the development of the Canada Council writer-in-residence program and offered an overview of its appointments from 1965 to 2000 by institution, region, and participating authors. I have demonstrated the significance of the universities as co-patrons of residency grants, beginning with the crucial role in the launch of the program played by Desmond Pacey and UNB in the 1960s; outlined the council's efforts to establish broad community and regional bases for the support of authors; and explored how the aims and concerns of the program have broadened to include authors working in a greater range of genres and representing more cultural communities than ever before. A nationally significant program in terms of its construction of public authorship and its monetary support for writers, the council's writer-in-residence program has had, and will continue to exert, an important influence on the creation and recognition of Canadian literatures.



**SASKATCHEWAN AND ALBERTA:  
FOSTERING WRITING IN THE WEST**

What a wonderful sound – Writer in Residence – and what images are conjured by uttering these words. To be a writer, or a lover of writing ... is to feel you occupy a place in the history, the present, and the future of literature.

*Shirlee Smith Matheson, writer-in-residence,  
Calgary Public Library, closing talk, 10 December 1998.<sup>1</sup>*

Since the creation of the Canada Council's national program, writer-in-residence programs have also drawn on provincial, municipal, institutional, and private support. While the emergence of local government funding is one of the most significant factors in financing the arts in Canada since the 1970s, in recent years instances of private patronage have added new texture to the cultural landscape. A cogent illustration of the multiplying benefactors for the arts and their impact on the cultural field is offered by the development of Canadian literary prizes in the twentieth century. The venerable Governor General's Literary Awards, launched in 1936 by the Canadian Authors Association and taken over by the Canada Council in 1959, have been increasingly complemented in recent decades by the addition of genre- and region-specific awards that celebrate and help support authors in their respective communities.<sup>2</sup> In the field of fiction, the Giller Prize, established by Toronto entrepreneur Jack Rabinovitch in honour of his late wife, literary journalist Doris Giller, in 1994, became upon its launch both the

country's most lucrative literary prize and a strong promotional tool for its nominated and winning titles, as well as an indication that Canadian writing had achieved a popularity and prestige almost unimaginable to writers of previous generations.<sup>3</sup> Grants for writers, residency grants among them, have followed a similar trajectory: by the close of the century, patrons for authors may be found at all levels of government, as well as in public institutions and the private sector.

The provincial context, comprehending local government policies and programs and their interactions with the larger regional culture, is of paramount importance to working writers, especially those living outside the major centres. In publicly funding the arts, two Western provinces had a head start on other parts of Canada, including the federal government. Even before the Massey Commission was created, Saskatchewan and Alberta had cultural funding agencies of their own, outcomes of the CCF and Social Credit policies of the 1940s. As Susan Crean observed in 1976, the political environments in these provinces "lent a perspective to the social importance of culture, the like of which did not develop in other provinces for another 15 or 20 years."<sup>4</sup>

As Northrop Frye has argued, "the question of identity, so far as it affects the creative imagination, is not a 'Canadian' question at all, but a regional one."<sup>5</sup> In both practical terms and philosophical outlook, Saskatchewan and Alberta represent their own cultural environments that support and shape the role of the author in specific ways. From mid-century efforts to encourage cultural production and to stimulate markets for their own artists, by the end of the century, Saskatchewan and Alberta had active and distinct literary cultures characterized by contributions of public funding and, in Alberta especially, private endowments. The vibrant writer-in-residence programs in both

provinces are examples of how provincial benefactors have attempted to foster grassroots literary activity in order to contribute to both regional and national literary cultures.

In Saskatchewan, the cradle of the co-operative movement and medicare, provincial support for literature has been broadly conceived, taking into account a writing community that is geographically dispersed and at various levels of development. The Saskatchewan Arts Board, modelled after the British Arts Council and thought to be the first of its kind in North America, was established by the CCF government of T.C. Douglas and began operations in 1948.<sup>6</sup> The new board, which reported to the Minister of Education, was charged with “[making] available to the people of Saskatchewan opportunities to engage in ... drama, the visual arts, music, literature, handicrafts, and other arts,” offering “leadership in such activities,” and promoting “the development and maintenance of high standards for such activity in the province.”<sup>7</sup> During its first year, the board announced that its primary obligation was to “people living in the smaller towns and villages.”<sup>8</sup> Concerned with training artists and working co-operatively with other cultural organizations, the board undertook early activities in the literary arts such as running summer creative writing workshops and literary competitions and distributing recommended book lists, compiled by members of the Saskatchewan Library Association and produced in order “to promote more and better reading.”<sup>9</sup> Taking by far the smallest share of the board’s resources (in 1964, for example, less than \$675 was spent in support of writing, of a total grants, projects, and administrative budget of nearly \$90,000<sup>10</sup>), the board’s efforts in this area were nonetheless expansively aimed at the enrichment of audiences, as well as novice and more experienced writers.

By the final decade of the century, the populist approach to supporting the

province's literary interests at all levels was still strongly in evidence, as was the public sector's concern with integrating the provincial with the wider national culture. While the paternalistic language of the arts board act had been considerably diluted by the revision of the act in 1984,<sup>11</sup> in part because the board was divesting its resources and decision-making to a wider range of arts organizations, some run by the artists themselves, the contributions of government agencies in shaping the environment for the arts have remained extensive and significant. In a 1993 survey of book publishing in Saskatchewan, Rowland Lorimer observed that the scope of government programs for local publishing, themselves widely focused to offer support for the publication of "both Canadian and Saskatchewan writers on a full range of topics in a full range of genres," was echoed and complemented by the contributions of other institutions – educational, cultural, and commercial – which broadly supported "the reading, writing, and book community."<sup>12</sup>

A writer-in-residence program – symbolically and materially productive, benefiting professional and novice writers and their readers – is thus in many ways a natural fit for Saskatchewan. In terms of the development of residency programs in the province, two factors have been especially significant. The first was the founding of the Saskatchewan Writers Guild (SWG), an organization hatched at a Saskatchewan Arts Board conference in 1969, which quickly became one of the largest and most politically active writers' groups in the country. Funded by the board and, from 1974, the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund, the guild encompasses established, emerging, and unpublished writers, and attempts to provide relevant services for all its members. The second factor was the provincial public library system, which was by 1975 among the

most developed in Canada. Supported by the province and local municipalities, the Saskatchewan Public Library has continually revealed itself to be, in the words of Don Kerr, “co-operative, sophisticated and committed to providing, according to its central legislative mandate, equitable library service to Saskatchewan people.”<sup>13</sup> Through the SWG’s introduction of library residency programs in Regina and Saskatoon, homes of the two municipal public libraries that have had the highest, or close to the highest, per capita expenditures in the country consistently since the 1940s,<sup>14</sup> Saskatchewan pioneered and has hosted by far the largest number of library-based Canada Council writers-in-residence in the country. Strongly motivated to support practicing artists and to encourage local activity, the province also introduced a Resident Artists Program that, from the 1980s, placed author-animators in small communities for yearlong tenures.

In Alberta, public support for writers has manifested differently. As in Saskatchewan, provincial funding for the arts began early with the creation of a Cultural Development Branch in the 1940s. Literature, however, was not a priority of the branch and received very little support beyond the publication of an anthology celebrating the province’s golden jubilee in 1955 (Saskatchewan, having also been established in 1905, produced a similar work). In 1971, the Conservative government of Peter Lougheed established a Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation, known as Alberta Culture from 1975, and Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, from 1987 to 1992. The department’s Literary Arts Branch focused its funding programs on commercial writing, including popular fiction, romance, radio and film scripts, and magazine journalism, helped writers to find markets for their work, and offered modest grants for beginning writers.<sup>15</sup> These programs were especially successful in the rural areas of the province

and encouraged a great deal of activity in this sphere.<sup>16</sup> In 1984, the introduction of government-operated lotteries enabled the creation of three arm's length organizations dedicated to the support of the visual, performing, and literary arts, respectively. The Alberta Foundation for the Literary Arts (AFLA, later subsumed by the umbrella organization, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts [AFA, 1991-]), with an initial annual budget of \$800,000 (augmented to \$1 million in 1986 and to \$1,325,000 in 1988), introduced a relatively generous program of grants to writers, publishers, and libraries, encompassing the producers of literary fiction, poetry, and drama.<sup>17</sup> Among the AFLA's offerings were writer-in-residence grants for libraries, colleges, and universities. While these grants contributed to residences in far-flung communities, from Cold Lake to Jasper to Fort McMurray, the lion's share of the writer-in-residence funding between 1985 and 2000 went to the larger centres of Lethbridge, Edmonton, and Calgary. Moreover, while some funding for these cities went to public libraries and colleges, the most substantial grants (up to \$10,000) typically went to the universities. Unlike in Saskatchewan, where provincial funding has fostered sustained residency programs outside the universities, in Alberta, the programs at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary have become the major sites for such activity. Using a combination of funding from the AFLA, Alberta Culture, the Canada Council, and, increasingly, private donations, the University of Alberta (U of A) has maintained one of the longest continually running writer-in-residence programs in Canada. While the University of Calgary had hosted publicly sponsored residencies as early as 1968, it launched what would become its acclaimed program of visiting international writers and young Canadian resident authors in 1993. The Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme was established and in part

shaped by Calgary entrepreneurs Allan Markin and Jackie Flanagan, who endowed the university with \$1 million earmarked for the support of creative writing. Amidst scattered and, often, sporadic programs at colleges and libraries, the high-profile residency programs at U of A and Calgary have come to represent, at once, provincial and national institutions, widely sought after by writers across the country.

This chapter explores the impact of public and private patrons in Saskatchewan and Alberta to the year 2000, and illustrates how the particular goals of these sponsors have created diverse writer-in-residence programs and, by extension, distinctive literary cultures in these provinces. Because of the rich historical record for the various programs in Saskatchewan, I will begin with a detailed examination of writers-in-residence in that province.

## **Saskatchewan**

Writer-in-residence programs in Saskatchewan are author-driven and, for the most part, concerned with nurturing writing outside university campuses. Aided by substantial provincial support, these programs aim to strike a balance between serving established and beginning writers, and between fostering local activity and creating links between it and the national literary community. A province whose Aboriginal population was 14 per cent, and growing, in 2001,<sup>18</sup> Saskatchewan has in recent years made increased attempts to support and recognize the work of Native writers and storytellers.

The most significant lobbyist for and administrator of residency programs in Saskatchewan is the Saskatchewan Writers Guild. The SWG was born from a conference organized by the Saskatchewan Arts Board and attended by fifty writers, along with

representatives from the board, the Canada Council, the CBC, and “the major Canadian publishing houses,” at Fort Qu’Appelle, SK, in August 1969.<sup>19</sup> Immediately, the guild applied itself to fostering a provincial culture conducive and receptive to the arts and artists, and quickly established itself as a kingpin between its broadly based membership and the national writing community. Its constitution, adopted in 1970, stated the goals of: improving the standard of writing in Saskatchewan, improving the status of Saskatchewan writers, and encouraging liaison with other provincial and federal agencies concerned with writers and writing standards.<sup>20</sup> In April 1970, the guild had 84 members; by 1986, it would have 500 members, a permanent full-time staff of six, and an annual operating budget of half a million dollars.<sup>21</sup> The SWG has served both its urban and rural membership through its newsletter, which first appeared in 1969 and is now known as the *Freelance*; its literary magazine of Saskatchewan and non-Saskatchewan writing, *Grain* (Saskatoon, 1973-); competitions; workshops; and an annual conference. As Rowland Lorimer rightly observes, arts activism and organization in Saskatchewan has looked both inwards and out, bolstering local activity and bridging it into the Canadian mainstream.<sup>22</sup>

Library writers-in-residence. The writer-in-residence programs that began at Regina Public Library and Saskatoon Public Library in the late 1970s and early ’80s at the instigation of the SWG offer a case in point. While the Canada Council writer-in-residence program had been in existence since 1965, twelve years later an appointment had yet to take place in Saskatchewan. To tap into the national program, the SWG required a local patron to provide a matching grant, and so looked, not to a university or college, but to a municipal government, making use, as the arts board had in the past, of a



provincial milestone to further the cause of creative writing. In August 1977, with the capital city of Regina's diamond jubilee approaching the following year, the guild's executive director, Nik L. Burton, put forth the SWG's suggestions of various literary activities to mark the event to the Cultural Committee in charge of the municipal celebrations.<sup>23</sup> The proposals, as befitting a guild concerned with writers in all stages of their careers and their audiences, included a writer-in-residence position for a Saskatchewan author at the Regina Public Library for 1978-9, three short-term grants to local writers for projects focusing on Regina, four writing scholarships at the Saskatchewan School of the Arts, a book fair, and series of public readings.<sup>24</sup>

Although the city was initially reluctant to contribute the \$11,500 requested for the writer-in-residence, a project related loosely at best to the celebration of municipal history, Burton argued that the program was an investment in *the future* of the arts community, as well as Regina's opportunity to set a national precedent as patron of a resident author.<sup>25</sup> Apparently persuaded, the committee approved the funding for all the guild's projects. Several months later, however, the committee saw its celebrations budget cut by almost fifty per cent and announced that a sizable portion of the planned events would have to be scaled back or cancelled. At the emergency meeting of the committee and the affected organizations, Burton withdrew all the guild's proposals but that of the writer-in-residence, a position which "would not only be of untold benefit to the writers and the potential writers of the city; it would be a landmark for the participation in the arts by a civic government."<sup>26</sup> The residency was once again approved by the city on 14 December 1977.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, choosing the candidate for this position of "landmark" civic

importance rested with the SWG. At a meeting of 6 November 1977, members of the executive had offered suggestions for potential writers-in-residence, all recognized names who lived in or were from the province: John Newlove, Anne Szumigalski, Sinclair Ross, Eli Mandel, singer/songwriter Joni Mitchell, and Rudy Wiebe.<sup>28</sup> It is unclear if all these individuals were contacted, but of those who agreed to let their names stand, Eli Mandel, born in Estevan, SK, founding president of the League of Canadian Poets, Governor General's Award-winning poet, and professor of English at York University, was chosen as the writer-in-residence at an executive meeting of the guild in February 1978.<sup>29</sup> Mandel's status as a native son of Saskatchewan, his national reputation, and his academic credentials made him a good candidate for the guild, the city, and the federal patron.

An awareness of both Canada Council and community expectations influenced the SWG's development of the new position throughout the planning stages. In devising the terms for the appointment, the guild kept in mind the council's guidelines for author residencies; that is, eighty per cent of the writer's time was to be reserved for his own creative work. The public component of writer's work in the library, however, was of special interest to the local patrons, who imposed a tighter structure upon it than the typical council-funded university appointment. In the early months of 1978, the guild, in co-operation with the library and Mandel, formalized specific requirements for the twelve-month residency: three hours a week (including mandatory evening hours) for individual consultations, two public readings, two writing workshops, and ten school visits.<sup>30</sup> The writer was invited to take on additional readings, workshops, and school visits as he pleased, with the understanding that outside remuneration should be sought

for such activities. These base requirements have remained in practice at the library until the present day, although the length of the residency was shortened from a full calendar year to nine months at RPL in the late 1980s, bringing the library appointments more in line with those of universities, which have typically run for an academic year, that is, through the fall and winter/spring semesters.

From the outset, the Regina Public Library's support for the project was enthusiastic. When approached by the SWG to act as host to the author, chief librarian Ronald Yeo had promptly agreed to donate a room for the writer in which to work. When the space proved difficult to find, the library constructed a new office on the mezzanine level of its central branch building.<sup>31</sup> The library's commitment to the program in the first year would also entail hosting a reception for Mandel and providing advertising material. In subsequent years, the library would also assume the cost of the resident authors' salaries. For 1978-9, however, the city picked up the full \$8,500 for Mandel's salary and an additional \$3,000 for his moving expenses. The matching \$8,500 (the maximum allotment) was secured from the Canada Council.

From its launch, the program at Regina Public Library attracted the public's attention, perhaps as an outcome of the extensive media exposure the program received, which would in years to come span local newspapers, television, and radio, as well as the popular national CBC Radio program, *Morningside*. Following some initial grumbling in a letter to the *Regina Leader-Post* that the city would be better occupied with potholes than with poetry, Mandel himself encountered adequate public debate about the position for him to reflect seriously on its significance to the community.<sup>32</sup> Despite the modicum of scepticism, Mandel found a receptive audience and eager clientele in Regina,

launching what would soon be thought of, at least locally, as “the busiest residency in all of Canada.”<sup>33</sup> The guild’s report to the city on Mandel’s tenure noted both the library’s and the Canada Council’s satisfaction with the appointment and their willingness to continue funding writers-in-libraries. For its part, the guild credited the residency with having provided guidance for aspiring writers – in later years, E.F. Dyck, editing a collection of essays on Saskatchewan writing, would claim that many Saskatchewan writers had been “shaped as much by [the] teaching [of Mandel and his successor, John Newlove] as by their poetry”<sup>34</sup> – and for “the much improved image the writing profession has gained in Regina because of the extended presence of a professional writer.”<sup>35</sup> The distinction of a civic appointment had also heightened the profile of authorship and Saskatchewan literary culture outside the province. While in residence, Mandel observed that on his cross-country reading engagements he was identified not just as a professor from York University but as the writer-in-residence from Regina, making that position “part of the life of the country.”<sup>36</sup> Over the next two decades, the longevity of the RPL program would also contribute to the force of its national presence; it would continue, almost without interruption, to the 1990s, when the suspension of Canada Council funding turned the yearly appointment into a biennial one (see Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1**  
**Writers-in-Residence at Regina Public Library, 1978-2000**

Year	Writer	Genres	Origin of writer*
1978-9	Eli Mandel	poetry	Ontario
1979-80	John Newlove	poetry	Across Canada
1980-1	Andreas Schroeder	prose	British Columbia
1981-2	Maria Campbell	prose	Alberta
1982-3	Janet Lunn	children's literature	Ontario
1983-4	Seán Virgo	prose	British Columbia
1984-5	Lorna Crozier	poetry	Saskatchewan
1985-6	Edna Alford	poetry	Saskatchewan
1986-7	Sharon Pollock	drama	Alberta
1987-8	Mary di Michele	poetry	Ontario
1988-9	Kristjana Gunnars	poetry and prose	Iceland; Oregon, USA; Prairie Provinces
1989-90	Wayne Johnston	prose	Newfoundland
1991-2	Celia Lottridge	children's literature	Ontario
1992-3	John Sorrell	poetry and prose	British Columbia
1994-5	Dianne Warren	prose	Saskatchewan
1996-7	Myrna Kostash	non-fiction	Alberta
1998-9	Tim Lilburn	poetry	Saskatchewan
2000 fall	Sandra Birdsell	prose	Manitoba

Source: Regina Public Library, "Regina Public Library/Canada Council for the Arts Writer-In-Residence," 2003.

Note: \*As given by RPL. Mandel, Newlove, and Campbell were Saskatchewan-born.

The next two writer-in-residence appointments in Saskatchewan were also community-based ones. In 1980-1, Lorna (Uher) Crozier became a Canada Council resident author, based nominally at Cypress Hills Community College in Swift Current, but who, as I discuss further below, was, in effect, resident author for the entire Swift Current region. The next writer-in-residence program, established at Saskatoon Public Library (SPL), shared many similarities with that of RPL, but differed in some key areas. With Saskatoon's centenary approaching in 1982, the guild put a similar process in motion to appoint a resident author as part of the celebrations in that city. It approached city hall's Century Saskatoon Society, followed by the SPL, as early as 1979.<sup>37</sup> Although

the guild, as it had in Regina, offered to select the author for the position, Frances Morrison, chief librarian and secretary to the library board, while relaying the library's enthusiasm for the project, also indicated its desire to be part of the selection committee.<sup>38</sup> The resultant committee, which consisted of representatives from the guild, the library, and interested groups contacted by the library, namely, the Saskatchewan English Teachers Association and the University of Saskatchewan, held its first meeting on 27 October 1980.<sup>39</sup> Unlike in Regina, where the guild had also recently introduced a selection committee drawn from its own members, in Saskatoon the SWG had minority representation.

The interests of the Saskatoon committee, chaired by the library's Mary Emson, are reflected in its first discussions about the residency and its perceived goals. When it came to choosing the inaugural writer, some committee members resisted the idea of immediately accepting the writer nominated by the guild, Anne Szumigalski, reasoning that the appointment of a SWG member might appear as a biased choice on the part of the guild, that her writing was too difficult for high school students, and that a writer with a greater national profile should be considered. One committee member also pointed out that, whomever was appointed, the writer's work might attract the condemnation of Renaissance International, a Canadian-based Fundamentalist movement that had mounted dozens of censorship challenges since its foundation in 1974.<sup>40</sup> This last point, however, appears to have been put to rest immediately, as the prospect of screening every potential writer "for dubious content" appeared both undesirable and unworkable. Amidst this community-focused discussion, the guild representative, Brenda Riches, adopted the strategy of emphasizing Szumigalski's skills as "a good and inspiring teacher" who was

devoted to Saskatoon. However, in the interests of conducting a transparent hiring process and despite the closeness of the Canada Council's deadline for applications, the committee decided to widely advertise the position by sending notices to writers' organizations and university and college English departments across the country, as well as to invite individual writers, including Szumigalski, to apply.<sup>41</sup>

Due in part to the strength of the local support for her nomination, Szumigalski's name was put forward with the library's application to the Canada Council, bolstered by a statement of the guild's "complete support" for the writer and letters from Ronald Marken of the University of Saskatchewan, Robert Kroetsch of the University of Manitoba, and Pat Kraus, editor of *Grain*.<sup>42</sup> The guild's statement emphasized Szumigalski's mentoring abilities: founder of several local poets' groups, teacher at the Saskatchewan School of the Arts, and generally acknowledged to have acted as "an unpaid writer-in-residence" in Saskatoon for many years, Szumigalski was said to be the "right and proper choice" for the civic appointment.<sup>43</sup> The application was successful, and Szumigalski became the SPL's first writer-in-residence in 1981-2, launching what would become another long-standing library residency program. Announcing her appointment in the *Freelance*, the guild encouraged other communities to follow the example of Regina, Swift Current, and Saskatoon.<sup>44</sup>

Over the years, SPL has hosted a higher percentage of Saskatchewan-based writers than has Regina, which perhaps reflects the priorities of the programs' respective patrons. Regina's early emphasis on Saskatchewan-born writers had provoked criticism from some guild members, including a potential resident author, Terrence Heath, who declined his nomination and encouraged the appointment of authors from other regions.

His comments, written to Nik Burton in 1981, describe the residency as an opportunity to more fully integrate the local community into the national community of writers, a unique opportunity amidst the guild's other offerings:

I think we need the residency to generate new ideas and methods and to weld together the writing community into something like what Margaret Laurence calls 'The Tribe'. We are too strong now in Saskatchewan to be overrun by writers from other areas and we can only benefit from their contributions. On the other hand, we have access through readings, the Guild, the Summer School and the Writers Colony to our own writers; we don't need them in the residency.<sup>45</sup>

In Saskatoon, in contrast, where the guild has had less say in the nomination process, the focus has been more on the meaning of the appointment for the community at large. The SPL has been determined to consistently keep a writer in the position, and its program has thereby continued uninterrupted since 1981. When the Canada Council program was suspended in 1993, unlike RPL, which curtailed its program, the SPL was resourceful in securing a variety of alternative sponsors, most based in the Prairies, to keep the program going (see Table 2.2). One notable exception was Saskatoon's one-time partnership with the Welsh Arts Council, which brought UK poet Robert Mihinnick to the city in 1994-5, and remains the only international author residency on record to have been initiated and co-sponsored by a provincial patron.



**Table 2.2**  
**Writers-in-Residence at Saskatoon Public Library, 1981-2000**

Year	Writer	Genre(s)	Origin of writer
1981-2	Anne Szumigalski	poetry	Saskatchewan
1982-3	Patrick Lane	poetry	Saskatchewan
1983-4	Guy Vanderhaeghe	prose	Saskatchewan
1984-5	Geoffrey Ursell	drama, prose, poetry	Saskatchewan
1985-6	Joe Rosenblatt	poetry	British Columbia
1986-7	Gertrude Story	prose	Saskatchewan
1987-8	Lois Simmie	children's literature, prose	Saskatchewan
1988-9	Glen Sorestad	poetry	Saskatchewan
1989-90	Samuel Selvon	prose	Alberta
1990-1	Candace Savage	children's literature, prose	Northwest Territories / Saskatchewan
1991-2	Seán Virgo	prose, poetry	Ontario
1992-3	Armin Wiebe	humour, prose	Manitoba
1993-4	Betsy Warland	poetry	British Columbia
1994-5	Robert Mihinnick*	poetry	Wales
1995-6	Sandra Birdsell**	prose	Manitoba
1996-7	Steven Ross Smith***	poetry	Saskatchewan
1997-8	Harry Rintoul****	drama	Manitoba
1998-9	Elisabeth Harvor	poetry, prose	Ontario
1999-2000	John Livingstone Clark	poetry	Saskatchewan

Source: Saskatoon Public Library

Note: All residencies co-sponsored by SPL and the Canada Council, except:

\* co-sponsored by SPL and the Welsh Arts Council

\*\* co-sponsored by SPL and the Manitoba Arts Council

\*\*\* co-sponsored by SPL and the Resident Artists Program of the Saskatchewan Arts Board

\*\*\*\* co-sponsored by the Manitoba Arts Council and the Society of Friends of the Saskatoon Public Library

As a venue, the public library has appealed to patrons and authors as an institution that is accessible to a wide cross-section of the public, one which seemingly does not erect the social barriers or provoke the cultural anxieties associated with universities and literature departments. Early resident authors at the RPL expressed their approval of the library location, contrasting it favourably with that of the university, especially in terms of the positive, casual, and active environment it created for writers and book lovers.

While in residence at RPL, John Newlove contended that poetry readings at universities were “too solemn and too formal. There’s still a whiff of the church about them.”<sup>46</sup> The following year, resident author Andreas Schroeder also explained the attraction of the library residency for practicing and potential writers by contrasting it with the university atmosphere:

Here at the library it’s a kind of top-down, tie off, relaxed kind of atmosphere where people come because they enjoy books and not because they have a paralysing respect for them, and because this is the place where the joy of books is still real, whereas at universities literature tends to be treated as a pathology of some sort.<sup>47</sup>

Contending that, at the library, “the creative element” is emphasized, Schroeder suggests that the library is a more affirming place for practicing authors than the university campus, where textual criticism, and not literary creation, is the primary focus. In Saskatoon, as well, authors applauded the library for bringing literature “to the people.” In residence at SPL in 1983, poet Patrick Lane asserted, “Universities are distanced from the general public. Libraries are a reflection of the public and a natural extension of normal patterns for the average person.”<sup>48</sup> In 1991, Seán Virgo also observed that the democratic ideology of the public library made for a welcoming environment for a wide range of people with various expectations:

There’s no doubt in my mind that library residencies are more valuable to a community than university residencies (though a university environment has its own attractions for a writer). As well as the fringe group of clients who really need a social worker (and one learns to function as such, of course), one meets far

more people who have the urge to write for purely personal reasons (without the Literary preconceptions of university students) and I have dealt with teenagers (and younger), recent immigrants, aboriginals and senior citizens who want to write out of their own experiences, enthusiasms and compulsions; and this urge – in a T.V. dominated phase of our culture – can be quite moving. These are the kind of people, of course, who naturally gravitate to a Public Library as the repository of the kind of wisdom and opportunity they seek.<sup>49</sup>

Virgo's comments also touch on the impact of such an environment for the writer: while the library residency may lack certain "attractions" offered by a university appointment, the opportunity to observe the high value assigned to literature and self-expression by so many people was a positive experience for this author.

To say that library residences are more "community-focused" than university appointments is to suggest that they are aimed toward a wider demographic, as well as more heavily oriented toward public duties than direct support for the resident author as literary artist. Evidence for both assertions is impossible to demonstrate in quantitative terms, although anecdotal evidence and popular opinion suggest they hold true. Library residencies do regularly attract a high volume of clients (as discussed further in Chapter Three) and are perhaps better positioned to reach certain social groups, including seniors and school children. As well, the Saskatchewan Public Library's mandate to maintain an accessible, province-wide library system<sup>50</sup> across a considerable geographic expanse may create an atmosphere in which authors feel compelled to take on more community duties than they would at a university. As early as 1982, Ronald Yeo of the RPL acknowledged to the Canada Council that library resident authors typically "allocate much more than the

20% of their time that is to be devoted to library work,” despite the fact that the library put no direct pressure on them to do so.<sup>51</sup>

In addition to helping writers, in the public library context, the appointment of resident authors may be seen to be of discernable value to the institution, helping it fulfil its cultural role. As Zenon Zuzack, assistant chief librarian at SPL, explained to the Canada Council on 21 December 1987, residencies helped to define and illustrate the public library’s role in the community:

The Writer-in-Residence programme has become a vital part of this library’s community outreach. Libraries today provide a wide variety of materials and information but the Board feels that the Writer-in-Residence programme significantly sustains the library’s fundamental objective. This programme exemplifies the library’s conscious effort to encourage the writing and reading of Canadian literature, to develop an awareness of the broad selection of Canadian writing and to encourage and increase public awareness of this basic and special heritage.<sup>52</sup>

Through the considerable attention given to them by the media, resident writers have been shown to attract newcomers to the library system, and in this way have functioned as “ambassadors” of the library in the community. Moreover, residency programs have been structured to exemplify the public library’s mandate of equitable, decentralized service. Accordingly, SPL writers’ workshops and readings are co-ordinated through the six branches of the Saskatoon Public Library, not just the main branch, and, whenever possible, the writer’s services are offered outside the city. In 1986, for example, when the SPL appointed Steven Ross Smith under the co-sponsorship of the provincial Resident

Artists Program (see below), whose terms required him to devote fifty per cent of his time to the community, the library arranged for a full thirty per cent of his total hours to be spent at libraries outside the city.<sup>53</sup> Authors at both Regina and Saskatoon have reported regularly receiving and responding to manuscripts by mail from outlying areas. In the 1980s, writer-in-residence exchanges between the two cities also occurred, especially in years when the two appointed authors specialized in complementary genres.

In addition to providing services across the province, the Saskatchewan Public Library also works collaboratively with other cultural and educational institutions, especially the school boards. The library's involvement in the public school system has also had ramifications for resident authors, who are imbued with the trust and share in the responsibilities of their patron library. By 1987, a librarian in Saskatoon would observe, "The schools have come to see the writer-in-residence as a community resource and no doubt will continue to do so."<sup>54</sup> While all library resident authors were required by their local patron to devote a portion of their time to school visits, some authors, including Gertrude Story (SPL, 1986-7), have been especially dedicated to this aspect of their residency and have heavily oriented their community duties toward their work with students, in Story's case, with Native youth. In total, Story visited twenty-four schools and strongly encouraged the library to place more emphasis on this part of the residency in the future. The extent of Story's school activities, however, provoked a note of caution from the Canada Council, who reminded the SPL that education was a provincial jurisdiction and the "Canada Council, by its mandate, is not able to support activities in schools at the primary and secondary levels": as long as the responsibility of the program was shared by the federal patron, school activities would have to be limited.<sup>55</sup> Despite the

council's reluctance to overstep its bounds and its desire not be seen as the sponsor of resident authors' educational activities, the association of the resident authors with both the national patron and the library has lent them an authoritative status useful in advocating for the arts with local educators. Several writers at SPL have reported meeting with public and Catholic school boards while in residence, to discuss the place of literature in the schools and provide insight to teachers on their careers in writing.<sup>56</sup>

The Saskatchewan writers-in-libraries concept has had a national impact. By 1983, interest in the library programs was evident in the Canadian library community, aided no doubt by the extent of the media interest in the Prairie appointments and the work of librarians such as Ronald Yeo, who spoke on the Regina program to the Canadian Association of Large Urban Public Libraries in Montreal in the fall of 1983.<sup>57</sup> By this time, the Canada Council's Writing and Publishing Section was fielding regular inquiries from potential library hosts from across the country, many of which the council redirected to the RPL.<sup>58</sup> Ontario introduced a writers-in-libraries program in 1986, and by 1988, Alberta writers were agitating for a comparable program in their province.<sup>59</sup> By the end of the century, library residency positions, funded by the Canada Council and provincial/territorial patrons, had also been funded in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and the Yukon.

The Resident Artists Program. In addition to pioneering the library placements, Saskatchewan stretched the Canada Council program in other directions as well. One of the first Canada Council residencies based in a small community and outside a university, Lorna Crozier's 1980-1 Swift Current residency was co-sponsored by the Southwest Saskatchewan Writers Project, a collaborative project of the Chinook Regional Library,

the Cypress Hills Community College, and the Swift Current Allied Arts Council. During the year, Crozier used the community college as a base for extensive work in and around Swift Current, including carrying out well over one hundred individual consultations, facilitating workshops throughout the region (including two series of workshops with the nascent Eastend Literary Group, in Eastend, SK, a neighbouring town<sup>60</sup>), giving public readings, and editing an anthology, *Branch Lines*, which appeared late in 1981.<sup>61</sup> Co-funded by the cultural section of the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund and Celebrate Saskatchewan (the province marked its diamond jubilee in 1980), Crozier's residency in Swift Current anticipated the goals and methods of the provincial Resident Artists Program, which would be in full swing by the mid-1980s.

The administrative history of the Resident Artists Program reflects the development and reconfigurations of the cultural infrastructure in Saskatchewan in recent decades. While the Saskatchewan Arts Board had sponsored resident artists from 1968, responsibility for them shifted to the cultural division of the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation – the co-sponsor of Crozier's Swift Current residency – in the late 1970s. These lottery monies, at that time dispersed by Sask Sport, a federation of non-profit organizations, were provided through the Department of Culture and Youth (est. 1972; later, Department of Culture and Recreation). A configured Resident Artists Program was launched by the department in 1984. This program would return to the domain of the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund in 1991, and then back to the arts board the following year.<sup>62</sup> In 1993, the arts board would be restored as the single provincial arts agency, sponsoring many of its programs, including the Resident Artist Program, in co-operation with the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund. A new Arts Board

Act in 1997 would provide an opportunity for a unified provincial arts policy. It reconfirmed the board's wide focus on, among other goals, supporting and "fostering excellence" in the arts community, encouraging public participation in the arts, and promoting "public appreciation and understanding of the arts."<sup>63</sup> Significantly, the new Act also mandated the support and encouragement of "the arts of both Aboriginal and the ethnic communities of Saskatchewan."<sup>64</sup>

The Resident Artists Program (RAP) has focused on arts development in rural Saskatchewan. Cultural groups, such as the Saskatchewan Writers Guild, work extensively with small communities – whose populations range from 5,000 to 35,000 inhabitants – to develop a proposed program of work for a chosen artist, a resident of Saskatchewan normally residing outside the community in question. In the case of authors, the SWG advertises the position and names the selection committee, consisting of guild writers and a majority of community members from the town. Eligible writers need not be members of the guild. Once hired, the writer reports regularly both to the SWG (his or her official employer) and to the board's review committee, which is drawn from community members, such as librarians, teachers, and civic administrators.<sup>65</sup>

In contrast to the Canada Council writer-in-residence program, RAP is intended to be of primary benefit to the community. The writer's salary is modest – it increased from \$20,000 in 1984<sup>66</sup> to \$25,000 in 1995 – and the workload is considerable: in contrast to the 20/80 split established by the Canada Council in its guidelines for writers-in-residence – in which a writer spends twenty per cent of his or her time, that is, eight hours or one day a week with the community, RAP writers devote fifty per cent of their time (twenty hours a week) to community projects, such as organizing conferences,



establishing and/or consulting with local writing groups, mentoring, and producing local anthologies. A significant aspect of the residency is to contribute to the establishment of cultural infrastructure in the community, including spearheading the creation of arts organizations and linking them with the broader community. Paul Wilson of the SWG describes the Resident Artist Program as “a way of animating the literary arts in one community in one year. ... Residencies present the possibility to the young writer that it is possible to create a life around writing.”<sup>67</sup> As role models, mentors, animators, advocates, and educators, RAP authors are intended to be catalysts in improving the climate for the arts at the grassroots level, one town or village at a time (see Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3**  
**SWG Writers Participating in the Resident Artists Program, 1984-2000**

Year	Writer	Place of Residency
1984-5	Gertrude Story	Prince Albert
1985-6	Steven Michael Berzensky (Mick Burrs)	Yorkton
1986-7	Rick Hillis	Swift Current
1987-8	Steven Smith/ report	Weyburn
1988-9	Brenda Niskala	North Battleford
1989-90	Lee Gowan	Melfort
1990-1	Gertrude Story	Moose Jaw
1992-3	Rod MacIntyre	Estevan
1993-4	Terry Jordan	Eastend
1994-6	Don Freed	Prince Albert
1995-6	Joseph Naytowhow	Meadow Lake
1996-7	Elly Danica	Assiniboia
1997-8	Rod MacIntyre	Swift Current
1999-2000	Allan Safarik	Humbolt

Source: Amy Nelson-Mile, SWG, email correspondence, 18 September 2003.

Gertrude Story’s residency in Prince Albert, the first SWG-RAP residency, which took place in 1984-5, offers a good example of the creativity, organizational skills, and stamina the program requires of its authors. In a letter to the Canada Council supporting

Story's nomination for the SPL residency in 1986-7, Grethyll Adams, alderman of the City of Prince Albert, wrote that the author's RAP residency had "added a whole new dimension to our city and the surrounding communities." Story's most memorable contribution had been the co-ordination of a National Book Week celebration that brought together 800 Prince Albert students with 38 writers from across Canada; according to Adams, it had been a major event which "received national recognition." In Story's day-to-day activities, as well, the writer was said to have worked, with seemingly missionary zeal, to raise the profile of Canadian authors and to encourage writing in all corners of the community. Adams explained:

As a resource person in this area, she worked with numerous writers, conducted workshops, visited would-be writers in many of the local schools, she visited writers' groups, spoke to organizations, for example the service clubs, in general she spread the 'news' about writing, to as many parts of our community as she could possibly reach. She started a writers' group in the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, and at the time of our city's farewell to Mrs. Story, the inmates wrote praising this very hard working and dedicated woman.<sup>68</sup>

Fifteen years later, Allan Safarik's residency in the much smaller town of Humboldt (pop. 5,074 in 1996) – an appointment announced and literally inscribed on the local landscape by means of a billboard on the highway – was similarly productive, symbolically and practically. Aided considerably by local librarians and teachers, Safarik has given the community "full credit" for the success of the residency. In an email interview of 2003, Safarik recalled quickly becoming "somewhat of a celebrity" in the town: "Whenever I walked on the street people stopped to welcome me and soon they

were telling me I was doing a great job.” Safarik found his consulting hours “booked solid” with over a hundred writers from the surrounding region; he gave workshops and readings, helped organize a Multicultural Readers Festival (a reading tour, featuring six authors of diverse ethnic backgrounds, which travelled to high schools in several towns), produced two anthologies of student writing at Humboldt Collegiate, and inaugurated a regular section in the *Humboldt Journal* featuring writing by townspeople, an initiative that was “invaluable at giving local writers confidence and giving them profile in the local community.”<sup>69</sup> Tellingly, Maury Wrubleski’s article on Safarik’s work, published in the *Freelance*, profiled the residency from the perspective of its impact on Humboldt resident Joe Stannard, “a 40-year [writing] veteran,” whose previous “publication credits extended no further than his family,” who gave his first reading and published his first poems during Safarik’s residency. Safarik, according to Wrubleski, had “a profound impact” on the building up of a “vibrant and visible writing community in the area.”<sup>70</sup>

A program that is aimed at instilling a sense of a writing culture outside the urban areas, in recent years, the Resident Artists Program has become a significant site of activity for Native communities in both the cities and the rural areas. While the SWG has occasionally nominated Native authors for residencies – for example, storyteller Joseph Naytowhow, who encouraged the continuance of the oral tradition in Meadow Lake in 1995, other organizations have also appointed Aboriginal writers-in-residence through the arts board program. In 1999-2000, Cree poet Randy Lundy took on an expansive role at campuses of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and other communities, and at the University of Regina. The art board’s annual report explained that Lundy served as:

role model, mentor, tutor, and editor for emerging writers, encouraged and guided university instructors teaching Aboriginal literature or attempting to incorporate Aboriginal writing and literature into their courses, and educated the Aboriginal and university communities about the calling, life and role of a writer.<sup>71</sup>

Lundy's role as a consultant for university teachers represents a new and intriguing aspect of the Resident Artists Program, bringing local activity in contact with the university as educational institution and literary consecrator. As few university residency positions have taken place in Saskatchewan, Lundy's RAP residency perhaps foreshadows the development of a unique literary and academic culture in Saskatchewan English departments.

For residency programs in Saskatchewan, the aims of demystifying and democratizing art production may be seen to be at work. A review of the Saskatchewan Arts Board program, conducted by the board in 2001, emphasized that a goal of the Resident Artists Program is to normalize arts activity, to provide "the opportunity for an artist to be visibly working in the community [and to be seen as] someone making a significant contribution to society" and "to "dispel the myth that artists are 'different'" from "ordinary men and women."<sup>72</sup> While the writer of the report is speaking here specifically of artists' desire to earn a living from their work just like other working people, his words also signal a source of lingering tension within writing communities in Saskatchewan, in which the populist ethos does not always draw a ready distinction between "amateur" and "professional" authors and their respective interests. Paul Wilson has noted that RAP is appealing to the guild for this very reason. On the one hand, he says, the guild operates on the ideal of inclusiveness: "Every voice should be given at

least the opportunity to be heard.” On the other, Wilson argues,

Communities work when differences are recognized. To my mind the attitude that insists ‘we’re all the same’ is the antithesis of community. Residences work because you have someone who’s recognized for their difference and who can bring something to a community.<sup>73</sup>

Residency appointments in Saskatchewan – those based in small communities, as well as those in urban libraries, universities, and colleges – thus construct a highly visible, multifaceted public role for creative artists, who are valued both for their literary abilities and their powers as advocates, educators, and mentors.

A final observation on the community-focused, publicly supported Saskatchewan residencies: as we have seen, the celebration of provincial milestones has often served as the instigating event for the launch of writer-in-residence programs. Provincial identity and the perceived need to encourage such social and cultural cohesiveness may thus be seen to be a motivating factor in these programs. Saskatchewan’s desire to celebrate its history and culture has been recently evinced in the province’s appointment of the first Poet Laureate in 2000, Glen Sorestad. Sorestad’s tenure, which would be extended from two years to four, was funded by the arts board as a writer-in-residence position and involved many of the activities the province has come to expect from such an appointment: arts advocacy, mentorship, province-wide readings, and poetry-writing.<sup>74</sup> It is the first and only such provincial appointment in Canada.

## Alberta

The writer-in-residence programs in Alberta that are the focus in this section are university-based and have been largely conceived by university professors who are also creative authors. While provincial government support has been instrumental in maintaining these high-profile positions, in recent years, private sponsors have also been important patrons.

In addition to maintaining their national profile, author residency programs at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary have aimed to have an impact on the local environment beyond their own campuses. The University of Alberta calls its program one of “creative outreach to the wider literary community of Alberta,”<sup>75</sup> while promotional material for the University of Calgary’s Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme lists first among its goals the aim “to benefit the community of readers and writers in Calgary, Alberta and in Canada.”<sup>76</sup> As in Regina and Saskatoon, where resident authors have become library “ambassadors,” in Edmonton and Calgary, the university resident authors have helped bridge town and gown by serving central cultural roles in both cities. This outreach activity reflects the aims of the Alberta-based sponsors of the program, who have the goals of improving the climate for the arts in these cities and across the province.

With regard to residency programs, the interest of author-professors at U of A and Calgary has been crucial. The Alberta Writers Guild (AWG), comparable in size to the SWG (the AWG had 625 members in 1988<sup>77</sup>), has been less influential than its Saskatchewan counterpart in this regard, partly due to its later founding date (1980). While the AWG has had representation on Calgary’s Markin-Flanagan selection

committee through the 1990s, perhaps its most significant long-term role in relation to the residency programs is promotion. Writer-in-residence positions are advertised in the guild's newsletter, as is the contact information for the appointed writers, who are thus positioned as resources for writers throughout the province. The consistency and longevity of the U of A program in particular has created a steady level of interest and participation from across Alberta. A survey of 210 Alberta writers undertaken by J.J. Douglas and published in 1986 revealed that twenty-four per cent of the surveyed writers reported consulting with a writer-in-residence, although some respondents commented that the existing residency programs were too closely focused on "university writers."<sup>78</sup> Programs at public libraries and community colleges, such as Edmonton's Grant MacEwan College,<sup>79</sup> would begin emerging in the late 1980s, supported by the province, but would not have the provincial or national impact of the university programs.

The University of Alberta. From the beginning, the University of Alberta's writer-in-residence program has sought to be a vehicle "for promoting writers of national stature," as well as a form of "outreach to anyone who can benefit from consultations with an important Canadian writer."<sup>80</sup> In 1974, author and professor Rudy Wiebe envisioned the creation of a prestigious, three-year program that would bring "major Canadian literary [figures]" to Edmonton. Drawing up a proposal for a residency sponsored by the Canada Council (\$7,000), the department (over \$7,000 in direct funds and overhead expenses), the university (\$4,000), and an unnamed private donor (\$11,000), Wiebe hoped to pay visiting writers \$25,000 for the academic year, plus \$500 for travel expenses. In comparison, the going rate for Canada Council resident authors in the same period was

\$14,000 plus travel allowance. The program would help the writer by providing “a year of writing under decent conditions”; it would benefit the university’s creative writing program, enhancing its reputation as “a centre for excellence in artistic achievement and tutoring,” and increasing its interactions with the community; as well, it would be of direct benefit to the city, which would also share in the writer’s services. In the eyes of the department, the “best possible beginning” for such a program would be the appointment of Margaret Laurence, an author of “international stature,” with previous residency experience and the reputation of being an excellent mentor.<sup>81</sup>

The program, however, got off to a more modest start. By 1975, Margaret Laurence, exhausted by her year of back-to-back appointments at Trent University and the University of Western Ontario, had retired from university residency appointments (See Chapter Three). The private patronage not forthcoming, the department was able to offer just \$14,000 and a travel allowance to Toronto author Matt Cohen, who had recently visited Edmonton in the course of a reading tour sponsored by McClelland & Stewart. As attested by Greg Hollingshead (quoted in the Introduction to this dissertation), Cohen’s residency was nonetheless highly effective in inspiring potential writers and creating a sense of community between Edmonton authors and those outside the region. The English Department was also successful in attracting the university administration’s notice of and securing its participation in this cultural program. As at the University of Toronto (see Chapter Four), the alma mater fund and the Office of the President would prove important sources of funding in the upcoming years, each contributing several thousand dollars per annum.

The administration’s support of writers-in-residence was greatly encouraged by



the national media attention garnered by Elizabeth Smart's residency in 1982-3. Interviewed by both Peter Gzowski and Vicki Gabereau for their national CBC Radio programs and profiled on the cross-country evening television news program, *The Journal*, as well as in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, *Books in Canada*, *Quill & Quire*, and several western newspapers, Smart intentionally drew attention to her institutional affiliation, putting the University of Alberta in the national spotlight.<sup>82</sup> This exposure would greatly heighten the level of participation in the program from Alberta writers throughout the province and would result in the program's inclusion in the university's 75th Anniversary Fund Drive in 1983, which provided the opportunity to begin an endowment assuring the program's continuation. While the fund drive was not as extensive as the university had hoped, an endowment was created, to which students, staff, and the larger community were invited to make tax-deductible donations.<sup>83</sup>

It was the introduction of provincial money, however, which greatly sustained the U of A program over the succeeding decades. From appointment of Métis author Maria Campbell in 1979 to the close of the 1980s, Alberta Culture provided grants up to \$7,000 per annum for the program – an amount representing a sizable portion of its annual support for literary competitions, readings, travel, and writer-in-residence programs. From 1986, the Alberta Foundation for the Literary Arts/Alberta Foundation for the Arts additionally regularly provided grants of up to \$10,000 a year. While the provincial agencies were initially poised to support Alberta writers only, U of A successfully made the case for the support of both Alberta resident authors and those from outside the province, including BC poet Phyllis Webb and Maritime novelist David Adams Richards (See Table 2.4). By the mid-1980s, U of A represented the “Rolls-Royce” of residency

programs,<sup>84</sup> offering its authors the benefits extended to full-time staff and salaries regularly topping \$30,000 for two semesters: \$6,000 more than the typical Canada Council residency at this time. Endeavouring to offer “variety” in its choice of writers, “a reasonable balance of male and female writers, a number from visible minorities, and from all parts of the country,”<sup>85</sup> the program has supported authors working a fairly conservative range of genres, from poetry, drama, and prose, only occasionally gesturing to such genres as children’s literature and science fiction (Monica Hughes, 1984-5) and, in more recent years, non-fiction (Myrna Kostash, 2003-4). Edmonton equally proved to be a generative place to work: in 1985, faculty member Bert Almon noted that the program had resulted in ten books in ten years from the resident authors.<sup>86</sup>

**Table 2.4:  
Writers-in-Residence at the University of Alberta, 1975-2000**

Year	Writer
1975-6	Matt Cohen
1976-7	Gary Geddes
1977-8	Marian Engel
1978-9	Tom Wayman
1979-80	Maria Campbell
1980-1	Phyllis Webb
1981-2	Patrick Lane
1982-3	Elizabeth Smart
1983-4	Samuel Selvon
1984-5	Monica Hughes
1985-6	Daphne Marlatt
1986-7	Ray Smith
1987-8	Leona Gom
1988-9	Fred Wah
1989-90	Kristjana Gunnars
1990 fall	David Adams Richards
1991 winter	Sandra Birdsell
1990-1	John Glenday (Canada-Scotland Exchange Writer)
1991-2	Merna Summers
1992-3	Trevor Ferguson
	Tom Pow (Canada-Scotland Exchange Writer)
1993-4	Don McKay
1994-5	Gail Scott
1995-6	Di Brandt
1996-7	Ven Begamudré
1997-8	Caterina Edwards
1998-9	Olive Senior
1999-2000	Tim Lilburn

Source: University of Alberta.

Given the suspension of the Canada Council program in 1993, and the disappearance of Alberta Culture monies, the 1990s were harder financially for the program than the previous decade. The salary for writers would remain the same - \$30,000 for two semesters – to the close of the century. Despite practical limitations imposed by the limited budget, the English Department, home to “an eclectic group” of creative authors,<sup>87</sup> as well as a cohort of graduate students writing “creative” master’s

theses (literary, as opposed to scholarly, works), continues to build a program of well-established authors writing across a range of genres and representing diverse regional, ethnic, and social groups. From the early 1990s, professor Greg Hollingshead organized fund-raising campaigns for the program, including such events as a reading by Carol Shields at the Timms Centre for the Arts in October 1997. Today, faculty members at U of A credit the continuance of the program to professor-authors who have identified the needs of the local arts community beyond the department. From the initial envisaging of a generous publicly and privately funded residency program – seen as evidence of Rudy Wiebe “thinking more as a writer than as an administrator”<sup>88</sup> – to more recent instances of the faculty’s commitment to raising the program’s profile and ensuring its continuance, English professors at U of A have seen the program as contributing primarily to authors and their public outside the university.

### University of Calgary

‘I wish,’ [Fred Wah] said, ‘that somebody would give us lots of money so that we could do something with creative writing.’ And Allan Markin said, ‘Okay, I’ll give you a million dollars. What do you want to do?’ ... And Fred looked at him and laughed and said, ‘I’d put together the greatest writer-in-residence program in the whole world.’<sup>89</sup>

In November 2003, novelist and University of Calgary (U of C) English professor Aritha van Herk enjoyed recounting the legend of how the University of Calgary’s Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme originated at a party hosted by Calgary oil executive and philanthropist Allan Markin and author and publisher Jackie Flanagan, just

over a decade earlier. Poet and professor Fred Wah, who had recently been hired at the University of Calgary, had spent the previous year as writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta and had developed ideas for a new kind of residency that would be of particular benefit to Calgary. The Canada Council program, which seemed to Wah to regularly draw from a small pool of established writers, was facing economic difficulties. The University of Calgary, which, like U of A, had a steady number of master's students in its creative writing stream, was in the process of developing a doctoral program in creative writing, the first in the country. Wah saw an opportunity to launch a program that would benefit these graduating students, while creating much-needed ties between the university and the city.<sup>90</sup>

While the U of C had periodically hosted writers-in-residence through the Canada Council program from 1968, when W.O. Mitchell began what would be a three-year term there, the Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme, which was launched in 1993, represented an entirely new venture on campus. One prong of the program supports an “emerging and promising” Canadian author as writer-in-residence, and the other allows for the visit of a “distinguished visiting writer of international stature,” who may be Canadian or foreign (see Table 2.5). The program has strong ties to both the graduate program in English and the Calgary literary community. Several of the resident writers have been U of C graduates (Roberta Rees, Peter Oliva), and most hold master's degrees in creative writing from Canadian universities. Whereas the Canada Council program is aimed at mid-career, established authors, Markin-Flanagan appointments are intended for younger writers, those with fewer than four books to their credit. As such, the program is highly reflective of very current directions in contemporary fiction.

**Table 2.5**  
**The University of Calgary's Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme,**  
**1993-2000**

Writer-in-Residence		Visiting Writer(s)	
<i>Year</i>		<i>Year</i>	
1993-4	Roberta Rees	1993	Michael Ondaatje
1994-5	Ven Begamudré	1994	Thomas King Marilyn Dumont Tom Raworth David Albahari
1995-6	Richard Harrison	1995	Robert Creeley Robin Blazer Yevgeny Yevtushenko Sir Laurens van der Post Keri Hulme
1996-7	Rosemary Nixon	1996	Steve McCaffery Louis de Bernieres Ursula Le Guin D.M. Thomas
1997-8	Larissa Lai	1997	Rose Scollard
1998-9	Peter Oliva	1998	Dionne Brand Adrienne Rich Alberto Manguel
1999- 2000	Richard Sanger	1999	Tony Kushner Emma Donoghue
		2000	Erin Mouré Screenwriting symposium (Gary Burns, Deepa Mehta, Paul Quarrington, Anne Wheeler)

Source: The University of Calgary's Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme, home page, 2001.

Beyond recognizing young writers who are emerging from university creative writing programs, however, the writer-in-residence program is not primarily intended as a resource for the English Department – although visiting writers such as Steve McCaffrey and Dionne Brand have worked closely with graduate students. Wah has described the program as “the university gesturing to community writers” in the greater Calgary area.<sup>91</sup> While visiting writers are invited to engage in manuscript consultation, give readings and talks, and participate in symposia and workshops, writers-in-residence are expected to

devote fifty per cent of their time to campus and public activities. Most, for example, are involved in WordFest, an annual literary festival that takes place in downtown Calgary and Banff. Wah's particular interest in the literary community beyond the university was described by Susan Rudy, chair of the English Department, in 2003:

Fred Wah came ... from BC, where he'd been involved with and supported several writing communities that were very active, and that tends to be the way he works, teaching and encouraging the students to start magazines and encouraging them to read widely. He had already, through several creative writing classes of his own, developed students who went into the community and started little magazines like *Filling Station* and *Secrets from the Orange Couch* ...in the late '80s, early '90s. ... His desire to nurture that community ... gave him the energy to say, 'This is the kind of program we need,' not because it would benefit the university in any way that was obvious to him then, but that it would bring writers to Calgary so that younger writers could talk to them, and he knew from experience that it was a generative thing to do for young writers. And so the program came out of Fred's desire to give back to that community. And since it's been in place, that's exactly what it's done.<sup>92</sup>

While Wah, from the beginning, was a principal architect of the program, its sponsors, Allan Markin and Jackie Flanagan (Wah's former creative-writing student from Mount Royal College) were also closely involved in the program's development. For several years, they served, along with Wah, the university vice-president, and the dean of arts, on the steering committee. The Markin-Flanagan writer-in-residence position is advertised nationally – attracting between twenty to fifty qualified, and sometimes

overqualified, applicants a year<sup>93</sup> – and the selection committee is expansive, comprising community representatives from the Alberta Writers Guild, local publishing houses, and booksellers; faculty members from English and other university departments; higher-level university administrators; and a graduate student. In 2000, the honorarium for the ten-month position was \$40,000.

An effort to form a bridge between arts and corporate and popular cultures, the program is marked by creative and whimsical public events reminiscent of Jack McClelland's promotional stunts of the 1960s and '70s. Most of the program's public readings have taken place off-campus. In 1995, for example, Yevgeny Yevtushenko read from atop an army tank parked outside Pages Bookstore in downtown Calgary. The following year, science-fiction author Ursula Le Guin spoke at the planetarium, while poet Richard Harrison read at the Pengrowth Saddledome and was introduced by professor Aritha van Herk dressed as a goaltender.<sup>94</sup> Harrison's poems, replete with hockey metaphors, were accompanied by the rhythms of the Calgary Flames practicing in the main stadium.<sup>95</sup> Over the years, Markin-Flanagan readings and receptions have been well publicized, well attended, and lavish. Wah notes that while such special events are gratifying for the invited authors and the department, they are also important for engaging the interest of "downtown," that is, involving the business sector in the arts:

Calgary is a very corporate – *very corporate* – place. So some of those early events were pretty incredible, where you have five or six hundred suits come out to a literary event. ... It has had an impact on the business community, and of course one of the spin-offs has been that a lot of the business people see Al Markin doing this, and they also are interested in getting involved.<sup>96</sup>



According to van Herk, Markin, known locally as “Rhymin’ Markin” because of his interest in poetry, hopes that his example as a patron of the arts will encourage others to support the literary community in Calgary.<sup>97</sup>

Since the mid-1990s, the Markin-Flanagan program has employed a full-time administrator who, among other responsibilities, handles the graphic design contracts – Markin-Flanagan appointments and events are publicized through full-colour posters and postcards, all bearing the distinctive Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme logo, in which the program’s name is printed under a representation of the Rockies skyline. The mailing list for the program is extensive: in 2003, its total of one thousand names was tripled in order to advertise the program’s ten-year anniversary.<sup>98</sup> Such professionally produced, eye-catching material, some of which reproduces photographs of the authors and their book covers, also contributes to the sense of the program’s material presence in the community.

In the fall of 2003, the Markin-Flanagan program marked its tenth anniversary with a gala celebration and reunion of past writers-in-residence, entitled “Twelve writers. And a fistful of words.” The elegant invitation to the event – a small, sepia-toned, accordion-style fold-out card featuring authors’ photographs and brief bio-bibliographies – was complemented by a keepsake program featuring writing by the authors, called *DECADEnt Writing: Celebrating Ten Years of the Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme*, “a tangible expression,” according to the introductory note, “of the goals of the Markin-Flanagan programme – to excite people about literature and to put the works of literature in their hands.”<sup>99</sup> *DECADEnt*, which opens with Dionne Brand’s poem “I,” whose first line is “This city is beautiful,” includes authors’ recollections of

their stay in Calgary and other pieces which toast the city as an unlikely muse, including Louis de Bernières' tribute to the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge and Richard Sanger's parodic poem dedicated to Flanagan and Markin ("Oh for a little oil well, something clean and discreet, / Out toward Cochran or Kananaskis, / A ranch, some woods, some favourite books to reread, / An SUV, a girl to do my taxes ..."). Ranging from serious to light-hearted excerpts, the texts in the understatedly designed *DECADEnt* construct Calgary as centre for high culture that is vibrant, young, and lacking in cultural pretensions.

In addition to the local buzz it creates, the Markin-Flanagan program contributes to continued academic interest in the authors it has featured. Upon the ten-year anniversary, Jackie Flanagan commented: "I don't think there is anything more important than creating a legacy of literary heritage."<sup>100</sup> A spin-off of the program has been the Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme Collection of Books, Manuscripts, Sound Recordings and Videotapes, a repository held by the university library's Special Collections, already a significant national archive for Canadian authors' papers.<sup>101</sup>

The Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme has been groundbreaking in providing positions for young writers and in bringing internationally established writers to the university and the city of Calgary. The success for the program has been significant for local writers such as Stuart McKay, who served on the Markin-Flanagan selection committee in 2002 and was impressed both by the "time, talent, [and] great imaginative acts" that went into the planning the program, and the high-calibre applicants it attracted: "All this brings a certain legitimacy to Calgary," McKay concluded, "as if to say there are writers living and working here in this prairie city and that others want to be a part of it too."<sup>102</sup>

## Conclusion

The residency programs in Saskatchewan and Alberta represent different approaches to fostering writing in the West. Saskatchewan, with a sophisticated cultural infrastructure, in which the Saskatchewan Writers Guild is a significant stakeholder, favours decentralized, community-oriented residencies that can demonstrably benefit writers at all stages of their careers, as well as their audiences. While Saskatchewan creates ties between its authors and the national scene through its high-profile library residency appointments, Alberta's programs – urban, university-based, and funded by a combination of public and private partners – are more explicitly oriented toward providing venues for nationally established (or soon to be nationally established) authors.

In both Saskatchewan and Alberta, the perceived need to create public support for working writers is in evidence in the provincial policies and programs for the literary arts. In Alberta, the persistence of a frontier ethos<sup>103</sup> has been said to be a contributing factor in the provincial government's and the arts community's efforts to build a cultural identity. In Saskatchewan as well, in remote communities where there has been little formal exposure to the arts, writer-in-residence programs have been seen as useful ways of introducing artists to their public and encouraging continued interest in literary activities. As Alberta writer-in-residence Shirlee Matheson, who provided the epigraph to this chapter, has noted, "residencies help to promote one's own work (and worth) in the community."<sup>104</sup> In these Western provinces, residency programs work by giving a face – as well as an extra pair of hands – to the literary arts. Both celebrate literature, and through literature, the provinces themselves, as distinct geographic, political, and cultural entities.

### WORKING “IN RESIDENCE”

Mordecai [Richler], as you know, is w-in-r at Sir George Williams this year. I wrote and asked him what a w-in-r did, and he replied that he didn't know any more than I did.

Margaret Laurence, 1968<sup>1</sup>

[W]hat the writer-in-residence is seems to come down to what kind of value I can show the world at large. ... [I]t's like algebra, it's not like anything else. You have x equals prestige, plus y number of students, x times per year, plus z number of guest lectures, with q attendance, you know, and you add all that up and you make it equal \$20,000 ... and then you divide it on a per head service basis and then you say, 'My goodness, this is peculiar,' but it's a very peculiar exercise to even think of doing in the first place.

Carol Bolt, 1978<sup>2</sup>

[My work as writer-in-residence at the Whitehorse Public Library consisted of] 18 hours per week (three hours set aside for travel) for consultations, readings, workshops and lectures as requested by community libraries, groups or individuals, with no preset proportion of time on each; this was to represent 40% of my time.

I also researched, wrote and revised for my own creative and commercial projects; this was to represent 60% of my time or about 22 hours per week, but I put in much more time than this, probably about 70 to 80 hours per week (including the Yukon College course that I taught) for an overall work week of approximately 90 to 100 hours.

Susan Mayse, 2003<sup>3</sup>

Spanning thirty-five years, these three quotations are all, to some extent, “unofficial” descriptions of residency work. Margaret Laurence, writing to a friend, had yet to become author-in-residence at the University of Toronto; Carol Bolt, being interviewed for the student newspaper, was midway through her appointment at the same university; and Susan Mayse, responding to my question via email, had recently returned from her three-month stint in the Yukon. Amused, apprehensive, defensive, or hasty, these jot notes on the job of resident author reflect the institutionalization of author residencies that has been in process since the 1960s and the concomitant fine-tuning of writers’ expectations for these appointments. Writer-in-residence work has encompassed an increasingly wide range of activities, which have been assigned varying levels of value by authors, institutions, and their publics. Part patronage, part public service, writer-in-residence appointments are “not like anything else”; they draw on every practical, creative, and performative aspect of authorship.

This chapter addresses the ways in which writer-in-residence programs materially support the creation of literature by providing employment for established authors and apprenticeship opportunities for writers at earlier stages in their careers. As such, it explores how residencies have contributed to the careers of self-employed writers and, by extension, to the development of authorship as a profession in Canada since the 1960s. To do this, it situates the activities of professional authors within the larger context of writing activity in Canada. In the past forty years, thousands of individuals have consulted resident authors to seek help with creative projects, everything from literary fiction, poetry, and work in the commercial or popular genres, to more personal forms of writing, such as family history and memoir. Some of these writers have gone on to

become published authors; the majority have not. To meet the expectations of such a wide “clientele” – comprising students of literature, would-be published authors, and hobbyist writers, among others – the writer-in-residence acts variously as reader, mentor, editor, agent, reference writer, adjudicator, critic, event organizer, counsellor, intellectual, and expert – in addition to carrying out his or her vocation as creative artist. Resident authors’ individualistic approaches to their work have demonstrated their efforts to balance these public and private roles.

Since the 1960s, Canadian universities and colleges have emerged as significant employers and educators of literary authors through the growth of creative writing programs. The writer-in-residence concept has grown in tandem with such programs and yet it potentially disrupts emerging patterns in university pedagogy and criticism, by offering non-university-affiliated authors (and their clients) a point of entry into the academic environment. As Pierre Bourdieu contends, any such position-taking in a defined field has ramifications for the structure of that field.<sup>4</sup> That Canadian universities are, as are our libraries, publicly funded institutions suggests that authors operating within such institutions are effectively situating the profession of authorship in a larger social network. This chapter will show that, while residencies have become institutional positions with familiar and predictable parameters, professional authors have rarely integrated themselves into these institutional environments on a long-term basis. Despite the attempts of individual authors and institutions to create spaces for creative writers *as creative writers* within institutional frameworks, with very few exceptions residency appointments continue to be made on an ad hoc basis, and professional authors remain transient figures on university, college, and library grounds. While, collectively, writers-

in-residence have greatly contributed to heightening the profiles of Canadian literature and creative writing across the country, individually, writers, by both choice and necessity, have remained temporary staff in public institutions.

In this discussion I use the term “professional author” interchangeably with “self-employed author” to describe those writers who are not simultaneously engaged in other full-time professions or trades. They may be either full-time freelance writers, balancing literary projects with journalistic or other commercial assignments, or authors who take on occasional work not directly related to writing, such as part-time or temporary teaching. Self-employed authors have not generally enjoyed a comfortable or predictable financial situation. In its annual report of 1966-7, the Canada Council summarized the economic status of many of the country’s creative artists with the grim observation that “It is most curious that such an important sector of any civilized society should be tacitly accepted by that society as a kind of sub-proletariat.” Disadvantaged by a lack of collective bargaining power, a taxation system insensitive to the rhythms of artistic production, inadequate returns on their work, and the need to seek alternative employment, these self-employed artists, according to the council, “[foot] the bill for our cultural evolution.” The use of the term “evolution” is significant: the council asserted that as it had finally become possible to distinguish between “amateur” and “professional” artists in Canada, public patronage could help redress the situation of those emerging professional artists “whose cultural contribution far outweighs the rewards they can expect at the going market price.”<sup>5</sup>

This report, which is roughly contemporaneous with the establishment of the council’s writer-in-residence program, highlights potential sources of tension between

full-time writers and the individuals employed in the institutions that have supported residencies: the economic divide separating (many) artists from (many) “arts professionals” (university faculty members, civil servants), and a discrepancy in status: while the specialized training of the professor or librarian is easily documented and publicly recognized, the patterns of apprenticeship and labour of literary artists are not so well defined or understood.

It is also significant that the report dichotomizes “amateur” and “professional” writers without defining these terms: “professional” here cannot simply denote paid work, given that so few professional writers in Canada derive substantial income from creative writing. The “professional” writing criterion implicitly suggested by the council is that this writing represent a “cultural contribution,” itself an ambiguous phrase. One way of defining it has been to assign it to particular literary genres at the exclusion of other forms of writing. As we have seen in Chapter One, a strategy employed by the council to target the appropriate writers has been to delimit the genres eligible for grants: originally these were literary fiction, poetry, and drama. Children’s literature officially became an eligible category in the early 1980s, joined in the late 1990s by comic art/narrative books, “creative non-fiction,” and work in oral traditions. Also in the 1990s, the council introduced a requirement that works be issued through a “professional publishing house.”<sup>6</sup> While the Canada Council, host institutions, and writers-in-residence are all significant agents in creating and maintaining such gate-keeping factors which fortify the status of the professional author, it is remarkable that residency programs require authors to devote so much energy to amateur writing, the Trojan horse of folk poetry, life-writing, and would-be Hollywood scripts. The second part of this chapter will



thus explore the intersections of professional authors and wider writing communities that university and library residencies have facilitated.

### **Creative writers in the academy**

British author David Lodge's campus novel *Thinks . . .* (2001) depicts the following exchange between Helen Reed, writer-in-residence at the fictional University of Gloucester, and Sir Stanley Hibberd, University Vice Chancellor:

'I'll be honest with you,' says Sir Stan, 'I didn't rate creative writing as an academic subject when I came here. But when I looked at the books I was converted.'

'You mean, books by former students?' says Helen.

'No, no! I mean the accounts,' says Sir Stan, laughing merrily.<sup>7</sup>

Helen, whose salary is universally admitted to be "peanuts," takes this comment in stride, cognizant that Sir Stanley has little personal interest in what are her two primary concerns: making literature and making a living. Lodge's use of the old joke echoes George Gissing, who used it to strike a darkly comic note in *New Grub Street* (1891), an exploration of the economic and social marginalization of the literary artist in late-Victorian society.<sup>8</sup> In *Thinks . . .*, set in contemporary Britain, the joke implicates the university in capitalist power structures and casts the writer as a hapless Reed who lacks both the economic class and social status of her partner in the dialogue. The passage highlights several issues about the 20th-century creative author and the university which we may readily translate to the Canadian context: how significant are universities for the training and employment of literary writers? What tensions – social, economic, and

aesthetic – exist between the creative and academic professional spheres?

Canadian universities have been formally training writers since early in the twentieth century. Professor F.M. Salter of the University of Alberta is credited with having introduced the first creative writing course in Canada in 1939.<sup>9</sup> Until his retirement in the 1960s, Salter was mentor to such writers as W.O. Mitchell, Rudy Wiebe, Christine Van der Mark, and Sheila Watson.<sup>10</sup> Salter, like many other Canadian academics during his time and since, taught creative writing as a sideline to his primary academic specialization.<sup>11</sup> In the 1940s, undergraduate courses in creative writing were offered at a number of universities, including the University of New Brunswick, McGill University, the University of Manitoba, and University of British Columbia, and “creative thesis” options were introduced in some master-level English programs.<sup>12</sup> By the 1960s, undergraduate courses were proliferating across the country, and M.A. and M.F.A. programs in creative writing began to emerge. In 1967, the first creative writing department was established at the University of British Columbia. In the mid-1990s, the University of Calgary created the country’s only Ph.D. program in creative writing, evidence of a need for academically trained author/critics to work in universities. In such contexts, the work of writers-in-residence have both supplemented emerging creative writing programs, such as those at the University of Windsor and Concordia University, and provided a creative focus in institutions where such programs did not exist, for example, the University of Toronto and Simon Fraser University. Both creative writing programs and author residencies have contributed to contemporary writing gaining a profile as an academic subject and have increasingly served as employment options for practicing authors. How, then, have resident authors – both those who have worked in

other capacities within the institution and those who have not – viewed and shaped their place in the university?

### **Two models for writers-in-residence: Earle Birney and Margaret Laurence**

Two of the first writers-in-residence of the 1960s, Earle Birney (1904-95) and Margaret Laurence (1926-87), approached these appointments from very different professional spheres. Birney (PhD, University of Toronto, 1936), a professor of English and the catalyst behind the establishment of the creative writing department at the University of British Columbia, possessed the necessary cultural capital in the academic environment to create a residency suited to his conception of the professional author. Laurence was a self-employed writer who, with financial help from her husband, supported her family through the publication of her literary prose and journalism. Laurence had been a stellar undergraduate English student at United College and the University of Manitoba in the 1940s, but had had no further contact with the academy since that time; moreover, she had been living abroad since 1962: her residency appointment thus represented a high-profile re-entry, not just to the university environment, but to her native Canada, which was undergoing rapid social transformations as the baby boomers came of age in the late 1960s. While Birney was more intent on defining his residency position as a prototype in the expanding and proliferating university structure, both authors scrutinized the material and symbolic aspects of their university work within the university and beyond.

At ease in the post-secondary system and assured by his academic credentials – he sometimes spoke of the possibility of having “dual citizenship” in the academic and

literary professions<sup>13</sup> – Birney was the first writer-in-residence at both the University of Toronto (U of T), from 1965 to 1967, and the University of Waterloo, for 1967-8, in both cases negotiating respectable salaries: at U of T during his first year, the author augmented a half-salary through the sale of his papers to the university library<sup>14</sup> and, during his second, received the equivalent of an associate professor's salary; as the Centennial Year Writer-in-Residence at Waterloo, Birney enjoyed a full professor's salary, plus accommodation. In 1968, Birney would also experience the more luxurious American system as Regents Professor at the University of California (Irvine), where his salary would equal the department head's.<sup>15</sup>

Birney was adamant that resident authors demand remuneration that reflected a professional status comparable to that of academic faculty members. Responding to a survey on writer-in-residence work conducted by the Writers' Union of Canada in 1973,<sup>16</sup> he contended:

An author should be advised not to accept writer-in-residence offers unless they specify a salary that is at least equivalent to an assistant professor's, if he is a young and not fully established author; a senior author, recognized as such across Canada, ought to demand a salary equivalent to that of a full professor. If the appointment is being offered for an indefinite number of years, the author should also ask to be included in the university's pension schemes. He should also make sure that the residenceship really means he will have adequate free lodgings near the campus.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, Birney argued the creative author's sphere of activity should not be constricted to English department business: the writer should have nothing to do with

courses, examinations, or marking schemes, which are “irrelevant to the creative artist,” but should dedicate a certain number of hours to advising aspiring writers from across campus working in any “creative” genre. While an author in residence at “a provincial university” may feel an obligation to give readings or talks in the community, such activities should be considered extra work and carry an honorarium. Finally, the writer-in-residence “should not be subject to the final authority of a department head or even a dean but have the function of a Professor of the university.”<sup>18</sup>

While at the University of Toronto, Birney was consciously forging a model for author residencies and was careful to record and publicize his professional activities on- and off-campus.<sup>19</sup> Taking on visiting professorships, he lectured to lesser extent on Chaucer, his original academic specialization, and to a greater extent on contemporary poetry, including Canadian, American, British, and others in translation. He gave multiple poetry readings from Prince Edward Island to British Columbia and spoke in classrooms, on CBC radio, and in print on the role of writer-in-residence.<sup>20</sup> The final months of his tenure coincided with the Centennial year of 1967, at which time, Birney reported, not without pride, that “national narcissism reached the point when even the poets were popular.”<sup>21</sup> The timing was right for the author to confirm the extent of his public role. During the first six months of 1967, Birney calculated his live appearances reached an audience of just under 10,000 listeners, of whom approximately half had attended one of two non-literary events: the “End War in Vietnam” rally in the Eaton Auditorium on May 18th (750 in attendance) and the Love-in at Queen’s Park on May 22nd (4,500 in attendance). All these engagements combined to assert the presence of writer-in-residence as an artist and public intellectual, a viable contributor to university

life and to the wider cultural and social life of the nation.<sup>22</sup>

Although having conceptualized the Toronto residency along the lines of Robert Frost's twenty-two-year appointment at Amherst,<sup>23</sup> Birney was not ambitious to become Toronto's permanent resident author. At times throughout his career, Birney resented his academic obligations, which he sometimes depicted as a muzzle to the creative voice. A complex and often difficult personality, he cultivated his anti-academic stance while writer-in-residence at Toronto, even as he sought to legitimize the position.<sup>24</sup> The author, for Birney, was one who both merited and shunned public recognition and integration. The following year at the University of Waterloo, where Birney's contact with faculty was limited and his observations of student life left him cold,<sup>25</sup> Birney felt alienated, and cast at least one Orwellian glance at the university. In a poem called "1984 Minus 17 & Counting at U of Waterloo Ontario," Birney uses playfully compressed neologisms to describe a driven but soulless student culture: "after the calorestimated meal / in the male hall / they walk back to the compulibratories / ... / sometimes a thousand are in forward motion." The voluntary conformity of the engineering ("engimechs the plureality") and math ("the mathamen") students' dull clothing suggests an undifferentiated mass of humanity, "a communiternity," a collective made all the more remarkable by the absence of individual personalities, "a campustalt." In contrast, the implied individuality and the distanced position of the poet are enforced by the description of the arts students, of whom only "1 in 10 / dress as above" and who "walk alone."<sup>26</sup>

Birney's concept of the author – male, non-conformist, non-academic (in attitude if not on paper) – contributed to his ideas for his replacement at the University of Toronto. Before taking his leave from the University of Toronto in the spring of 1967,

Birney offered president Claude Bissell a list of fourteen authors, ranked by personal preference, whom Birney considered suitable to take up the gauntlet. It included non-university affiliated writers such as Al Purdy (at the head of the list), Morley Callaghan, Leonard Cohen, Donald Harron, David Wevill, and women writers Phyllis Webb, Adele Wiseman, and Margaret Laurence (in eleventh, thirteenth, and fourteenth place, respectively), as well as poet-professors F.R. Scott, Louis Dudek, James Reaney, and Lionel Kearns.<sup>27</sup> Shortly thereafter, however, Birney wrote a second letter recommending Jack Ludwig, also a professor of English, who was then living in New York.<sup>28</sup> Ludwig, unavailable for the upcoming academic year, became the university's next writer-in-residence in 1968.

In contrast to Birney, the third writer-in-residence at the University of Toronto in 1969-70, Margaret Laurence, was as unsure of her fitness for the appointment as she was ambivalent about its value for herself, the university community, and the Canadian public. Several years earlier, her friends in Canada, including Adele Wiseman, Malcolm Ross, and John Gray, had attempted to secure the University of Toronto residency for her. (They found the university had a prior commitment to Ludwig.)<sup>29</sup> Silver Don Cameron had also put her name forward at Dalhousie University in Halifax, and Laurence was invited by the head of the English Department there to apply for a Killam Senior Fellowship (\$12,000 tax free) for a residency to take place in 1968-9.<sup>30</sup> While the plans were developing, to various correspondents, Laurence expressed anxiety about her lack of teaching experience, her foreseen discomfort with associating with professors, and her *small-town timidity* at taking a high-profile appointment at the “imposing” University of Toronto.<sup>31</sup> While Laurence's apprehensions may be considered ill-fitting

modesty, they also indicate the relative novelty, for writers of her generation, of university and government support for literary authors. To Cameron, she expressed discomfort with the idea of ongoing public patronage: having savings from a recent Canada Council grant as well as a Governor General's Award, she wrote that "it doesn't seem that public money ought to be given to me at this point, as I have done terribly well out of this kind of thing in the past year."<sup>32</sup> To Adele Wiseman, with whom she was typically candid, she elaborated: applying for a grant, especially when the money was needed, felt like asking for charity, and the author felt that charity threatened her independence. "It is only a kind of cultural oddity, my reaction to the Can. Council," Laurence explained. "When the chips are down, alas, I have many of [*The Stone Angel* protagonist] Hagar's characteristics – I cannot really bear to feel beholden to anyone. I do not think of this as a virtue, I may say – I think it is an affliction."<sup>33</sup>

The university appointment, and the income and the stamp of public recognition that it represented, presented another issue for Laurence as a woman writer in these years preceding the full impact of second-wave feminism. Laurence confided to Wiseman that the proffered income, not to mention the relocation with or without her teenaged children, created the potential for conflict in her personal life. She worried that Jack Laurence, her estranged husband, might not want the children taken out of England and that the move would disrupt their schooling. She was also concerned that her newly flush income, which she here and elsewhere characterized as "a fluke" and admitted might evaporate at any moment, would make her husband, who had been until recently the primary wage earner, feel inadequate. This shift in gender roles, with the woman conducting the higher-profile, more lucrative career, was appearing increasingly inevitable, but postponing it



was nonetheless a real reason for declining the Dalhousie appointment for 1968-9.

Although Laurence expressed the inclination to put her professional needs first, she feared condemnation for her choices:

I don't feel that the right solution is to give in and say *Your work means more than mine*. But on the other hand, I can't with any honesty say *My work means more than yours*. The man's work, of course, socially, tends to be taken as more valuable by everybody. This is partly why I feel so goddam guilty at wanting to do my own work despite Jack and even despite the children's educational needs.

A mother is not supposed to feel this way. Repeat three times and underline, eh?<sup>34</sup>

Despite her hesitancy, Laurence's literary ambitions would eventually win out.

Following a ten-month correspondence with the University of Toronto in 1968, she accepted the university's offer of \$15,000 and arranged for friends to care for her children and her home in England. Although the "domestic" side of the residency had been smoothly organized – the university arranged a sublet close to campus, complete with a roommate – the professional side remained dauntingly hazy. Before moving to Canada in the fall of 1969, Laurence wrote to several writers with residency experience for advice on how to approach her duties. To Birney, she admitted she was "stricken with nerves" at the thought of the university appointment.<sup>35</sup> Birney's response, in a letter of 29 July 1969, reflects his agenda of boosting the confidence and professionalizing the self-presentation of his fellow authors:

cant imagine why you should be nervous about being the writer-in-res. at u. of t.  
you must be kidding – no teaching, no formal duties whatsoever, a wonderful  
office, a good salary i had to wait forty years to get the job, and even then i had

to argue it into existence, and argue myself out of it again 2 years later

i'm glad you will have it for the coming year and can't believe you won't enjoy meeting and exchanging ideas with all the creative kids around u of t. that's the only part of the 'job' that i considered to be *de rigueur* – anything else, like dining with the brass, giving speeches, i did or didn't take on, as i chose

the main thing is NOT TO LET THE SIDE DOWN (the side being OUR SIDE, the UNUnited Writers of the World) make your *own* writing the first essential, the students your relaxation and joy (BUT NOT IN A DREARY CLASSROOM SITUATION), and don't let yourself develop a single care for the vast muddling stupid reactionary academic mess that is the University of Toronto<sup>36</sup>

Arriving on campus, Laurence would cling to the idea that the authors' "side" existed, even when she confronted barriers – of gender, age, and academic credentials – which she felt separated her from other nationally recognized figures in Canadian literature. Despite her intense fear of public speaking, Laurence gave twenty-seven lectures as the University of Toronto writer-in-residence. The most harrowing of these, she would later report to the university president, took place at McGill University, where she, upon walking into the lecture hall, saw Hugh MacLennan, A.J.M. Smith, and F.R. Scott sitting in the front row:

'The old brigade,' I thought, 'I won't be able to open my mouth.' Then I decided that they were members of my tribe and has come to support me, so I ought to feel heartened rather than nervous.<sup>37</sup>

Over a decade later, in her memoir, *Dance on the Earth* (published posthumously in 1989), Laurence focalizes her time at the University of Toronto more sharply through the lens of her position as a woman writer: recalling that she was the first woman to have an office at Massey College, she tells of the pain of leaving her children, her arrangements with the male graduate student in the adjacent office to come to her aid if the need arose, and her visit to the engineering students' residence to discuss, at their request, not literature but women: "most of them needed a lot of consciousness-raising" is her concluding remark.<sup>38</sup> In the midst of her description of her stint in Toronto, Laurence records that her divorce was finalized at a court date during her Christmas break. This she treats briefly and with a humorous anecdote, though she admits it was "awful."<sup>39</sup> James King's biography of Laurence, however, depicts the court proceedings as the culmination of intense conflicts between the writer's personal and professional selves. His description of the event focuses on details which Laurence herself kept quiet, among them the magistrate's depiction of her as an "unnatural mother" who abandoned her children for employment in Canada.<sup>40</sup>

Unlike Birney, who commented wryly that during his years at the University of Toronto he "should have talked less and written more,"<sup>41</sup> Laurence did not view her residency as an opportunity to write, though she anticipated the appointment might provide her with the opportunity to do some research "in connection with an aspect of Canadian history, with a view to a possible future novel."<sup>42</sup> Laurence had completed *The Fire-Dwellers* (1969) and the children's book *Jason's Quest* (1970) before she returned to Canada, and she did not begin *The Diviners* (1974) until 1971.<sup>43</sup> "I can't seem to combine writing with being a writer-in-res. It is an either/or thing for me," she would

later write to Al Purdy.<sup>44</sup> Part of the problem was the public, performative aspect of the residency, the classroom visits and public lectures, which Laurence felt distanced her from her inner life. It was a theme she often took up in her correspondence with Purdy: having completed her first residency, she wrote, on 14 August 1970, “I’m beginning to feel like a human being again after a year of pretending to be a real live author.”<sup>45</sup> At U of T, Laurence threw all her energy into her work with young writers, sixty in total, including Dennis Lee, Frank Paci, and Gary Geddes.<sup>46</sup> Though she would sometimes express doubt that her advice helped writers in any demonstrable way, Laurence identified one-on-one coaching as the core of her residency work. Her conscientious and fond attitude towards her “clientele” provoked some needling by fellow writer-in-residence Purdy, who concluded one letter with a flourish: “Clients you have? For chrissake! All I got is lousy versifiers.”<sup>47</sup>

By the end of 1973, with two residencies under her belt, Laurence was more at ease in the university system, more confident to decline requests for public lectures and to define her academic duties in ways that suited her. For example, for classroom visits she would agree to question-and-answer sessions only.<sup>48</sup> In her response to the 1973 survey by the Writers’ Union, she discouraged the union from drafting a policy statement on acceptable terms for residencies. Instead, she stressed the importance of flexibility and the different needs and strengths of individual writers. Her ideal residency, which she admitted would not suit everyone, would be geared less towards the production of new work (perhaps reflecting the discomfort with patronage she had earlier expressed to Wiseman) and more towards university coaching: “I would personally rather see the w-in-r paid more, and do fairly large sizeable duties that year and not his/her own work, and

be able to save enough for private writing time the following year. We *are* underpaid, cf. professors and even assistant and teaching instructors.” Pointing to the writers’ lack of bargaining power and the universities’ limited budgets, however, she advised caution: “we may quite soon be a luxury they think they can’t afford.”<sup>49</sup> Unlike Birney, academically qualified and familiar with the workings of the male-dominated post-secondary system, who endeavoured to build a university structure that could support creative authors, Laurence, as a relative outsider, perceived the contemporary residency as an “extra,” a makeshift bridge between academic and literary worlds.

### **Transients on campus**

Another early, previously non-university-affiliated writer-in-residence, Norman Levine, has also depicted author residencies as little more than tentative rapprochements between authors and academic institutions. Levine’s short story “Thin Ice” (1979) depicts the modern writer’s economic and social marginality and leaves hanging the question of whether this marginality is inevitable or in any way desirable. The story is a fictionalized account of an author residency at a Canadian university. Unlike Levine’s real-life appointment at the University of New Brunswick in 1965-6, the narrator’s residency at the unnamed Maritime university is a fleeting three months. What it loses in brevity, however, it makes up in opulence: the writer is offered accommodation in “the best hotel in the city,” rich meals, and celebrity status. At first, he enjoys what seems to be seamless integration into the community. Emerging from his existence as “near-recluse,” on campus he is “in demand,” meeting with professors, students, and visiting VIPs. Beyond the campus borders, encounters with “judges, politicians, engineers, surgeons, scientists,

army officers, restaurateurs, [and] businessmen” provide generous helpings of local lore, ranging in content from practical knowledge to the community’s most intimate stories. A barber offers instruction in how to hunt duck and moose; the officers’ wives from the local military base ask advice regarding their planned musical based on town events and army gossip; a scientist relates the open secret about the parish priest. Just as the department head makes the author an offer of a permanent position (to which the non-committal reply is “That’s very nice”), the narrator’s experience turns dark. En route to a reading engagement at a sister college, he is snowed in for several days in a small town with less than twenty dollars in his pocket. Feeling like “a vagrant,” he is treated with suspicion, and his sense of belonging vanishes like a dream. There is, however, a modicum of satisfaction in this awakening: “All that had happened to me since the last book was published seemed some kind of fraud. I was a writer. In my world nothing is certain. I needed this reminder, I told myself.”<sup>50</sup> Returning to the university in time for another lavish dinner, he acknowledges the reaffirmed distance between himself and “the others,” a separation made inevitable by his knowledge as an outsider:

They were young, attractive, well-fed, well-dressed. How secure they all appeared. And how certain their world.

But outside I could see the snow, the cold, the acres of emptiness that lay frozen all around.<sup>51</sup>

It could be argued that “Thin Ice” suggests that writer’s renewed sense of alienation is somehow necessary for the practice of his art. The resident author’s moments of introspection are, after all, limited to the passages quoted above, and he makes no mention of writing while at the university outside the articles he contributes to

a local magazine. Despite the lack of these indicators of a vibrant inner life, however, Levine's artist is fully absorbed in his environment. His primary characteristic is receptiveness. He records in-jokes and quotes gossip and intimate confessions in long passages, without comment, as if to emphasize the speakers' point of view and linguistic patterns. The effect of this narrative montage is to render a setting that is unmistakably Atlantic Canada in mid-winter, mid-century. The writer has not lost his edge, despite the provision of a soft bed and good food. The continuation of such a life could indeed be "very nice" for all involved. Levine, however, like Laurence and Birney, seems to vacillate between the desire for public integration and recognition and that for autonomy and critical distance.

Moreover, Levine's story anticipates the pattern that would develop for writer-in-residence appointments in Canada: they would guarantee no long-term security to participating authors. The Canada Council, the most significant patron and influential administrator of author residencies, quickly opted against supporting any one writer at a given institution for an extended period of time (see Chapter One), and the majority of participating universities, both those dependent on the council's funding and those which were not, identified value in hosting new writers on a yearly or even semesterly basis. For writers seeking longer-term employment in a given institution, the revolving-door policy seemed disheartening, if not a little comical. Reporting on his appointment at the University of Toronto in 1973-4, for example, W.O. Mitchell drew the university president's attention to the Canadian writer-in-residence circuit, calling it a "game of musical chairs." Comparing his Toronto position with his three-year posting at the University of Calgary (1968-71), Mitchell argued that the short tenure of the former

curtailed the value of the residency for both author and institution.<sup>52</sup> Mitchell would hold residencies at four universities before securing a longer term at the University of Windsor (1979-87).

Less than princely pay did little to attract writers who were dubious that universities were a good fit for creative artists. Irving Layton, who had been part-time lecturer at Sir George Williams University for over a decade before becoming poet-in-residence there in 1965, left that position in 1967, writing to Desmond Pacey, “who in hell wants to be a tamed poetic cat?”<sup>53</sup> Remuneration and not the threat of domesticity, however, was a deciding factor for Layton: the poet-in-residence post had carried a salary that was half that of an assistant professor’s.<sup>54</sup> Combined with the short tenures, inadequate pay deterred more than a few authors from becoming writers-in-residence. While tokens of symbolic capital, such as literary prizes and other distinctions (of which a residency is itself an example), have become increasingly available to Canadian writers since the 1960s, even nationally recognized writers could not with confidence anticipate exchanging markers of prestige for economic capital. Following an unsuccessful attempt to bring Morley Callaghan, among other authors, to the University of Toronto in 1975, writer-in-residence committee member Dave Godfrey observed, “Writers are not essentially greedy people, but perhaps Companions of the Order of Canada and well-known figures throughout the land have a right to feel they are worth at least as much as a public school principal in monetary terms.”<sup>55</sup> Universities seemed unsure about their role in relation to creative writers, as well as unclear about what these writers contributed to campus life. How did hiring authors fit into a mandate of furthering teaching and research? Should the university’s contribution to the writer’s salary be thought of as a



creative writing grant or as compensation for relatively minimal campus duties? A little of both? From the perspective of the writer, however, a university residency represented both a high-profile award and, often, a significant work commitment. Close examination of either component made the offer of scanty cash seem appalling.

Despite Birney's efforts to make author residencies the responsibility of the highest level of university governance, by the mid-1970s most residency programs were administered at the departmental level. While many literature departments were interested in hosting resident writers, at this level budgeting for non-teaching staff became increasingly challenging and improvisational, and the long procedure for applying for Canada Council grants added to the uncertainty. Not always sure what money would become available, universities sounded out writers for expressions of interest months or years in advance, often with offers whose tentativeness some writers found distasteful.<sup>56</sup> On 14 April 1975, T.E. Tausky, associate chairman of the English Department at the University of Western Ontario, invited Dave Godfrey to be Western's writer-in-residence for a three-month term in the upcoming academic year. The proposed salary was \$5,000. Godfrey, who was currently earning \$6,800 per course as an academic, responded to the invitation in "anger":

[W]ould you seriously ask [University of British Columbia professor] Bill New or [University of Toronto professor] Germaine Warkentin to come and work for you for \$5,000.00 per semester? Especially for half a term. What does one do for the rest of the year to survive? And all this without tenure or other benefits.

Frankly, I can consider the offer: insulting! Perhaps for someone just breaking into the field about 25 or so, it might be worthwhile. But if this is the

best that the university can do then it really ought to do nothing and not pretend that it is helping the creative writer exist.<sup>57</sup>

Tausky's response, also written in "anger," detailed the chairman's labours to keep the writer-in-residence program alive on "funds scraped together from those reserved for part-time faculty":

In the abstract, writers-in-residence may well deserve as much as academics. But the present university structure does not usually allow that, and in a period of difficult financing, positions not integrated into the structure will inevitably suffer. I can assure you that without strenuous efforts on my part there would have been no Writer-in-Residence, at any salary, at Western next year. Would that have been a great victory?

I think you should learn to distinguish your friends from your enemies.<sup>58</sup>

In the end, with the help of a matching grant from the Canada Council, Western secured John Newlove for the 1975-6 academic year, at a salary of \$12,000. As we have seen in Chapter One, for many years the Canada Council's stipend remained beneath the level of compensation the council wished to maintain because the council judged it preferable to fund a greater number of residencies than fewer. And while several wealthier universities, notably U of T and University of Alberta (U of A), supplemented the base amount required for the council's matching grant for residencies, others could just afford to match it. By the 1980s, in some cases when the Canada Council grant or a portion of the institutional money did not materialize, host institutions compensated by shortening the residencies. The result for writers was an expanded, faster game of musical chairs.

The University of New Brunswick (UNB), where Alden Nowlan was resident

author from 1968 until his death in 1983, at first glance appears to represent an exceptional case of a university offering a writer secure, long-term employment. In 1976, the ad hoc writer-in-residence committee of the Writers' Union of Canada contacted Alden Nowlan for his impressions as the "only permanent W-in-R around."<sup>59</sup> Nowlan, however, was quick to point out that he was no such thing, but was appointed on a yearly basis.<sup>60</sup> Nowlan's career illustrates how the high-profile position generated increased voluntary work, while at the same time, because of its low salary and lack of security, necessitated extra remunerative work. On 13 May 1979, applying for his annual reappointment in a letter to Robert H. Cockburn, chairman of the English Department, Nowlan listed his activities of the past year, which included visiting high schools in eight communities, organizing a poetry festival, serving on two Canada Council juries and the Governor General's Awards jury, and acting as a member of the Writers' Advisory Council of the Cultural Affairs Branch of the New Brunswick Department of Youth, Recreation and Cultural Resources. The financial rewards for these undertakings, Nowlan pointed out, were "either nominal or non-existent." In addition to these activities and building a substantial record of literary publications that year, Nowlan also undertook some journalism, as he pointedly explained,

partly to supplement my income as a writer-in-residence and partly to maintain my contacts in that field of endeavour, since my appointment at UNB has been on a year-to-year basis, making it imperative that I have some source of income, however modest, to fall back on if my appointment is not renewed.<sup>61</sup>

The quick turnover of appointments and the uncertainty about what the next year held was taxing on writers, especially those who faced relocation with families, as well as

on faculty members who wanted to maintain their programs as a regular component of university life. Finishing her stint at U of A in 1978 and declining other residency offers for the following year, Marian Engel wrote to Naïm Kattan at the Canada Council:

I am embarrassed to turn them down but MUST return to Toronto. They say that the financial situation is so parlous that unless a university can get a writer it wants the programme there is in danger; I dislike this pressure and do not feel I can gypsy the children from school to school for its sake. Stable allotments ought to be organised, really. I mean I'm a good puritan, willing to haul the sun up every morning but I don't think I'm capable of keeping W-i-R programmes alive: wish allocations were bigger and more certain as it's a grand thing to do for the right person in the right year.<sup>62</sup>

Already it was clear that university residencies did not represent a long-term career opportunity for authors but merely one more weapon in the professional writer's arsenal of freelance gigs: "a grand thing ... in the right year." Though universities had greatly expanded since the 1960s and residency programs had become reliable fixtures in many locales, there remained few opportunities for individual writers-in-residence to secure a stable home base. At three years, Adele Wiseman's appointment at the University of Windsor (1988-91) was one of the longest writer-in-residence posts in Canada in the last twenty years. In her final year there, frustrated by the university's lack of help with housing, Wiseman concluded her year-end report of 1991 with this observation, which may be extrapolated to describe the Canadian author's situation as a whole:

What an amazing metaphor the juxtaposition of that great growing claw of a business administration building with my situation, 'resident' artist shunted from

place to place to place to place to place, while it grew and grew and grew and grew and grew; so accurate an enactment, apparently, of University values and priorities.<sup>63</sup>

Since the 1990s, residencies longer than a year or two are even scarcer. Writers establishing more enduring relationships with specific institutions in recent years have done so by working in different capacities within them, typically by taking on sessional teaching positions. A common pattern for professional writers is to alternate temporary teaching appointments, arts council grants, and residencies. Fortunately for authors who find value in such work, flexibility has been afforded by the creation of provincial and municipal author residencies and the expansion of artists-in-the-schools programs and WIER, the Writers In Electronic Residence program.

As I have shown, many Canadian writers-in-residence are full-time academics on leaves of absence. For those self-employed authors, does taking on a series of residencies represent an extended career option? Examining the table of Canada Council writers-in-residence between 1965 and 2000 (Appendix A), one observes some of the same names occurring half a dozen times, even over a period of more than a decade. Given the limited number of residency appointments made annually and the burgeoning number of writers in Canada in recent years, the question has been posed as to whether these posts and other forms of public support ought to be distributed more widely. Mary Soderstrom's article, "The Grant Game," which appeared in *Quill & Quire* in July 2001, addressed this issue. As a focal point for the debate, Soderstrom listed the top 30 English-language writers earning grant monies from the Canada Council and provincial sources between 1991-2000.<sup>64</sup> As at least two of the named authors have since publicly noted, the listed dollar

amounts included residency grants, which these writers argued were at least in part salary-for-service, and not, therefore, full “grants.”<sup>65</sup> By my calculations, exactly half the authors listed had earned some of the grant money from writer-in-residence appointments.

One side of the debate highlighted in “The Grant Game” is expressed by Mona Fertig, who contends that “no professor or writer on sabbatical or in a high-paying job should be eligible” for grants and that writers who have enjoyed grants in the past should move on: “There is only so much honey in the pot. Grants are temporary financial respite for creative work, not steady jobs.”<sup>66</sup> While upcoming authors who would like to take on residencies are understandably frustrated when experienced resident authors secure them, the suggestion that self-employed authors should “graduate” from the grant system, presumably to live on royalties and film options, or give up and find a day job, is also problematic. Earning a livelihood in the literary marketplace, however, is no easier now than it was in 1965, even though residency programs and other factors have permitted a larger number of writers to work and be recognized in their chosen profession. It is reasonable, then, to expect an individual author to cease seeking out such work? Authors, public institutions, and government patrons alike have identified value in residencies held by writers at all stages of their careers. No matter what the resident author’s experience, each residency offers a new set of circumstances and generates its own synergy.

### **University mentoring**

Next to benefiting the resident author, encouraging aspiring writers is an important goal of writer-in-residence programs. Reports of writers-in-residence are

fascinating for the glimpses they provide into the wide world of amateur writing. Describing the range of material she saw during her tenure at the University of Alberta in 1991-2, Merna Summers wrote:

There was considerable variety in both the type and the quality of writing brought to me. Manuscripts ranged from a harrowing account, in Spanish, of the experiences of a woman who had been tortured as a political prisoner in Argentina, to a 500-page interpretation of the Book of Revelations, from a disconnected record of the sufferings of a woman with Tourette's syndrome to some really exciting writing, particularly in the short story form, some of it by writers who are as yet unpublished. I was also delighted to have the opportunity to read a fantasy novel for children that I strongly feel may become a Canadian classic.<sup>67</sup>

Summers' account is not atypical in its enumeration of eclectic non-fiction, creative writing, and the occasional works of promise that a writer-in-residence encounters. Whether in a library or university, resident authors have read and responded to a wide array of manuscript material. The university environment, and that of English departments in particular, however, provides a particularly nuanced setting for contact between professional and aspiring writers.

One of the few published accounts of university mentoring is John Metcalf's essay "Without an 'E,'" a satiric memoir<sup>68</sup> of four residencies Metcalf held between 1972 and 1976, in each of which the presence of the writer barely registered on the campus radar. Metcalf writes:

During that entire year at UNB, I saw two students. When I was writer-in-

residence at the University of Ottawa, one student came to see me; she was in the English Department and wanted to know if I thought she should quit. She seemed very intelligent so I advised her to quit forthwith. We still correspond. When I was writer-in-residence at Loyola of Montreal not a single student appeared. When I was writer-in-residence at Concordia one student did come to see me but he turned out to be an unpublished poet seeking my aid in securing a teaching position at a CEGEP.<sup>69</sup>

An examination of Canada Council residency reports suggests that the experience Metcalf describes is unusual; even the quietest university residencies appear to have attracted some aspiring writers from the student population. Moreover, while four students in four years is certainly not a strong showing, it would be erroneous to judge the success of a residency simply by tallying the number of clients. Well-timed work with one person may make a valuable contribution to Canadian letters. For example, in another early residency, Peter Such, at Erindale College, University of Toronto, in 1971-2, reported working with six students of “distinct promise” and mentioned only one student by name: Harold Ladoo, whose *No Pain Like this Body* was to be published shortly by the House of Anansi.<sup>70</sup> *No Pain*, which was reissued in 2003 with an introduction by Dionne Brand as “a classic of Canadian and Caribbean writing,” would be among Ladoo’s last works.<sup>71</sup> The author was murdered in his native Trinidad in 1973.

One of the main targets of Metcalf’s essay is what he views as the academy’s endemic lack of engagement with contemporary literature, of which the students’ ignorance of the writer’s presence is symptomatic. The teasing hostility towards the university exhibited in the passage above is more pronounced in Metcalf’s rewriting of



the essay in *An Aesthetic Underground* (2003), in which he makes the assertion that “Canadian literary studies and ‘scholarship’ have always been lax and undemanding,” expunges appreciative passages about Desmond Pacey’s and UNB’s support of creative artists, and adds a section on Fred Cogswell’s “unspeakable” Fiddlehead Poetry Books, “wretched pamphlets” that “took away from the three or four good poets we should have been reading.” Metcalf’s attack on the Fiddlehead chapbooks is used to underscore his criticisms of state and university support of literature, which he portrays as conservative and generalist: “Fred’s contribution was of the kind Canada understood and wanted. It was a kind of ‘outreach,’ the literary equivalent of helium balloons on strings and painting the faces of children at ‘cultural events.’”<sup>72</sup> What had the serious creative author to gain by contributing to such ‘outreach’ activity?

We need not look further than F.R. Scott’s “The Canadian Authors Meet” (first published in 1927) to locate a starting point for the argument that ambitious Canadian authors have long regarded the resilience of amateur and commercially oriented writers, as well as the cultural institutions that take them seriously, as threats to their own cultural status. “O Canada, O Canada, Oh can / A day go by without new authors springing / To paint the native maple ...?” asks Scott in the often anthologized poem.<sup>73</sup> And, as we have seen in the previous section, creative artists have at times felt under-appreciated and exploited in the academic environment. Not surprisingly, writers-in-residence have sometimes recorded antagonist relationships with both their clients and host institutions.

Evidence of such antagonism is offered by Carol Bolt, a professional dramatist, who became playwright-in-residence at U of T in 1977-8. In a long, reflective report of 1978, which is, in parts, variously humble, hilarious, and full of rage, Bolt speaks for the

most part admiringly of the fifty individual writers who visited her Massey College office. There was, however, as she explains, one student whom she found to be “totally without anything I could ever believe ever might be talent by any stretch of the imagination” who presented her with a 150-poem “sonnet cycle written in doggerel verse”:

I tried to react positively but honestly to all the writing I saw, but the sonnets I had to say I hated. He said his friends liked them. I said ‘So what.’ This very low level of critical exchange inspired him to appear six weeks later with a who-dun-it written for the stage concerning a country house and greed, lust, blood and murder. I think he hoped to get me where I lived. But I hated the play, too, except that it was funnier than the sonnets. Unfortunately, it wasn’t meant to be.<sup>74</sup>

Within the context of her report, Bolt’s anecdote illustrates her on-going effort to establish some sort of authoritative presence as university writer-in-residence. In addition to this student who seemed to disregard the weight of her critical opinion, she reported that student-journalists had questioned her literary credentials, to the point that Bolt felt that her salary was being begrudged in some quarters. Bolt’s frustration with the sonnet-writer resulted in part from her perception that the institutional environment did not appreciate her situation as a professional writer, either by acknowledging her expertise or recognizing her sacrifices for her craft:

I remember someone at the Writer-in-Residence conference [held at Hart House on 19 and 20 October 1977] suggested that one useful thing the Writer-in-Residence might do would be to offer a prize of \$100 or so to the best writing she discovered. I said, ‘Sure, why not, they can have my royalties from *Desperadoes*,’

by which I meant that writing didn't really have much to do with money even when it is your living.<sup>75</sup>

Bolt was, as were other writers, angered by the naive and incorrect assumptions about the ease of writing and the financial rewards of publishing that she encountered as writer-in-residence. To take another example, during her term at U of T, Margaret Laurence experienced a similar sense of exasperation. To Al Purdy, Laurence wrote that she had received over five-dozen letters from across the country, in which writers had asked for help getting their manuscripts published. These tried her patience:

the fucking letters in this vein have bugged me ... because so many are from people who are virtually illiterate. What do you say? It is pretty awful, because here are people who are actually nearly inchoate, but needing to SAY.<sup>76</sup>

On campus as well, some writers-in-residence observed clients' seemingly inexplicable drive to create new material, despite lack of encouragement from the mentor and their own lack of interest in editing and revision. One University of Alberta writer-in-residence reported of the work received: "Some of this writing was intractably bad; it was at times discouraging to read the fourth and fifth novel by the same writer, with all the flaws that I had pointed out in the earlier works." Faculty members at U of A recall that this writer kept a logbook of consultations for the benefit of the next resident author, in which a common annotation was "Not interested in improving writing." Educating clients about realities of professional authorship, its necessary commitments and uncertain rewards, proved to be an ongoing battle for many resident authors.

While significant institutional interest in creative writing pedagogy has emerged in recent decades, most writers-in-residence have been free to style their own mentorship

approaches.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, although Canada Council guidelines do not permit writers-in-residence to teach university courses, many resident writers have done so, either for extra remuneration during a residency, or to maintain contact with the university before or after the appointment. Some writers, however, have been very reluctant to take on classes or informal seminars. When, in 1968, Desmond Pacey inquired if incoming writer-in-residence Alden Nowlan would conduct a writing workshop, Nowlan responded:

I'm very dubious about the writers' workshop idea. Even the expression 'workshop' sort of sets my teeth on edge like metal grinding against glass. I realize that it is non-credit and informal and that the number of students taking part would be very small, but it suggests to me – probably quite wrongly and even irrationally – an approach to writing that is foreign to me. It sounds to me like the kind of thing that has the same relation to writing that the pre-marital courses given by priests have to marriage. That isn't to say that either a writers' workshop or a pre-marital course need be useless; but I don't think I'd be any good at conducting either one or the other.<sup>78</sup>

Nowlan's comparison of a writing teacher with a priest who counsels couples in marriage may suggest the irrelevancy of teachers for those who must struggle to find their own voice. It also imbues the figure of the writer with a powerfully authoritative role within an institutional framework to which Nowlan, whose previous experience with formal education had culminated in grade five, did not aspire.

Non-university affiliated writers like Nowlan often sought to bring evidence of a wider social and cultural experience to the campus body. For his writing seminar at Carleton University in 1972-3, non-Canada Council writer-in-residence Mordecai Richler

requested the prerogative to interview prospective students and insist on “a most stringent reading list as prerequisite to the course.” Through these means, he hoped to have a creative writing seminar that was “Not so much middle-class group therapy ... as a discipline, making it clear from the very beginning that I cannot actually ‘teach’ the unteachable, but can be helpful to *talented* young people.”<sup>79</sup> Some writers challenged course curricula by introducing their student clients to wide-ranging literary works they were not studying in school. Expressing her intention to introduce literary works to writers at “the right psychological moment,” for instance, Elizabeth Smart directed her clients towards a cosmopolitan literary selection, largely of the twentieth century, including works by Ronald Firbank, Saki, Peter Handke, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Samuel Beckett, Stevie Smith, W.S. Graham, George Barker, David Gascoyne, David Wright, Patrick Kavanagh, Rilke, and Arthur Rimbaud.<sup>80</sup> It has been very common for resident authors to record such efforts to encourage students to read widely. “Creative writing needs to have that literary matrix to support it,” comments Daphne Marlatt, who has held five residency appointments. “You don’t develop good writers unless they’re good readers.”<sup>81</sup>

Talent, once identified by the writer-in-residence, often needs help with what Tom Wayman has called “the second skill set” of the professional author,<sup>82</sup> the business side of submitting work to magazines or book publishers, working with agents, and negotiating contracts. Many resident authors have created handouts listing such things as reference books for writers, little magazines, and Canadian trade publishers, and outlining the basics of physically preparing a manuscript for submission. These practical elements, which some writers assumed were well known, were often received as much-needed and

welcome information. While at Université du Québec à Montréal in 1989-90, Raymond Plante, publisher (with Éditions du Boreal), writer for television, and author of children's, young adult, and adult literature, registered profound surprise at how little the university community understood of the "technical" side of publishing.<sup>83</sup> Like Margaret Atwood, who a decade earlier had simultaneously served as writer-in-residence and member of the editorial board at Anansi, Plante took pains to differentiate between his roles as resident author and literary press publisher and to direct those writers aspiring to publish through the regular channels.

That being said, university resident authors have often used their connections to help to introduce emerging writers to domestic and international audiences. While at Concordia University in 1986-7, Clark Blaise reported that "a number of young authors have seen print (due to my intervention), and are about to be anthologized in an American quarterly, *Translations*, whose guest-editor I am, for an upcoming Canadian issue."<sup>84</sup> Still other writers looked to campus resources for means of promoting emerging creative writers. Dorothy Livesay used her tenure at the University of Manitoba in 1974-5 as an opportunity to launch the influential *CV/II (Contemporary Verse II, 1975-85?)*, one of the few publications of the 1970s to be singled out by Ken Norris in his study of little magazines in Canada, in which he praised *CV/II* as a lively national forum for poetry criticism.<sup>85</sup> Livesay, who personally financed the first two issues, described the impetus for this undertaking:

There seemed to be such a keen interest in prairie writing that, with the cooperation and administrative support of the Evening Institute (Department of Extension), I organized a 3-day symposium on 'Manitoba in Literature' which

some 70 teachers and writers attended February 28–March 1. ... I was so impressed by the need for a western literary outlet (particularly for the encouragement of young poets) that I decided to launch a quarterly magazine of poetry and poetry criticism. It would be centred in Winnipeg but would seek to be national in scope and popular in appeal.<sup>86</sup>

Like Livesay, other writers worked within university infrastructures to promote young writers. From 1972 to 1984, resident writers at the University of Western Ontario acted as advisors to student editors of the *Pom Seed*, the English department's student journal of creative writing. While in residence at the University of Waterloo, Harold Horwood founded the *New Quarterly* literary magazine (est. 1981), with the help of campus funds drawn from multiple sources, \$3,000 raised from "friends in the writing profession," and free typesetting and press work provided by one Father Lavigne of St. Jerome's College.<sup>87</sup> Other resident writers have encouraged the production of chapbooks issued through university printers, as Marilyn Bowering did at Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1995.<sup>88</sup>

Beyond nurturing students of literature, a university resident author can be a beacon for aspiring writers who have never set foot in an English department. A university campus can be a vast, cacophonous, and lonely place, as resident writers whose presence has not been adequately advertised have sometimes found. Once they have established a visible presence, however, such authors have been uniquely positioned to make contact with writers from all corners of campus – students, faculty, and staff. While at the University of Toronto in 1975-6, Adele Wiseman described the isolation of most campus writers, which she felt the resident author could rectify:

[These campus writers] work [on their manuscripts] alone, though there is no hint of the deliberately chosen ivory tower here. These people vocalize their sense of isolation, and their desire to make contact with others who are writing. They need the stimulation and cross-fertilization and craft-talk which can prove invaluable to the developing artist. But they are encapsulated in their various disciplines. ...

You will note that I am not speaking now of those flowers in the University hat, the already justly famous literary people who grace our Campus, but of those aspiring possibilities with whom I have, in my function, made contact.<sup>89</sup>

To aid in increasing contact between these writers, Wiseman recommended the establishment of more writers' workshops, a monthly news bulletin, a continuing series of student readings, and inter-university readings. Wiseman had already begun the program of student readings on campus, but the other projects were not acted upon.

Beyond the campus borders, university writers-in-residence also have had an impact. At universities including UNB, University of Windsor, U of T, and U of A, writers have observed that over half of the submitted manuscripts originated from off-campus, from the local town, surrounding rural areas, or from outside the province. The long-standing University of Alberta program (est. 1974) has an especially vibrant community component. Participating writers are greatly in demand for readings and as workshop facilitators, reference writers, and literary adjudicators. By the mid-1980s, professor Bert Almon estimated that resident writers saw an average of 50 individual clients per year, often with the majority coming from outside the university.<sup>90</sup> Writers were often awed by the sheer quantity of work they received. Reporting the reason behind the extent of his reading load at U of A in 1986-7, Ray Smith explained, "I had



mentioned on both radio and TV that I was available to all of Alberta, every fifth resident of which seems to have written a 1,000 page novel.”<sup>91</sup> The following year, Leona Gom adjudicated several literary competitions, several of which drew applicants from across the country. She recorded her reading activities as follows:

the CAA Alberta Poetry Yearbook Competition (1,600 entries); the *Gateway* [campus newspaper] poetry contest (400 entries); the Celebration of Women in the Arts competition (about 20 manuscripts): and the Alberta Culture Poetry Award (10 books).<sup>92</sup>

The Alberta Poetry Yearbook competition had generated the same number of applicants for writer-in-residence Elizabeth Smart five years earlier.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, even thirty years earlier, the immense popularity of the contest provoked Wilfred Watson to remark: “[The] hundreds and hundreds of entries of verse ... from people all over the country [are] enough to confirm my suspicion that poetry is a universal human instinct.”<sup>94</sup>

To return to an idea expressed earlier, beyond red pens, blue pencils, and paper by the tonnage, it is individual contacts that make author residencies worthwhile. For the researcher, these encounters are unfortunately more difficult to document through the archival records. Mentors rarely record clients by name. Of his term at the University of Toronto in 1984-5, for example, Leon Rooke reported advising writers on “over 200 short stories and drafts, two novels, several plays, not a faint scattering of poems, and even several self-help, diet control, factory management, and automotive maintenance manuscripts.”<sup>95</sup> In a *Globe and Mail* article of 2001, however, a public note of personal gratitude was sounded by one of Rooke’s former clients, Rohinton Mistry.<sup>96</sup> Beyond editorial help, practical advice, and intense one-on-one consultation, both resident authors

and clients have identified value in the most casual of exchanges. While at the male-dominated University of Alberta, then graduate student Aritha van Herk found resident author Marian Engel to be “exactly the right person at the right time”:

The person who really made a difference to me was Marian Engel. She was there right after she had published *Bear*. ... Marian came and she read *Judith* and she gave me some great feedback. But most of all she just gave me confidence. ... And through her I met people like Margaret Laurence and Jane Rule, and they were all so important to my belief that I could write the kind of stories about women that I wanted to write.<sup>97</sup>

Daphne Marlatt agrees that instilling confidence is one of the most important things a mentor can do for a young writer. Characterizing the Canadian writing community as “generous,” Marlatt says, “A lot of older writers have acted as ‘off the cuff’ mentors over the years. Part of the pleasure [in being a writer-in-residence] is giving back what you had been given as a younger writer.”<sup>98</sup>

To summarize some aspects of university mentoring: writers-in-residence educate, sometimes reluctantly, the university community about the professional lives of working authors; they introduce new voices, new educational approaches, and new literary texts in the academic environment; they provide practical help to publishable writers; and they forge valuable links between writers on campuses and beyond. Finally, like all resident authors, they also sometimes provide the encouragement a beginning writer needs to take the next step.

## Library mentoring

Author Myrna Kostash recalls an experience that enforced her perception that the culture of the public library differed greatly from that of the university, in that there is a “sense that the people really *own* [the library].” While Kostash was writer-in-residence at the Saskatoon Public Library (SPL) in 2002-3, a strike temporarily closed the library doors. She remembers: “I was standing outside waiting for my client, and I watched people’s reactions when they came up and realized the doors were locked and they couldn’t get in. ... The bewilderment! It’s not possible that you can’t go into *your library*.” Comparing this sense of ownership with the public’s attitude toward universities, she comments, “The university is the temple on the hill; it has a very different presence in the community.”<sup>99</sup>

Since their creation in Saskatchewan in 1978 (see Chapter Two), library residencies have been lively centres of activity, which differ somewhat from university residencies in atmosphere, aims, and clientele. From the numbers reported, it appears that writers-in-libraries on average see a higher number of clients than university authors; however, it is difficult to make general comparisons as library reports have tended to be more scrupulous in regard to numbers than have university reports. It is clear, however, that writers-in-libraries are in high demand. Of the nine reports that are available for the Regina Public Library (RPL) between the years 1980 and 1990, seven of the writers reported logging 90 or more individual consultations. At SPL, from the start of its program in 1981 to 1991, five writers reported conducting between 190 and 267 consultations.

Library placements often require more structured community outreach activities

than do university appointments. This is especially true in the Yukon, where the residency is heavily promoted, and the author, who is based at the Whitehorse Public Library, is considered a resource person for the whole of the territory. Writers-in-residence there have travelled extensively to branch and volunteer libraries in remote communities, some of which are not accessible by road, to give readings and conduct workshops. These authors have also helped set local writers' groups in motion. In 1991 Gertrude Story initiated a committee to explore the feasibility of a Yukon Writers' Guild; three years later Maria Campbell helped to form the Yukon First Nations Writers Circle. Such widespread, community-focused work requires considerable dedication from the author; travelling to the North alone demands some sacrifices: Susan Mayse, quoted earlier, reports that she spent a more than a third of her gross income on housing while in residence in the Yukon.<sup>100</sup>

Library writers-in-residence have sometimes found their services in demand with specific groups, including rural populations, children, new immigrants, and seniors. Of this last group, Edna Alford, writer-in-residence at SPL in 2000-1, observed, "It is my belief that this constituency of writers is less well served in the country right now than it should be, and whatever initiatives possible be taken to rectify the situation."<sup>101</sup> While several RPL authors report working extensively with seniors, that library also introduced a focus on youth activities in 1990s.<sup>102</sup> Libraries are likely better situated than are universities for contact with such social groups.

While library residencies have often taken place in small cities and towns, the response to library programs in large urban centres has also been enthusiastic. Miriam Waddington's report on her tenure at the Toronto Public Library in 1986 is particularly

interesting for the portrait it reveals of an urban Canadian writing community. Few writer-in-residence reports so scrupulously describe an author's clientele and their writing.

Over a period of six months, from June to December 1986, Waddington advised 178 poetry and fiction writers. While the library had in fact received 239 manuscripts before a cut-off date for submissions was imposed, the author decided to restrict her sessions to one per client and turn away manuscripts in genres other than poetry and fiction, as well as those received from out of town. Manuscripts arriving from as far away as Sudbury and North Bay in Ontario, as well as Manitoba, Arizona, and Florida, were therefore returned to sender.<sup>103</sup>

In keeping with patterns identified by other writers-in-residence, Waddington found that only a minority of clients was producing potentially publishable work. However, she observed that writing was a valued activity for writers of all skill levels:

Out of 180 appointments, only two people failed to use their time, in each case because of illness. This indicates how important their mss were to them. Another indication was the care that had gone into the presentation of the manuscripts. Nearly all were typed, and many were enhanced by original drawings, collages, and bookbindings.<sup>104</sup>

Whereas other writer-in-residence reports have made reference only to the most seemingly unlikely client-writers – farmers, prisoners, blue-collar workers – Waddington appears to have kept a complete log of her clientele:

The writers who came spanned all age, ethnic and occupational groups.... The majority were between the ages of 15 and 45. About half, or a little more than

half, were women. A fair portion were working-class, and a few were immigrants with limited English language resources. One was a Cree Indian from a reserve in the Maritimes [sic]. There were nurses' aides, home care people, furnace repair men, waitresses, university and high school students, teachers, computer programmers, accountants, public relations workers, free lance commercial journalists, shippers and factory workers.<sup>105</sup>

For the author, this cross-section of humanity drawn together by the pursuit of creative writing was fascinating. Waddington concluded, "Even though only about one quarter of the manuscripts were in any way interesting, all the people who came were intensely so, and all had a deep yearning to experience and express more than their lives offered them."<sup>106</sup>

Although Waddington had a democratic, inclusive approach to her work with clients, her evaluation of their reading material was more elitist. Waddington surveyed her clients' reading preferences, finding that approximately "25% had literary interests and were active readers. About 75% were library users. Two thirds read only subway literature, magazines, newspapers, and commercial trash." While some of her clients declared an interest in writing popular fiction, it is perhaps not surprising, given Waddington's attitude toward "commercial trash," that very few admitted an ambition to write Harlequins.<sup>107</sup>

Overall, Waddington's report reveals a populist approach to fostering literary activity that has characterized library programs since their inception. While such programs have at times been taxing on writers – Waddington herself declared she would never do it again – library residencies have been extremely effective in bringing together

amateur and professional writers in a context where both parties have access to considerable printed and other resources. During her residency at RPL in 1982-3, Janet Lunn planned to work on an historical novel and several picture books and was looking forward to “the bliss of working where reference material is at hand.”<sup>108</sup> The library location has been convenient for writers of fiction and non-fiction, especially for work set in local areas. As noted in Chapter One, although non-fiction writers did not become eligible for residency grants until 1997, non-fiction has always figured prominently in the work brought to resident writers. Library resident authors have confronted a miscellany of non-fiction works variously intended for private, literary, and commercial ends: magazine articles, memoirs, autobiographies, biographies, family and local histories, encyclopedias, and, occasionally, commissioned reports have been among the works brought to their attention.

Children’s literature and popular fiction have also been especially in evidence in library residencies. Martyn Godfrey’s work at the Edmonton Public Library in 1989 was focused on such commercially oriented writing and publishing. Godfrey conducted two well-attended workshops, “The Contemporary Children’s Fiction Market” and “How to Write a Successful Book for Young People,” and volunteered 138.5 hours of his own time reading the submitted manuscripts, including “young adult and adult novels, romance novels, mysteries, fantasy, horror novels, text books, poetry, magazine articles, speculative fiction, scripts, [and] picture books.” As university writers-in-residence have helped clients find publishing venues, Godfrey also directed six clients to his Edmonton agent, Joanne Kellockin, in the hope of placing their books with Canadian or American publishing houses; two signed with her.<sup>109</sup>

As in the university setting, library authors have found themselves dispelling myths about authorship and publishing. As Seán Virgo, writer-in-residence at SPL in 1991-2, reported:

I've dealt too, inevitably, with a fair number of folk who have read nothing but Stephen King, want to be Stephen King, and yearn to earn like Stephen King (preferably without working 10 hours a day at it like Stephen King!). I help them all I can, wish them well and suggest, without great optimism, other writers they might also read and learn from.<sup>110</sup>

An interesting point to emerge from library residency reports is that the presence of professional authors attracts writers who are not normally library patrons. Authors, such as Elisabeth Harvor at SPL in 1998-9, have made it part of their mentoring practice to introduce these clients to the libraries' collections. By encouraging wider reading practices, Harvor held out "hope" for the people she saw who were "writing in a Hallmark greeting card style, without originality or force. ... One of the things they almost always have to do is learn to *read* better work."<sup>111</sup> As in the university setting, aspiring writers are encouraged to read widely and outside their accustomed areas.

In conclusion, library residencies make professional writers available to a wide range of writing communities in rural and urban areas. At the same time, through resident authors' work with the public, libraries become more accessible to these communities. "Library services and the imaginative literary ferment go very well together," Joe Rosenblatt, writer-in-residence at SPL in 1985-6, observed. "I feel that I have played a vital and concrete role in the process."<sup>112</sup>



## Writing communities

If we take the word “culture” in its broadest sense, to describe the sociological habits of a community, then the participation of community writers in writer-in-residence programs would seem to indicate that writing is an important component in Canadian culture, a popular activity practised with varying levels of skill, talent, and devotion, much like gardening or photography. I have chosen these prosaic activities, over perhaps the more likely comparisons, such as painting or playing a musical instrument, to call attention to the multiple motivations that might drive a person to write, as well as the many kinds of writing a person may attempt. Like a garden, a piece of writing may be undertaken for private satisfaction or it may be with a view to “publication.” Like a photograph, it may serve an artistic or documentary purpose, and be created with a very specific audience, such as family and close friends, in mind. Few gardeners or photographers consider themselves, or aspire to be considered, artists.

Little research has been done on this wide field of activity, which I have called, for want of a better term, “amateur” writing. One useful study examining a subset of this activity, however, is Pauline Greenhill’s *True Poetry: Traditional and Popular Verse in Ontario* (1989), which documents the presence of folk poetry in southern Ontario in the early 1980s. A prevalent practice in “mainstream Anglo Canada” in “urban, suburban, and rural areas alike,” folk or vernacular poetry has been largely ignored by “representatives of elite culture”: folklorists have generally interested themselves in broader based oral traditions,<sup>113</sup> and literature scholars educated in the modernist sensibility are unmoved by folk poetry’s parochial subject matter, predictable forms, concrete language, didactic tone, and themes largely confined to the praise of order and

tradition. Despite this lack of academic interest, Greenhill contends that

vernacular poetry is a valuable example of the prodigious creativity that human beings display in their everyday lives. Despite limitations of time, energy, and materials, people with no formal training and with little thought of material reward consistently produce new objects and texts that explain, elaborate, or criticize their lives and cultures.<sup>114</sup>

Observing that vernacular poetry loses its currency when taken out of context, Greenhill points to Canadian comedic treatments of such works (real and fictitious) in William Arthur Deacon's *The Four Jameses* (1927), Paul Hiebert's *Sarah Binks* (1947), and Randy Woods' *The Better Poems of Peter Paul van Camp* (1978), which present such verse "as representing backward sentimentality, poor education, and other negative stereotypes of rural life. They ignore the true significance of this poetry to its creators and their audiences."<sup>115</sup>

While Greenhill's work focuses on a small segment of writers who publish poems in local newspapers or perform them at community events, her analysis is useful in illuminating one corner of the wide range of literary activity witnessed by writers-in-residence. It is common for authors of an academically honed literary sensibility to observe that the majority of the writing brought to their attention is "not interesting" or "bad": "[A nine-year-old girl] was my youngest 'customer' and a man in his seventies who writes preachy poetry was the oldest. This job definitely fills a need," blandly reported one author on the community component of her work. Another library writer-in-residence observed, "Most of the work I was asked to appraise was not of very high standard" and advised the program administrators to make inroads into the university

community to remedy the situation.

Resident authors who have defined a larger mandate that includes responding to folk writing and work in non-literary genres, however, have found that they can help writers identify real and realistic goals for writing with no publishing potential. Myrna Kostash explains: “I try to find out why they’re writing ... and if their ambition is simply to pass something on to their children, then I’ll help them maybe organize it or [offer] just the sheer opportunity for them to talk [and] get an interested, a sympathetic response.” Through such expressions of interest, Kostash has engaged in personal exchanges during residences in both Saskatoon and Regina, in both places meeting “women who are so grateful for just the interest and the attentiveness and listening. They send me muffins; they send me cards.”<sup>116</sup>

Authors-in-residence have discovered that, in addition to being writers, they are readers and listeners. Sometimes the edges of their community role have blurred. Authors have reported meeting clients who were writing “for personal solace” or were not writing at all, but simply seeking human contact. One author-in-the-library put the number of such individuals who consulted him at twenty per cent: these persons’ “needs were essentially human, psychological and born out of loneliness,” he observed. Writers who have found themselves “functioning as social workers” have struggled with their desire to reserve their energy for the written word. Alden Nowlan reported that during his tenure at the University of New Brunswick, his services were increasingly in demand by professional social workers, who contacted him on behalf of their clients, many of whom were individuals in the penal or mental health systems. Nowlan acquiesced, but noted he was “dubious about the value of writing as a social therapy.”<sup>117</sup>

Writing is, however, a powerful form of communication, and just as specific works of literature speak to readers, an author's physical presence may also embolden a beginning or potential writer to make contact. As Joanna Russ has observed, "Without models, it's hard to work; without a context, difficult to evaluate; without peers, nearly impossible to speak."<sup>118</sup> A resident writer's gender, regional affiliation, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and linguistic background are often significant factors in drawing out voices from particular communities. A writer-in-residence by then in her seventies, Dorothy Livesay noted that many of her clients at Simon Fraser University (1979-80) and the University of Toronto (1983) were young women, and older men and women.<sup>119</sup> Of his tenure at Memorial University of Newfoundland (1993-4), Newfoundland novelist Wayne Johnston observed:

most of my writing students have told me that I am the first person to whom they have shown their stories and poems, and the first writer they have ever met, it having previously been their belief that all writers were either dead or from somewhere other than Newfoundland.<sup>120</sup>

Some writers have unexpectedly captured the attention of specific communities, while others have been hired with the intention of galvanizing these same groups. At the University of Calgary in 1998-9, Canadian-born Peter Oliva attracted immigrant writers and members of the Italian-Canadian community by his name alone.<sup>121</sup> Dub poet Lillian Allen was chosen as the writer to re-launch the University of Windsor's program in 1999, according to faculty member Di Brandt, "because she's very good at mobilizing communities. ... She's a great artist and pioneer."<sup>122</sup> Allen's residency resulted in interdisciplinary performances combining poetry, film, and visual arts, and she was

credited with forging links on campus, as well as “between the campus and the broader community, in particular the Afro-Canadian and Afro-American community in this our broader region, and the local arts community.”<sup>123</sup>

At times the individual working in residence can attract individuals who are otherwise not at ease in the so-called public institutions hosting the residences. Reflecting on the people’s sense of ownership she observed at SPL, Myrna Kostash admitted, “But even there, especially in Saskatoon, I was told that there would be certain inhibitions about coming to see me from, say, the people in the Aboriginal or the poor neighbourhoods. ... Not everyone has a habit of going to the library.”<sup>124</sup> The presence of Métis author Maria Campbell at RPL in 1981-2, however, helped some writers to overcome their sense of alienation from the institution. Campbell reported reading manuscripts from incarcerated men and women, from women’s groups, and from Native and non-Native low-income single mothers, noting, “Their writing is good and is, I feel, important.”<sup>125</sup> Campbell’s presence had had a similar effect at the University of Alberta in 1979-80, where faculty members remember that her residency was the first to draw Aboriginal writers to the department. Nearly twenty-five years later, Professor Bert Almon recalled witnessing the unusual sight of a young Native woman carrying an enormous portfolio of artwork to Campbell’s office.<sup>126</sup> That writer-in-residence programs give a face to the professional author may in time be revealed to be an important factor in fostering non-traditional writing communities.

## **Conclusion**

Since their inception in the 1960s, writer-in-residence programs have provided writers with high-profile, if short-term, employment. Early resident authors, such as Earle Birney and Margaret Laurence, became actively engaged in exploring the potential significance of these appointments for the economic and cultural status of Canadian author. For them and many writers since, the challenge has been to combine an increasingly task-laden public role with private work, both their own writing and their work with aspiring writers. The examination of working “in residence” thus offers an exciting portrait of both professional authorship and the larger writing communities in mid- to late-twentieth-century Canada.

**UNIVERSITY WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE  
AND CANADIAN CANONS**

The previous chapter traced the development of the university's role as patron of resident authors. While residency programs have not become institutionalized in a way that guarantees reliable, long-term employment for writers, the university's participation in the Canadian literary institution remains of fundamental importance. Writing to Al Purdy in 1980, Margaret Laurence observed that the academic system both nurtured and was nurtured by her literary output, even as it left the author out in the cold:

I am not against academics in any way – without their interest, our books would not be in university courses, so god bless 'em and all that, and I mean it. But still, when I consider that the work of writers such as you and myself and quite a pile of others have become a kind of growth industry in the academic world, and here we are, damn it, wondering every January if we're going to make enough to live on this year.<sup>1</sup>

The “growth industry” of Canadian literary studies, which gained momentum from the 1960s forward, was the result of many factors, including an increase in Canadian literary production, the expansion of Canadian universities, and the professionalization of both authors and professors.<sup>2</sup> To speak of the formation of Canadian literary canons in this

period is to describe multiple sites of struggle for legitimization, not just among authors of different schools, but among professors and academic institutions.

This chapter explores how university writer-in-residence programs contribute to the complex processes of constructing and contesting Canadian literary canons. My argument is informed by the work of Pierre Bourdieu, whose analysis of how literary works are consecrated is based on the architecture of the “field of cultural production,” in which positions are held by various agents (authors, publishers, professors, booksellers, etc.), who compete to gain legitimacy through the accumulation of symbolic capital.<sup>3</sup> In this “economic world reversed,” symbolic and economic capital have a negative relationship: short-term commercial success becomes a liability for artists seeking long-term consecration, and would-be consecrators manifest disinterestedness in order to consolidate their status. While some critics have noted the specificity of Bourdieu’s work to the cultural institutions of France, Canadian critic Paul Martin has argued that Bourdieu’s models are particularly appropriate to the Canadian context due to “the degree to which the field of restricted production relies so heavily on an economy of purely symbolic goods.”<sup>4</sup> (In this regard we might keep in mind that while the literary field in France is to large extent demarcated by a linguistic frame, the borders of the English-Canadian field are more porous, and Canadian texts represent a small, and subsidized, subset of available reading material.) Martin also suggests several factors that are unique to this country which must additionally be taken into account in order to understand the structure of the literary field, including a decentralized, province-based educational system and “the extreme restrictedness of the [Canadian literary] field of restricted production,”<sup>5</sup> that is, a small yet geographically dispersed cultural network in which



many position-holders, notably university teachers, possess “multiple [agencies]” as writers, reviewers, critics, editors, and publishers.<sup>6</sup> Whereas Bourdieu posits the university in the role of consecrator only,<sup>7</sup> Martin assigns the Canadian university a more expansive role in relation to literature, which includes production (universities train and employ creative writers) and dissemination.<sup>8</sup> It follows that, while Bourdieu sees an inevitable “time-lag between cultural production and scholastic consecration,”<sup>9</sup> the Canadian university’s ground-level involvement in the artistic field results in a situation in which many debates about current directions in cultural production take place on university campuses.

Canadian literature, an entity largely maintained by the “disinterested” state patronage of the Canada Council, constitutes a sub-field nestled in the heart of the field of cultural production in English Canada, situated between the poles of commercial popular literature (much of it American in origin) and the international literary canon, largely made up of British works. In general, it is customary to think of “Canadian literature” as a field unto itself, subject to its own economies. Before we turn to an examination of the inner workings of this field, however, we should examine its overall position more closely.

The creation of Canadian literature as a legitimate focus for academic interest has been the result of the labour of several generations of critics and writers who have argued that it is the university’s responsibility to foster and recognize Canadian letters. In the eyes of some, it has been a mitigated success. Following Terry Eagleton’s claim that “The literary is the vanishing point of the political, its dissolution and reconstitution into polite letters,” Margery Fee has shown how “English Studies” has absorbed Canadian

literature with little impact on the discipline as a whole. Although, since its inception, English studies in Canadian universities has been deployed on many fronts “to resist foreign domination” and to “inculcate national distinctiveness,”<sup>10</sup> Fee contends that the presence of Canadian literature in the curriculum historically has underscored the literature’s colonial status. She notes that while Canadian works have been featured on university syllabi since 1907, they often appear as “optional” offerings or in courses directed at students not majoring in English, with the effect that generations of Canadian students have learned that “they had at least the beginnings of a literature,” a literature that they could situate in a “hierarchy ... that placed it third, after British and American literature.”<sup>11</sup> Inheriting the “fundamental (and highly problematic) tenet of European romantic nationalist ideology ... that national cultural greatness validates national sovereignty,” Canadian critics, as early the 1880s, “pressed for the presence of poetry, and poets, in Canadian universities, with the aim of inspiring undergraduates to produce a great national literature.”<sup>12</sup> However, aware of the necessity of the appearance of disinterestedness for their own professional status, these same cultural nationalists stood by a belief in the putative “apolitical standard of greatness,” which reserved its unequivocal praise for the British canon.<sup>13</sup>

Supplementing Fee’s historical overview, Paul Martin’s study of Canadian course offerings in 1997-8 documents that in English-language universities across the country the number of Canadian courses has not increased since the expansion of the subject in the 1960s and ’70s, and that, in many cases, it has decreased.<sup>14</sup> Martin’s figures support Fee’s view that English-Canadian literature still occupies a marginal position in English departments, which continue to valorize British literature through structuring

undergraduate programs so that the literatures of Canada are, in effect, presented as addenda to the main lines of British (or, sometimes, American) literary traditions.<sup>15</sup> To illustrate how the situation might have configured along different lines, Martin points to the example of Quebec universities, where the Québécois literature courses rival, and sometimes outnumber, French literature courses. This is due, Martin says, to the belief that Québécois literature is “worthy of study ... on its own cultural terms,” while in English Canada

literary excellence and the supremacy of the ‘text’ are still the foundation upon which ‘English’ considers itself to be built. This helps to justify the still minor presence – at least in terms of the overall number of courses – of English-Canadian literature in the university English curriculum.<sup>16</sup>

Martin goes on to observe that “it is *only contemporary* Canadian texts that are usually considered of sufficient quality to be given a similar weight to the other more established national literatures of the United States and England” (my emphasis). While the emphasis on contemporary texts may be indicative of larger international and historical trends towards “modernizing the syllabus” which John Guillory argues has characterized the discipline since the 18th century,<sup>17</sup> in the Canadian context, the rapid renewal of texts also suggests that the national “canon” remains unfixed. Keeping in mind Bourdieu’s distinction between “the dated” (works that history has eclipsed) and “the classic” (works that “have become part of history, in the eternal present of *culture*”),<sup>18</sup> one could go as far as to conclude that Canadian critics have been reluctant or unable to consecrate a body of “classics.” While for both Fee and Martin the presentist emphasis of English-Canadian university curricula perpetuates a “maturation narrative” in which Canadian literature is

still playing catch up, other factors may also be in play to account for Canadian literature as a curriculum in flux, a canon in the making.

The university's role in materially and symbolically producing Canadian literature is crucial and complex. One of the university's best-documented functions in this regard has been that of fostering a readership for Canadian writing. While this process includes generally encouraging students' interest in reading Canadian works, it also involves the use of the syllabus as a promotional and sales tool. In an environment in which the student population at all levels constitutes a substantial market for Canadian works, a symbiotic relationship between Canadian publishers and educators has developed in which publishers cater to educational markets and professors teach available texts.<sup>19</sup> While this is the situation for current editions of 19th- and early 20th-century texts, many of which were out of print when the post-Second-World-War generation of academics sought in vain for Canadian texts for their classes, it also pertains to the fate of more contemporary books. Margaret Laurence, quoted above, for example, is foremost among mid- to late-twentieth century writers whose cultural contributions have been intensified by this circularity.<sup>20</sup> Writers whose works are not introduced, and quickly, into university curricula miss a vital window to establish their critical reputations and the possibility of a continued readership. David Arnason has observed:

A Canadian writer who does not end up being taught is unlikely ever to prove more than an historical footnote. Any writer who is dead and whose work is not part of the canon, that is to say not studied in schools by a sufficient number of students to make reprinting his or her work worthwhile, will simply vanish into the dustheap of Canadian literary history.<sup>21</sup>

With the field of Canadian studies itself vying for legitimization, especially during the middle decades of the century, English professors have long been aware that there is much at stake when they choose Canadian works as subjects of study and research. In addition to acting as consecrators in this nascent field, they are simultaneously significant promoters and disseminators of contemporary Canadian poetry, drama, and fiction.

A field that is neither fully canonical nor commercial, Canadian literature represents a mutable terrain both at its borders and in its interior. Turning to an examination of the inner workings of the field, we see that the issue of regional difference is of particular interest when studying the Canadian literary institution, though it is rarely addressed fully and explicitly. Noting that education is a provincial responsibility in Canada, Paul Martin asserts that “this heterogeneous system allows for regional and institutional canons to develop in isolation from others while still framing themselves under the rubric of a single ‘Canadian literature.’”<sup>22</sup> Disappointingly, however, Martin’s analysis and his presentation of data gleaned from twenty-nine institutions across the country do not address the characteristics of regional and institutional canons beyond this intriguing statement. In claiming the existence of such canons, Martin follows Frank Davey, who also asserts the presence of “vastly different curricula constructed in different parts of the country as ‘Canadian literature,’” without giving specifics.<sup>23</sup> Davey also goes so far as to suggest that regional canons and curricula develop in isolation, stating that “Canadian English departments are politically disconnected from one another, respond to internal priorities and practices, and are located within autonomous provincial ministries,” and that these factors negate the possibility of a centralized hegemony.<sup>24</sup> While these points are valid, their presentation overlooks the innumerable points of

connection between institutions, including hiring patterns, the trajectories of students taking advanced degrees, national professional associations and their conferences, and inter-university departmental review practices. Moreover, both Davey and Martin neglect to expand their discussions of the construction of cultural and literary value so that they encompass the *academic* field as a field in Bourdieu's sense of the term, one in which each institution, now positioned in terms of its status as consecrator, possesses certain symbolic capital that must be weighed in relation to that of its fellows.

To speak of the formation of Canadian canons since the 1960s, then, is to invite the exploration of site-specific perspectives, which take into account the economies of regional literary and academic cultures. Davey has indicated that such work is called for in his observation that

In the 1970s, while in Toronto it may have appeared that 'Canadian literature' courses were springing up across the country in response to nationalist sentiments, in the regions such courses were often responses as well to expanded regional publishing and to the increased power of provincial governments.<sup>25</sup>

This discussion of regional and institutional canon-building activities must, however, present these activities *within* the national framework. Though operating in unique cultural and commercial environments and subject to the individual policies and budgets of one of ten provincial governments, Canadian English departments perform their functions with one eye trained on their counterparts, whether they are across town or across the country; the contributions of each are measured in terms of their relative significance to the academic community as a whole: attracting students to new programs and specializations, mounting conferences and cultural events, publishing scholarship,

and securing research grants are all to some extent competitive endeavours that fortify an institution's prestige.

How, then, do writer-in-residence programs contribute to the construction of Canadian literary canons? If the trends in Canadian English departments, for the duration of the 20th century, can be said to perpetuate a maturation narrative through the teaching of contemporary texts and creative writing, writer-in-residence programs, flourishing from the mid-1960s onward, undoubtedly contribute to this present- and future-oriented emphasis. Such programs can exhibit only a limited historical sense. While residencies have sometimes been used as a form of recognition for long-established authors, their hybrid nature – as sources of both economic and symbolic capital – has remained a strong argument for reserving them for those writers who are working towards “making a name for themselves,” in all the senses that phrase implies. (In the words of one former department chair, their currency is immediately redeemable: residencies give authors “an extended audience and extended royalties.”<sup>26</sup>) University residencies contribute to the consecration of contemporary Canadian literary works by providing English professors, undergraduate and graduate students, the media, and members of the public increased access to authors and their writing, as mediated through the academic institution. From the moment they are appointed, resident authors approach their audiences from privileged positions: endorsed by departmental consensus and backed by institutional funding, which is itself often subsidized by a federal government grant awarded through a competitive process, writers-in-residence enjoy considerable symbolic capital in the Canadian literary field.

The relative symbolic value of residency appointments for authors, however,

varies according to the point in his or her career at which a writer is appointed, as well as the status of the institution. Their frequent mention in members' catalogues of such organizations as the League of Canadian Poets and the Writers' Union of Canada, as well as on authors' personal websites, attests to their legitimizing aspects.<sup>27</sup> They are recorded much more rarely, however, on book jackets,<sup>28</sup> which is not surprising given the short duration of most residencies and the resultant tenuousness of the writers' affiliations with the institutions. As well, this omission may point to the ceiling of value accorded to this position with its mentoring/public service component. A residency – as opposed to, say, a grant or a literary prize – may serve to represent a certain point in the author's trajectory of success. Several examples will illustrate the varying significations of residencies for authors at different stages in their careers. Nancy Bauer, a well-known teacher and literary advocate on the provincial scene, considered her appointment at University of New Brunswick in 1989-90 "tantamount to being called up to the big leagues," explaining that the "publicity for, the stamp of approval of, and the extra attention to my work have been gratifying."<sup>29</sup> Margaret Avison, having already served as a resident author in smaller universities and having taught at the University of Toronto (U of T), interpreted the offer of a writer-in-residence post at U of T as a mark of distinction which surpassed her previous university teaching and writer-in-residence experience: "Thank you for the astonishing invitation," she wrote to the university president on 19 January 1980. "I am indeed sensible of the honour of being proposed Writer in Residence, University of Toronto."<sup>30</sup> While Avison regretfully declined the position, Mavis Gallant returned to Canada from Paris to become U of T's resident author in 1983. During her tenure, Gallant professed disinterest in her star power in Canada, an attitude that



enhanced her own mystique, just as her presence lent increased prestige to U of T.<sup>31</sup> Other international literary successes, including Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, and Alice Munro, undertook residencies at Canadian universities early in their careers and later took comparable positions in the United States, Europe, and Australia.<sup>32</sup> Such forays abroad both significantly extend writers' audiences and increase their stature at home. The limited symbolic value of a Canadian residency appointment for writers making a mark on the international stage, however, may be put into perspective by the universal astonishment expressed when Yann Martel followed through with his appointment at the Saskatoon Public Library after winning the Man-Booker Prize for *The Life of Pi* in 2002.<sup>33</sup>

In the discussion that follows, I argue that specific universities occupy singular positions in mapping literary value, and that writer-in-residence programs – administered by the institution, often subsidized by the state, and typically characterized by multiple, short-term appointments – offer a starting point from which to explore how individual universities construct and disrupt literary canons. This chapter offers case studies of three very different, regionally dispersed Canadian universities: the University of Toronto (U of T), Simon Fraser University (SFU), and Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). Although there are other institutions that are significant and influential patrons of writers-in-residence – the University of Alberta, Concordia University, and the University of New Brunswick, to take three obvious examples – I have selected these three universities in order to reflect the wide cultural, political, and economic differences between regions and to illuminate specific historical moments. The venerable University of Toronto has one of the longest running and best-known writer-in-residence programs

in the country, which dates from 1965. SFU, in British Columbia, and MUN, in Newfoundland and Labrador, are younger, medium-sized universities, with large undergraduate programs and relatively small graduate programs in English. Both have depended upon Canada Council funding for writers-in-residence. SFU's inaugural program spanned the 1970s and '80s, and MUN's began in 1991. A commonality among the three universities, which sets them apart from many others in the country, is that none had a creative writing program, nor offered a creative writing thesis option for students, in the time period under discussion. In each case, the residency program represents the institution's official recognition and support of practicing creative authors. U of T, as the senior institution, serves as a national flagship; its writer-in-residence program traces the symbolic progress of Canadian letters in the institution across the final four decades of the 20th century. At SFU, the emphasis on young, west-coast resident authors reflects a curriculum that promoted experimental writing and mounted a challenge to nascent Ontario-centred canons. In Newfoundland, MUN has occupied a central position in local literary production, which itself greatly expanded in the 1970s, aided by the establishment of literary presses and writing groups. The late date of the launch of MUN's writer-in-residence program is indicative of very recent shifts in the publishing practices and intended readerships of local writers and critics. For all three universities, the programs illuminate the place of Canadian literature in the institution, as well as the institution's place in materially and symbolically creating Canadian literature.

## **University of Toronto: National flagship**

Of our three case studies, the University of Toronto has the longest running writer-in-residence program (est. 1965). A position that has its roots outside any U of T English Department,<sup>34</sup> this residency at one of the country's most prestigious academic institutions has had multiple significations within and outside the university. In its early history, it was seen as an extracurricular adornment to campus life, the resident author acting as teacher/scholar/artist within the university community. As a new generation of cultural-nationalist writers, critics, and publishers began to make their mark in urban Toronto in the early 1970s, the position began to be conceived as one of larger public significance. In latter years, it has reflected further developments in the field of Canadian literary studies. Due to both U of T's own reputation and its location in the English-language publishing and media centre of the country, its residency appointments have been highly publicized and in recent years have become competitive. Increasingly aware of the symbolic value of the appointment, U of T has evaluated and re-evaluated its place in relation to both the university's mandated pursuits of furthering education and research and its perceived obligations to fostering Canadian writing.

**Table 4.1**  
**Writers-in-Residence at the University of Toronto, St. George Campus,**  
**1965-2000**

Year(s)	Writer	Co-funded by Canada Council
1965-7*	Earle Birney	
1968-9	Jack Ludwig	
1969-70	Margaret Laurence	
1970-1	R.D.C. Finch	
	Josef Škvorecký	
1972-3	Margaret Atwood	
1973-4	W.O. Mitchell	
1974-5	Fletcher Markle	
1975-6	Adele Wiseman	Yes
1976-7	John Newlove	Yes
1977-8	Carol Bolt	Yes
1978-9	Dennis Lee	Yes
1979-80	Timothy Findley	
1980-1	Marian Engel	Yes
1981-2	Irving Layton	Yes
1982 fall	Brian Moore	Yes
1983 spring	Dorothy Livesay	Yes
1983-4	Mavis Gallant	Yes
1984-5	Leon Rooke	Yes
1985-6	Mary di Michele	
1986-7	Gwendolyn MacEwen	Yes
1987-8	Al Purdy	Yes
1988-9	Erika Ritter	Yes
1989 fall	Lorna Crozier	
1990 spring	Patrick Lane	
1990-1	Dionne Brand	Yes
1991-2	Judith Merrill	Yes
1992 fall	Peter Dale Scott	Yes
1993 spring	Audrey Thomas	Yes
1993-4	Tomson Highway	Yes
1995 spring	Susan Musgrave	
1996 spring	Tom Wayman	
1997 spring	Jane Urquhart	
1998 spring	Roo Borson	
1999 spring	Sarah Ellis	
2000 spring	Erin Mouré	

Source: University of Toronto Archives and the Canada Council for the Arts, Annual Reports, 1965/66-1999/2000.

Note: For the first year of his appointment, Earle Birney was based at the Scarborough campus.

The U of T writer-in-residence program began in 1965, when Earle Birney was appointed poet-in-residence at the new undergraduate Scarborough College by university president Claude Bissell, his former student.<sup>35</sup> Both Bissell and Birney (as discussed in Chapter Three) contributed to shaping this position for the creative writer within the complex and rapidly expanding university structure. Bissell, member of the University College English Department from 1941, had become university president in 1958.<sup>36</sup> The period of his presidency was one of prosperity and growth, marked by significant developments in graduate and interdisciplinary studies and the arrival of a politically active generation of students.<sup>37</sup> As a literary scholar and critic, Bissell was long invested in the field of Canadian literary studies. In the 1950s, he had been one of the few faculty members at U of T supervising doctoral research on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canadian poetry and prose, and his activities in this area resumed after his retirement as president in 1971.<sup>38</sup>

Bissell's backing of the residency position is consistent with the views expressed in his 1967 lecture, "The University and the Arts," which outlines the university's responsibilities in the field of the fine arts. Noting the discrepancy between Canadian practices and those of American universities in offering professional training in this field, Bissell gave reasons for keeping intellectual and artistic pursuits separate. He allowed, however, that literary endeavours might prove an exception to the rule. In order to train creative writers, he claimed,

There is no need to weaken our role as an institution concerned primarily with scholarship. We should be prepared ... to accept the not unstartling generalization that the study of poetry and the writing of poetry are not unrelated, and that the

study of dramatic literature is closely allied to what goes on in the theatre. What we need, in short, is the integration of the arts into the humanities and a rapprochement between theory and practice.<sup>39</sup>

Such an integration would “re-invigorate humanistic scholarship” and would “go a long way toward reconciling” the central dilemma of the modern university, the conflict between its “technocratic bias” and the “apocalyptic mode” of popular culture – the Canadian version of which was typified in Bissell’s view by Scott Symons’ novel *Place d’Armes* (McClelland and Stewart, 1967) – that was gaining currency among humanities students.<sup>40</sup> While Bissell also advocated that the university should be patron to writers and other artists, he argued such activity would ideally be supported by private donors and contended that education was the university’s primary concern and major contribution to cultural life: “Direct patronage by the university of the arts can have, at least, only a stimulating effect. Indirect patronage, through the building up of audiences, can have a transforming effect.”<sup>41</sup>

For this ultimately humanities student-centred endeavour, Bissell financed Birney’s tenure through the Varsity Fund, an alumni-funded coffer used for special projects that were “essentially outside the scope of University responsibilities.”<sup>42</sup> The following year, he relocated Birney to Massey College (est. 1963), where the author would work independently of any academic unit on the central campus and continue to report directly to the president.<sup>43</sup> As a male-only graduate residence, Massey was intimidating to undergraduates and female students, but provided comfortable office space and living quarters. Its lively intellectual environment was presided over by playwright and novelist Robertson Davies, whose appointment as first master of the

college had also been backed by Bissell.<sup>44</sup>

For many years, the writer-in-residence program at U of T proceeded on a year-by-year basis, and the appointment process was informal. Although Bissell created an Advisory Committee for the Writer-in-Residence in the spring of 1966,<sup>45</sup> the committee's initial purpose was to liase between the writer and the various colleges, not to select candidates for the position. Choosing writers remained the purview of the president, who was open to suggestions from committee members, other professors, and past resident authors. Earle Birney nominated his successor, Jack Ludwig, who arrived on campus with a proposal for an ambitious visiting speakers' program made up of prominent American and Canadian artists and political leaders. (Ultimately only a poetry reading by Robert Lowell came to pass.)<sup>46</sup> The two authors selected for 1970-71, Robert Finch, the poet who had first made his name as one of the McGill modernists in the 1930s, and Czech novelist Josef Škvorecký, were both internal appointments: Finch, then retiring from the French Department and fellow of Massey College, was recommended by Robertson Davies, and Škvorecký, nominated by the chair of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, was concluding his year as visiting special lecturer in that department and had made known his desire to remain permanently in Canada. Both writers had solid critical reputations, strong academic qualifications, and were known to be excellent with students.

The strength of a proposed resident author's place in the contemporary Canadian literary scene did not appear to override these other considerations, although the 1969-70 appointment of "[t]he major novelist of the 1960s,"<sup>47</sup> Margaret Laurence (the first non-academic), generated excitement and resonated with audible buzz in the local and

national media.<sup>48</sup> Following her tenure, Northrop Frye, though never a member of the writer-in-residence committee, wrote to the president with his suggestions for future resident authors. Frye's list was made up of writers who fit the teacher/scholar/artist role, or some variation on it: Margaret Avison's considerable teaching skills had been recently lauded in Frye's presence by a taxicab driver; Al Purdy had written more letters of reference for young poets than any other writer in the grant competition Frye had recently judged; in "a more academic slot" were Hugh Hood, Louis Dudek, George Woodcock, and Roy Daniells, all teaching or on the brink of retiring from academic positions; and, finally, Margaret Atwood, Frye's former student, and Gwendolyn MacEwen were both fine young writers with scholarly interests.<sup>49</sup>

By the time Bissell retired as president on 1 July 1971, there were many indications that the writer-in-residence role, as well as the general university environment, was changing. Atwood was the name put forth by the Writer-in-Residence Committee, which had included undergraduate and graduate student representatives for the first time that year and was now responsible for nominations. Atwood's letter of acceptance also intimated that power relations were shifting on campus. On 3 February 1972, she wrote to acting president J.H. Sword, "I'm a little jittery about having an office in Massey College; I wouldn't want the location to deter any potential female writers." Conveying an insider's knowledge, she added, "Though perhaps the regulations have been somewhat relaxed since I was last challenged at the gate of that institution."<sup>50</sup> Although the male-only rule at Massey would not be abolished until 1974, U of T students were already openly criticizing university priorities and practices.

The matter of curriculum was no exception. The early 1970s greatly broadened



Canadian literature as an area of instruction at U of T. The Anglo-centrism of the U of T curriculum in the 1960s had had a paradoxical effect on Atwood's generation of cultural nationalists: in a few cases, it had inspired them to establish their own presses and publications in order to counteract the legacy of their university education.<sup>51</sup> At the undergraduate level, U of T had introduced a Canadian survey course in 1956; it in effect represented U of T students' sole exposure to the subject until three courses (on Canadian poetry, prose, and criticism, respectively) were added in 1971.<sup>52</sup> The university had also entered graduate-level Canadian literary studies cautiously; in 1958 it had appointed a special committee to "consider subjects proper for research in the Canadian field," which had concluded that, as in English and American literature, "the use of material and of authors whose work may not be of the highest literary value is justified provided that [it] is directed to the discovery of facts, truths and conclusions important in the field of scholarship."<sup>53</sup> In 1971-2, the English graduate students at U of T demanded "a serious expansion in the work of Canadian studies," resulting in the immediate instatement of three new courses and the inclusion of Canadian literature on the nineteenth- and twentieth-century comprehensive exams.<sup>54</sup> While U of T has long been a significant training ground for Canadian academics,<sup>55</sup> students writing dissertations on Canadian topics represented only 22 of 492 Ph.D.'s graduating from U of T English between 1920 and 1984.<sup>56</sup> Of these Canadianists, who would go on to academic appointments in Newfoundland,<sup>57</sup> New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, fourteen would graduate in the 1975-84 period.<sup>58</sup>

Even more than Margaret Laurence's presence, Atwood's appointment in 1972 heralded the arrival of a celebrity author at U of T. At thirty-three, Atwood was already

one of the most dynamic figures on the national literary scene. Winner of the Governor General's Award for Poetry (1967), she arrived on campus following the publication of *Surfacing* (McClelland and Stewart, 1972), her second novel, and *Survival* (Anansi, 1972), her massively successful book of literary criticism. While in residence Atwood continued to serve as poetry editor on the board of House of Anansi Press, which, as she noted in her report to the university, had undergone "some major transitions, notably from a 'small press' to a fairly major one" since its founding in 1967.<sup>59</sup> She also hosted the founding meeting of the Writers' Union of Canada in her Massey College office. An alumna of Victoria College who had spent several years as a graduate student at Harvard, Atwood was self-assured in the academic environment. In 2003, professor Sam Solecki recalled Atwood "holding her own" with Marshall McLuhan in front of "a packed house of 500 people," refusing to debate issues within the terms McLuhan framed.<sup>60</sup>

"Besieged" by "highschool students with tape recorders," university students interested in "Margaret Atwood as a thesis subject," the media, campus and off-campus groups, and "sightseers," Atwood alerted the administration to the diverse demands made on writers-in-residence and suggested that the university clarify its expectations for the position:

The position of Writer-in-Residence at the University of Toronto is becoming a highly visible one. For the protection of future Writers-in-Residence, it might be nice to have a few guidelines. Perhaps they could be informed that they are not expected to be public servants (some members of the public evidently think they are), that they need accept invitations from organizations outside the University (and indeed within it) only at their own discretion, and that they are not there to

play Ann Landers for anyone who wanders in off the street. I knew these things, more or less, in advance, but some of my predecessors weren't so lucky!<sup>61</sup>

Upon concluding her appointment, Atwood and faculty member Christopher Love met with the president to discuss how the program could be configured to be of greatest benefit to both university and author.<sup>62</sup> Through Atwood's description of her role as celebrity, servant, and sage, it had become clear that the position had taken on weighty symbolic significance in the university and beyond.

Atwood's interest in the social and economic aspects of authorship is one that she has developed throughout her career.<sup>63</sup> Her acknowledgment of the importance of residency positions, both financial and symbolic, was made evident in a speech she delivered at the Conference on Book Publishing and Public Policy in Ottawa in 1981. In "The Writer in Canada Today," Atwood three times cited writer-in-residence programs as a "[form] of recognition" that supported professional writers while creating a demand for their work.<sup>64</sup> Even as her residency was in progress at U of T, members of the university community began to conceptualize the program as one of national cultural importance. On 8 January 1973 D.J. (David) Dooley wrote to the new president, J.R. Evans, to request permission to go ahead with the nominations for next year:

I do hope that you share the committee's view that it is very nearly necessary, especially at the present time, for our university to show its willingness to support and encourage creative writing in Canada; as our list of distinguished writers in residence lengthens, it affords an eloquent counter-argument to those who say that Toronto has done nothing to aid in the development of a national literature.<sup>65</sup>

The president concurred, and several weeks later, the committee forwarded its list of

nominations: W.O. Mitchell, Gabrielle Roy, (the relatively junior) Alice Munro, and Hugh MacLennan;<sup>66</sup> Mitchell was contacted and accepted the position. It is interesting to note that while the trend in the Canada Council program at this time was to support “young” authors (in Bourdieu’s sense of the term, that is, emerging writers whose body of work challenged the dominant schools<sup>67</sup>), U of T appears to have considered the best way to recognize Canadian literature was to appoint a recognized figure. At this point the university – still relying on the Varsity Fund for the author’s salary and the president’s office for the general operating budget for the program – had never applied for Canada Council funding: some committee members were in fact unaware that the grant program existed, while others assumed that council money was already in play. Within the year, however, the committee began to look into the national program. Although the internal support appeared to be stable, it was thought that the added grant “would make the position considerably more attractive” to high-profile candidates.<sup>68</sup>

Since the early part of the decade, however, the provincial government’s support to Ontario universities had not kept pace with larger enrolments or the cost of inflation, and the financial situation was considerably bleaker than it had been in the mid- to late-1960s.<sup>69</sup> In 1974, the president’s office, facing “drastic budget reductions” proposed to suspend the writer-in-residence program for one year and to plan a “special appointment” as a literary event to celebrate the university’s sesquicentennial in 1976-7. The decision provoked a schism within the advisory committee. The more junior committee members Phyllis Grosskurth and author/publisher/academic Dave Godfrey swiftly produced a “list of prominent names ... gathered in a short day and a half of telephoning” to support the program’s continuance. The petition, which was signed by prominent journalists and

publishers, including Pierre Berton, Robert Fulford, John Gray, and Robert Weaver, was forwarded to the university president and the Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities. Pointing to the the threatneded residency program as an emblem of the neglected arts sector, Grosskurth and Godfrey urged Evans to use the area of Canadian literature as a touchstone in order to exert “public pressure for increased funding”: “This is an area of study where demand is increasing steadily despite a prior lack of serious attention by the university. ... we feel that the community at large would strongly support an increase of interest.”<sup>70</sup> However, other committee members – David Dooley, Christopher Love, and Robertson Davies – did not lend their support to the petition, given the facts that the teaching budget was strained and some English departments were understaffed.<sup>71</sup> Upon consulting with both sides of the committee, as well as with the deans of arts and science and of graduate studies, the president weighed three prongs of the program – the patronage aspect, the “benefits that accrue to U of T,” and the stimulus provided for student writers – and decided to pursue the “patronage route” and keep the program going without interruption.<sup>72</sup> It was also resolved to seek Canada Council and provincial funding, and to facilitate greater interaction between future writers and the centres for Canadian studies on campus.<sup>73</sup>

The university’s sights were still set on an author of “substantial reputation” to be the sesquicentennial year writer. A return visit by Margaret Laurence was the first choice, but she, as well as Alice Munro, James Reaney, George Woodcock, Alden Nowlan, and Morley Callaghan, declined the position, leading Grosskurth and Godfrey to conclude that U of T was “outpriced in the market” – an observation that reflects generally upon all employment options open to authors, not upon the pool of residency positions, of which

the U of T post was among the most generous in the country. Given this turn of events, the president's office again considered the goals of the program, speculating that the appointment of a younger writer might serve the university and Canadian literature well.<sup>74</sup> The Canada Council sponsored tenures of Adele Wiseman and John Newlove passed with relatively little fanfare but with a steady level of interest from the student body. For the administration, the writer-in-residence program was revealing itself to be protean, with aims and attributes difficult to pin down.

The sesquicentennial event that drew together student, academic, and literary communities was directly focused on the residency program as an expression of the university's investment in the arts. With funds from the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and campus bodies, the Students' Administrative Council Sesquicentennial Committee held a conference at Hart House in October 1977 "to examine the history, and the future, of the writer-in-residence programme." Six former resident authors participated in panels and readings: Atwood, Ludwig, Newlove, Mitchell, Škvorecký, and Wiseman; the current writer-in-residence, playwright Carol Bolt, also took part. In total, one thousand people attended the two-day event, including journalists Jane O'Hara of the *Toronto Sun* and William French of the *Globe and Mail*, and the conference concluded with a reception at Queen's Park hosted by Lieutenant-Governor Pauline McGibbon. A literary festival and public relations event, the conference also resulted in nine recommendations for the program, including several that were intended to increase writer-student interaction. It was recommended, for instance, that the writer's office be moved from Massey College, that students have representation on the appointment committee (the student representative position had been inconsistently maintained), and

that the writer's presence be better advertised on campus.<sup>75</sup>

The student enrichment aspect of the writer-in-residence program, favoured by Bissell, was well represented by Dennis Lee, whom professor Russell Brown remembers as one of the most effective resident authors in U of T's history.<sup>76</sup> With editorial and post-secondary teaching experience, Lee (the first writer located at New College, which was also the home of the Canadian Studies Program) offered himself as an approachable and enthusiastic mentor in an early interview in a campus newspaper.<sup>77</sup> By December, having conducted 115 consultations, an exhausted and time-strapped Lee opted to concentrate his efforts on the half a dozen or so strong talents he had identified.<sup>78</sup> A result of this focused work was a poetry spread, edited by Lee and featuring works by Roo Borson (U of T writer-in-residence, 1998), Jan Zwicky, Kim Maltman, Polly Thompson, Theresa Moritz, Susan Glickman, Bruce Whiteman, and Suzanne Nussey, which appeared in two campus publications in the spring of 1979.<sup>79</sup> For the first time, this year, a buffet dinner was held at president's house in honour of Lee and his poets, a gesture of acknowledgment for both the author's work and the residency program itself, which the committee members found gratifying.<sup>80</sup> Presidential receptions – a “discreet” and accordingly “symbolically productive” form of promotion, according to Bourdieu<sup>81</sup> – became the norm for many years to come.

Before the 1980s, there is little on record about internal debates centring on nominations of writers-in-residence. One reason for this might be that, even by 1982, U of T had no dedicated Canadianists on its faculty; those who carried out work in this field had other, often primary, avenues of research as well.<sup>82</sup> One such professor, Sam Solecki, who had joined the writer-in-residence committee in 1976, wanted to see more discussion

about writers and more notice taken by the faculty of the authors who came to campus.<sup>83</sup> One writer who did not need extra help in drumming up interest was Mavis Gallant, who, having been previously invited by the university in 1978, was approached during her book tour for *Home Truths* in 1981 and agreed to be writer-in-residence for 1983-4.<sup>84</sup> As Solecki's letter of application to the Canada Council makes clear, the university was pleased to stage Gallant's "homecoming"<sup>85</sup>: "She is a writer of international reputation and the committee is both surprised and thrilled by her instant acceptance of the position."<sup>86</sup> In an article published in a campus paper, Solecki is quoted again expressing pleasure about the appointment, but adding a note of reservation: "If our program has a weakness, it is that so far we haven't gambled on a coming writer."<sup>87</sup> Several years later, in a memo to the English Department announcing Gallant's successor, Solecki reminded the academic community of its potential influence in fostering Canadian letters and of the power of the residency position to "indicate critical and financial support of [a writer's] work." He concluded, "I hope that in the future the committee puts its money, limited as it is, where its literary critical mouth is – that is, on less well known but still important individuals."<sup>88</sup>

In an interview in 2003, Solecki recalled his earlier criticisms of U of T's writer-in-residence program:

I pointed out that there was a passive assumption that we should get well-known writers. And I thought we should take a gamble on some younger writers and support them in their 30s instead of in their 60s and 70s. Dorothy Livesay doesn't need us, and Canadian literature in a sense already has Dorothy Livesay. ... Why don't we go after a Ray Smith ... right after he came out with *Lord Nelson*



*Tavern?* ... I think it's a gamble that departments and universities don't want to make because it exposes you to potential scrutiny afterwards if the writer turns out to be a nobody, or doesn't develop. In the same way a granting body does not want to give the money to somebody who will not produce the work they promise to do. I think that's a real flaw in the system across the country, that we're all conservative in that way. ... My one wish is that we had been bolder in making our choices, and leaning, let's say once every third year, towards a promising young writer.<sup>89</sup>

Despite Solecki's criticisms, U of T did occasionally lend its support to emerging writers, including poet Mary di Michele, who in her early thirties at the time of her appointment in 1985, was the youngest resident author since Atwood. It is perhaps worth noting, however, that the university's proposed residency program that year did not receive its anticipated support from the national patron: di Michele's nomination represented the first time in the history of the U of T program that the university was unsuccessful in securing Canada Council support, which that year had become competitive. U of T, however, did succeed throughout the decade in attracting pre-eminent figures for the position. By the late 1980s, U of T's status as a prestigious sponsor in the literary field had been confirmed by a record of nationally and internationally acclaimed resident authors, including Irving Layton, Timothy Findley, Brian Moore, Gwendolyn MacEwen, and Al Purdy.

In 1993, the Canada Council's suspension of the writer-in-residence program provided another opportunity for the university to take stock of the aims of its program. In the fall, the provost (to whom responsibility for the program had been transferred from

the president's office in the late 1980s) struck a committee to examine the program and make recommendations as to its continuance. Feedback was solicited from the university community at large and from the participating authors. Of the twenty-five writers who were still living, twelve responded by filling out a questionnaire and/or writing comments. (Unfortunately, these submissions do not appear to be extant.<sup>90</sup>) Coverage of the committee work in campus newspapers included interviews with English faculty members who argued for the program's continuing relevance in materially and symbolically producing Canadian letters. Of the practical work accomplished by resident authors, Rosemary Sullivan said, "The easy assumption that this is some kind of luxury is a mistake." At the same time Sam Solecki made a case for luxury, contending that the university should maintain its "prestigious programs" at all costs, noting its "responsibility to the writing community" to do so.<sup>91</sup>

The issues the committee identified and addressed were similar to those that had arisen in the early days of the program. While some considered such a program a "luxury" that should not be financed out of the academic budget, in general the briefs received indicated that the appointments were widely felt to bring the university prestige and to provide educational opportunities for student writers. However, evidence for these claims was not readily demonstrable, as responses were not solicited from outside the university. While several of the authors who responded testified to the benefits of the program for themselves, they did not comment on the benefits to U of T. Nonetheless, noting "that society has always held patronage of the arts in esteem," and pointing to the recent private endowment to the University of Calgary's residency program (see Chapter Two), the committee speculated that in the future the program could serve to attract

donations from the private sector.<sup>92</sup> In order to make some attempt to quantify the students who benefited from the residency program, the committee favoured the creation of a “teaching role” for future resident authors.

The following spring, the committee recommended the program’s continuation, with the incorporation of some changes. In the absence of Canada Council funding (the council program would be in hiatus until 1997), a \$20,000 Presidential Writer-in-Residence Fellowship – roughly the amount previously contributed annually by the university – would be created for shorter (four-month-long) residencies. The office of the writer-in-residence returned to the prestigious Massey College, which could provide housing, if needed, for out-of-town authors (at the writer’s expense). The author’s duties would consist of offering a workshop to “a set number of qualified and interested students,” as well as maintaining two office hours a week.<sup>93</sup> Responsibility for choosing writers and administering the program continued to rest with the English Department.

Despite the formalization of duties, the U of T position carried considerable symbolic value by the 1990s and was widely sought after by writers. When the Presidential Fellowship was instated, the residency position came to be advertised, often attracting a large number of applicants. In 1996, for example, Jane Urquhart was chosen out of forty applicants.<sup>94</sup> The appeal of the program also mounted for patrons in the book industry. In the mid-1990s, publisher Anna Porter undertook fundraising for an endowment for a chair in Canadian literature, to be named in honour of Jack McClelland, the Toronto publisher whose career was characterized by his many contributions to Canadian writing and who epitomized the energy behind the Canadian literary boom of the 1960s and ’70s.<sup>95</sup> The money raised went instead to the Jack McClelland Writer-in-

Residence Program, which was announced in June of 1998, at which point \$200,000 of the goal of \$500,000 had been raised.<sup>96</sup> When McClelland died in 2004, his obituary notice directed donations in his memory to be made to the Massey College program.<sup>97</sup> In at least one way, the program had come full circle; Claude Bissell's vision of integrating authors on campus with the help of private funding had been realized.

Examining the track record of U of T's writer-in-residence program, one can see it has been conservative in several ways. The university has appointed a high percentage of writers of poetry, traditionally the most valorized genre, and only occasionally ventured into the territory of popular genres, including script-writing (Fletcher Markle), science fiction (Judith Merrill), and humour (Erika Ritter). The university has indeed been "slow to gamble on coming writers": twenty-one of the thirty-six resident authors between 1965 and 2000 were in possession of a Governor General's Award at the time of their nominations. In an interview in 2003, when asked about the U of T writer-in-residence program's contribution to canon-building, English professor Rosemary Sullivan credited it with a supportive, if not trail-blazing role: "I don't think the canon is established by writers-in-residence, but the people on that list were the people with large profiles." Noting omissions of authors who made their mark early and who have become increasingly significant in the Canadian literary field, Sullivan says that U of T is now seeking out "people who should have been here millennia ago, such as Austin Clarke."<sup>98</sup> Clarke has recently served as resident author at Erindale College (1999-2000) and as Jack McClelland Writer-in-Residence (2001).

Regionally and ethnically, overall the writers in the program have reflected the make-up of the dominant voices in twentieth-century literary production. Just half of the

participating writers have been from outside Ontario. In the wake of the canon debates of the 1980s and 1990s, during which English scholars increasingly recovered and addressed works by women, gays and lesbians, and Native, “ethnic,” and immigrant writers, the department’s program reflected these important shifts in the discipline. Several authors writing out of cultural and linguistic traditions other than those of mainstream Anglo-Canada were chosen in 1990s, including Dionne Brand (1990-1) and Tomson Highway, the first Aboriginal resident writer at U of T, appointed in 1993-4.

For the appointed writers, the connection with U of T has contributed to furthering continued scholarly interest in their work. In 2006, Atwood, Birney, and Laurence remain three of the twelve core authors on U of T’s survey course in Canadian literature.<sup>99</sup> The university archives contain papers of ten of the resident authors from this period: Atwood, Birney, Finch, Gallant, Layton, Lee, MacEwen, Newlove, Purdy, and Škvorecký. Representing a sizable portion of the archive’s holdings of twentieth-century creative authors, these collections will continue to enable academic research on these writers. U of T faculty members have continued to publish scholarly works on the authors. Examples of this scholarship include Elspeth Cameron’s biographies of Birney and Layton, Rosemary Sullivan’s biographies of MacEwen and Atwood, and Solecki’s criticism on Škvorecký and anthologies of Purdy.

The history of writers-in-residence at U of T is useful in illustrating the development of the Canadian literary field since the 1960s: its struggle for legitimization and subsequent negotiations. By building a high-profile program, distinguished by the participation of acclaimed authors, publicity in the mainstream media, and the support of private patrons, the university has contributed to the dramatic appreciation of the

Canadian author's cachet in recent decades. Authors, especially those well known on the international stage, have today a relatively wide selection of accolades and professional commitments in the offering. While U of T has sought to attract the leading artists of the 20th century to its program, it has not always been successful. "We've tried to get Munro for over thirty years, and she's never wanted to come," says Sam Solecki of the country's most steadfast and personally elusive literary star. "I've got twenty letters of rejection from her," he admits, "which I'll sell some day."<sup>100</sup>

### **Simon Fraser University: Creative campus**

The writer-in-residence program at Simon Fraser University (est. 1965) began in 1976, a little more than a decade after that of U of T. Co-funded by the Canada Council, it lasted just ten years before lapsing due to significant financial cutbacks at the university, fallout of the recession of the 1980s, which was severe and prolonged in British Columbia. Although its program was much smaller in scope, SFU offers a valuable point of comparison with the older Ontario university in terms of both academic and literary cultures in this period. In general, the position of Canadian literary studies cross-country had much improved by the mid-1970s, aided in part by the publication of the T.H.B. Symons' *To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies* (vols. 1 and 2) in 1975, evidence of the heightened awareness of the desirability – if not the fortified presence – of Canadian content in higher education. At SFU, however, despite the intention of charter department head and university academic planner Ron Baker that Canadian literature would be an integral teaching area, as it was at the neighbouring University of British Columbia (UBC),<sup>101</sup> Canadian literary studies would

take an indirect and at times onerous path to becoming a recognized strength of the department at SFU. It would do this, first, through hosting events, such as readings, literary festivals, and author residencies, and launching publications that testified to the department's investment in contemporary literature, especially that of the "west coast" (comprising American, and, increasingly, Canadian material), and, second, through its recognition of the national emergence of Canadian literary studies and the student demand for courses in this subject. Faculty members, some of whom were hired for their expertise in other areas, were given or requested Canadian courses as an extension of their prior interests in west-coast literature. Between 1965 and 1986, instructors who arrived with or developed scholarly interests in a full range of Canadian literary topics included: Gordon Elliott, an historian by training, Bruce Nesbitt, a specialist in Commonwealth literature, Sandra Djwa, a Canadianist, and David Stouck, an Americanist, all hired in the 1960s, followed by Americanists George Bowering and Roy Miki, and Canadianist Kathy Mezei, hired in the late 1970s and early 1980s; and Canadianist Carole Gerson, teaching in the department from the early 1980s, who joined the faculty in the mid-1980s.

As an "instant university" of the 1960s, SFU was imagined as a "radical" and creative campus, from its architectural design and its curriculum to the composition of its teaching staff and student body.<sup>102</sup> From early in its existence, the English Department presented itself as offering a new approach to literary studies that incorporated the perspectives of practicing artists. In an essay of 1980, entitled, "Festival at Simon Fraser," SFU professor and novelist John Mills, an Englishman who had trained in both Canada and the United States, would proclaim,

No other Canadian university has been so hospitable to writers, film-makers, theatre people, musicians, and painters. ... our English department alone shelters six poets, one novelist, two playwrights, and one director, all of them active, all of them incorporated, despite occasional attempts to polarize them out, into the academic structure.<sup>103</sup>

Although many other universities in Canada housed such “dual citizens” (in Earle Birney’s phrase) in the creative and academic worlds, and other British Columbian post-secondary institutions, including UBC, the University of Victoria, the David Thompson University Centre (a satellite campus of the University of Victoria, which operated in Nelson, BC, from 1978 to 1984), and other colleges, had introduced influential creative writing programs, SFU’s early hiring and promotion criteria, with its emphasis on teaching over research and its equation of creative and scholarly publications, attracted instructors, through the 1970s, who identified as both critics and creative writers, including George Bowering, Fred Canderlaria, Stanley Cooperman, Lionel Kearns, Betty Lambert, and d.h. sullivan. Visiting authors, such as Daphne Marlatt, Eli Mandel, and Earle Birney, also occasionally taught on campus. While most such appointments were standard contractual teaching positions, that of Al Purdy in the spring of 1970 was more in keeping with an artist-in-residence position. As visiting associate professor, Purdy taught a poetry-writing seminar and hosted a visiting speakers series.<sup>104</sup> While the author privately and publicly expressed a sense of discomfort in the academic setting,<sup>105</sup> his presence seemed fitting from the point of view of faculty members, who welcomed the perspective of the self-educated, critically acclaimed poet.<sup>106</sup>

While most SFU author/professors were actively publishing in Canada, a number



of them identified American writers as their primary influences and the cultural traditions of the United States their literary heritage. The best known example of this attitude is the Tish group born at UBC in the 1960s, a group of then student poets including George Bowering and Lionel Kearns, who were well known for identifying American poet Charles Olson and the Black Mountain group as important influences and for resisting locating their work within an emergent Canadian “tradition.” While the dismissal of the existence of a “Canadian national literature” was a decreasingly common, though not uncommon, occurrence in English departments across the country, at SFU, the sustained resistance to constructs of Canadian literatures also may be seen as an illustration of western alienation – Vancouver writers’ professed cultural distance from the literatures and their theorization that were emerging from central Canada<sup>107</sup> – as well as a reflection of the educational and cultural backgrounds of the members of the English Department. From its earliest configurations, the department included faculty members arriving from a variety of national contexts: in 1975, for instance, twenty-five of the forty-one professors on staff (sixty-one per cent) had received their highest degrees from universities in the United States; most held Ph.D.’s, and a good number were also American by citizenship. In that year, four faculty members had graduated most recently from British universities, one from Hong Kong University, and the remaining eleven had Canadian degrees, the majority from the University of British Columbia, and with only one Ph.D. in the mix.<sup>108</sup> The parlance in such an international, if American-dominated, department included frequent reference to “the UNIVERSE-ity” and the ideal of “cosmopolitanism”<sup>109</sup> that left little room for Canadian cultural nationalism.<sup>110</sup> Sandra Djwa recalls that it was partly in response to the climate of the English department that she recognized the necessity for

the institutionalization of an association to put forward the aims of Canadian literature. Subsequently, in 1973, she co-founded a learned society with Robin Matthews called the Association of Canadian and Quebec Literatures (ACQL), an association whose inaugural meeting, attended by over 150 teachers of Canadian literature, was held at U of T.<sup>111</sup>

Despite the friction surrounding Canadian literature, as a teaching area it occupied a solid position on the curriculum. Whereas the subject was underrepresented at U of T until the revision of the undergraduate and graduate programs in 1971, Canadian courses were part of the original architecture of SFU's curriculum, with the first Canadian literature courses introduced at the undergraduate and graduate levels in 1966 and 1968, respectively. From 1968, Canadian works were also typically included in first-year courses introducing poetry, drama, and fiction.<sup>112</sup> Although the literature of British Columbia – one of only two province-based literature courses in the country, according to Paul Martin's 1997 survey; the other, on Newfoundland literature, offered by MUN<sup>113</sup> – did not become a dedicated course until 1997, the subject had, for over a decade, often been the focus of a special topics course, and BC works, including mid-century texts by Earle Birney, Dorothy Livesay, Ethel Wilson, and Sheila Watson, as well as more contemporary works, were very regularly taught at all levels. In designing syllabi, from the 1970s, SFU faculty members took advantage of both the expanding New Canadian Library series from McClelland and Stewart and material emanating from the small presses, especially Coach House (Toronto, est. 1965), Oberon (Ottawa, est. 1966), and Talonbooks (Vancouver, est. 1967). The magazine *West Coast Review*, established in 1966 by SFU English professor Fred Candelaria, also provided classroom material.

In the 1970s, Vancouver writers, critics, and publishers sought to promote west-coast writing in the face of the dominance of Ontario producers. This battle was both regional and generational – “generational” in the double sense, first, in the demographic power of baby-boomers who made their presence felt in Vancouver as they had in Toronto and, second, in the experimental and topical writing they produced that challenged the aesthetic and social expectations of their predecessors. In Bourdieu’s terms, SFU critics were seeking “discontinuity, rupture, difference, revolution”<sup>114</sup> by striving to create new positions for both artists and consecrators on the field of cultural production, to make room for avant-garde writing and a west-coast critical perspective. American poet and new immigrant Fred Candelaria’s *New: West Coast: 72 Contemporary British Columbia Poets* (Intermedia, 1977), which was sometimes used as a textbook at SFU in the years immediately following its publication, is notable in overtly employing this strategy. In his introduction, Candelaria stresses the newness of the collection (nothing was reprinted) as characteristic of west-coast writing, whose very immediacy presented a challenge to Canadian literary traditions established “back east,” a locus of power Candelaria conceptualized as “the hothouse of the somewhat incestuous (long outdated) Genteel Tradition of a Britain the British themselves would no longer even faintly recognize – but which some colonized minds here somewhat hysterically cling to, mistaking their Anglophilia for Canadian nationalism.”<sup>115</sup>

As SFU critics and cultural producers were working toward making the literature of Vancouver better known nationally, they were also aware of the diversity of the writing communities within their own city, from the postmodernist Tish alumni and the “anarchist” editors of the little magazine *Blackfish* (Burnaby, 1971-5), to the staid

Vancouver Poetry Society.<sup>116</sup> Within this environment, the department was a key site of struggles within the field of cultural production, struggles which were drawn along national/regional, political, and aesthetic lines.

In the spring of 1975, Paul Delany, chairman of the department's Search and Hire Committee, informally discussed the possibility of beginning a residency program at SFU with Vancouver work poet Tom Wayman, who responded to the professor's request for information about the Canada Council program in a letter of 26 March 1975. Outlining the terms of the council program, Wayman also offered his comments on the scope of the position, emphasizing the potential of resident author as a co-ordinator of visiting readers' series and symposia. The ideal candidates for such an appointment, he suggested, would be those willing to facilitate communication, "to tackle current artistic problems or to enlighten students and townspeople as to some aspects of the scope of Canadian letters." While there were "excellent eastern writers who might fit the bill admirably," Wayman had in mind "competent B.C. writers, good organizers, and [those] as yet untouched by the doings of various literary gangs that characterize some of the Vancouver scene." Wayman did not forget how this activity might dovetail into the creative and scholarly work in progress at SFU:

I am excited by the prospect of one of the Vancouver universities taking the lead in beginning such a program, and thereby integrating itself even more firmly with the world of contemporary letters, so that the considerable critical and artistic skills of those already situated at universities can mesh in a constructive way with more of what is happening outside.

All of this can only better the lot of the writer, the scholar, the student, and

Canadian culture as a whole, I believe.<sup>117</sup>

While SFU was already arguably on the ground floor of literary production in Vancouver, the writer-in-residence program launched the following year would firmly bring “the world of contemporary letters” that existed “outside” to the innermost rooms of the university on the mountain.

SFU’s writer-in-residence program began in 1976 (see Table 4.2), and by 1983, eight Canada Council-sponsored writers had been in residence on Burnaby Mountain; for six of the authors it was the first such appointment. SFU’s preference was for young, socially and politically engaged, west-coast authors. With the exception of senior writer Dorothy Livesay, the SFU writers-in-residence in this period were between the ages of 38 and 47, and all but Scott Symons were based in British Columbia. Earle Birney was to be the ninth writer-in-residence in the spring of 1984; however, the author requested a salary of more than the \$9,000 per semester then offered jointly by the council and the university, and ultimately SFU was unable even to match the council’s required minimum stipend.<sup>118</sup> After hosting Canada-Scotland Exchange writer William McIlvanney in 1986-7, the department had no resident authors until 2004-5, when Canada Council writer-in-residence Daphne Marlatt became the inaugural author of the re-established program.

**Table 4.2**  
**Writers-in-Residence at Simon Fraser University, 1976-87**

Year	Writer
1976 spring	Scott Symons
1977 spring	George Ryga
1977 fall	Jack Hodgins
1979 spring	David McFadden
1979 fall	Dorothy Livesay
1981 spring	Cam (Anne) Cameron (Cam Hubert)
1982 spring	Audrey Thomas
1983 spring	Tom Wayman
1986-7	William McIlvanney (Canada-Scotland Exchange writer)

Source: Canada Council for the Arts, Annual Reports, 1975/76–1986/87.

Because of its collective identity, which positioned many of its members as producers as well as consecrators, the department itself was a site for competing notions of literary value, a field in which resident authors were immediately implicated. Despite Wayman's suggestion that a BC writer would be appropriate for the program, the inaugural writer-in-residence was from outside the province and came at the suggestion of the new department chair, Peter Buitenhuis, an Americanist by training who had arrived at SFU from McGill University in 1975. Scott Symons, best known for his Montreal novel, *Place d'Armes* (controversial for its direct treatment of gay themes), was a Red Tory from Ontario, an author whose politics would seem to offer a contrast with SFU's leftist reputation and the scepticism that existed in the department toward the possibility of a distinct Canadian literary tradition. Reporting on Symons' tenure to the Canada Council in February 1977, Buitenhuis took obvious delight in describing SFU as the ground of political and literary battles, alluding to antagonisms that are rarely recorded in the Canada Council archives:

Over and above the formal and conventional role a writer should play during his tenure, Scott Symons was a ‘presence’ – a very much alive and somewhat dangerous and threatening force in this over-bland atmosphere of an academic department. As anyone who knows his writings will appreciate, Symons is not your middle-of-the-road, liberal and moderate voice. He is a self-acclaimed radical Tory, believer in a literary tradition which goes back before Confederation, and which has its roots in a degree of learning and sentience which is rare in modern life. Scott Symons made it his business to stir people up, to raise hackles, and to attack clichés.<sup>119</sup>

Beyond engaging in literary questions, Symons also had the opportunity to investigate the institution of the university. In a reversal of the situation in which the disinterested critic evaluates artistic production, in this case the autonomous resident author judged the academic enterprise. In an interview published in the student newspaper, *The Peak*, in the summer of 1976, Symons had contended that the role of a writer-in-residence, as well as that of the artist in general, was to inject social critique from an independent stance:

[A writer-in-residence is] an artist simply there in the performance of his art. ... It’s a question of being rather than working. ... I think he also has another role: he’s a commentator, an observer. He has no axe to grind, he’s not trying to move up in the hierarchy, and he’s not looking for a tenured position. And he’s in a position to say something about the university without fear of being smashed as an academic. He is a participant with the students as well as an accredited observer.

The student body was not spared the brunt of the force of Symons acting as provocateur.

In the same interview, the author attacked heterosexual student culture, bad faith political activism on campus, and the institution of the university, with particular emphasis on the inequality of the student–professor relationship.<sup>120</sup>

Regardless of their differences in conceptualizing Canadian literature, SFU faculty members were perhaps united in their interest in recognizing Vancouver as a generative site for contemporary literature and in promoting west-coast writing. Following the appointment of playwright George Ryga, SFU applied for a grant to hire Jack Hodgins in 1977. Hodgins had been assessed in the Canada Council’s “Junior” category two years earlier, and at the time council-sponsored writers-in-residence were required to be “Senior”-level writers. In response to a request by the national funding body for further documentation in support of this young BC writer, Vancouver critics successfully made the case for Hodgins’ reclassification as a senior-level author based on his literary potential, the merit of his numerous recent publications, notably *The Invention of the World* (Macmillan, 1977), his teaching abilities, and his importance to British Columbia in particular. Acting SFU English department chair Ann Messenger argued that Hodgins would be “a particularly appropriate person to have here in the fall term 1977,” when the department was offering five courses in Canadian literature, an introductory modern fiction course, and a class in creative writing. Messenger also noted the “strong support” from the associate academic vice-president “for giving such a position to a writer not only established nationally but of great local interest”:

Many of us would be happy to see such recognition for an artist with British Columbia roots. He deserves to be better known in his own territory, which would happen if he spent some time with us and our students.<sup>121</sup>



SFU's application for Hodgins was further strengthened by the support of other local literary critics and their national publications. W.H. New, professor of English at UBC and incoming editor of *Canadian Literature* (est. 1959), pointed to his recent praise of *Spit Delaney's Island: Selected Stories* (Macmillan, 1976), which New had described as "one of the most engaging publications of the year" in the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*.<sup>122</sup> Geoff Hancock, editor-in-chief of the *Canadian Fiction Magazine* (est. 1971), also based in Vancouver, positioned Hodgins' recent works of fiction in both regional, national, and international contexts. Hancock judged *Spit Delaney's Island* to be "probably the finest stories to come out of British Columbia since Howard O'Hagan's *The Woman Who Got On at Jasper Station*" and noted both its nomination for the Governor General's Award and its winning of the Eaton's Award for the book which contributed most to British Columbians. However, for Hancock, it was Hodgins' *The Invention of the World* that established Hodgins as "a key Canadian author":

[Hodgins'] novel, *The Invention of the World*, is a radical departure from the traditional realism which tends to be dominating contemporary Canadian fiction. This book in retrospect will likely be a division in the stream Canadian prose is flowing. Drawing upon techniques perfected by the Latin Americans – time compression, complex structures, fantasy, hyperbole, and cemented by a fine sense of humour – Jack Hodgins has created a world completely his own, though recognizably Vancouver Island. In doing so he has introduced a new aesthetic for serious readers of Canadian fiction. ... Other Canadian writers have tried non-realistic departures. Cohen's *Beautiful Losers*, Engel's *Bear*, Moore's *The Great Victorian Collection*, early Matt Cohen, as so on. In my opinion, Jack Hodgins is

their equal, and in many ways, their superior.<sup>123</sup>

While Hodgins' regional relevance is noted, it is his projected impact on the national scene that is emphasized here. While Hodgins' "national" status was undoubtedly reinforced by his Toronto imprint, support for the writer in his own province also contributed to establishing his enduring reputation. Hodgins, who had turned down a writer-in-residence offer from the University of Manitoba for 1977-8 in hope of the SFU position, would offer a very positive report of his stay at the university: "I was treated like a member of the English department, with certain skills to offer."<sup>124</sup> During his tenure, he met with undergraduate and graduate Canadian literature classes<sup>125</sup> and worked on *The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne* (Macmillan, 1979), which would win the Governor General's Award for Fiction.

Not all authors enjoyed such demonstrations of critical consensus on their work, however. In 1979, Dorothy Livesay became the second poet (after David McFadden) and the first woman to be resident author at SFU. While on campus, she contributed to a special issue of *Room of One's Own* (Vancouver, est. 1975), which celebrated her 70th birthday and 50th year as a published author. The *West Coast Review* also dedicated its fall issue to her, reproducing a photograph of the author posed on the university grounds. The tenure was not entirely dedicated to celebrating the career of this still practicing poet, however. Livesay's reintroduction to Vancouver over a decade earlier, in 1963, following her sojourns in Europe and Africa, had not been entirely smooth. Biographer Nadine McInnis records that Livesay had found the literary scene much changed upon her return, due in a large part to the impact of the Tish group. According to McInnis, at the time Livesay felt uncertain "whether or not she would be able to establish herself within this

new literary order.”<sup>126</sup> In 1979, while her work demonstrated the influence of Tish and other postmodern elements, Livesay was still engaged in this continuing struggle. While Livesay gave readings at numerous local colleges, as well as at the SFU library, at the university students’ union for a women’s studies event, and at an anti-nuclear conference, her involvement in English department was slight. In her final report to the Canada Council, Livesay commented:

I was pleased to be invited to talk to Education students and those in Women’s Studies about Canadian Literature or Creative Writing. However, it has to be admitted that only two professors from the English Department invited me to their classes. The explanation which I hazarded (to myself) was that my views on Canadian literature, especially Canadian poetry are not those currently promulgated on the West Coast. This is to be regretted, but it is a fact of the literary and academic life in Canada. It indicates that the isolation here can only be broken down by a greater east-west interchange of writers and critics, as against one that is north-south, or self-contained and circular.<sup>127</sup>

Livesay’s report to the council, like the letters in support of Hodgins, indicates an assumption that the council’s “national” perspective will differ from that of the west-coast university. Moreover, her report indirectly appeals to the council to assert what could be called a corrective influence on the west-coast trends, which Livesay implies are both American-influenced and insular. Peter Buitenhuis’s report to the council picked up on her complaint, conceding, “There is some truth to her contention that those who happened to be teaching the Introduction to Poetry that Fall do not subscribe to her particular field of poetry.” He deflected the implied criticism of the English department,

however, by noting that the differences in opinion were an indication of the university's active engagement in literary culture:

Dorothy Livesay is not only a distinguished but also a contentious figure in Canadian letters, now as she always was. She sparked a number of questions and debates with the department and ruffled not a few feathers. In other words, she was an entirely successful Writer-in-Residence.<sup>128</sup>

Tom Wayman, who had foreseen the inevitability of literary struggles from his first discussion of the residency program with Paul Delany in 1975, became writer-in-residence in 1983. In recalling his time at SFU, Wayman commented that SFU's relationship with UBC provided the context for some of the tensions noted by Livesay. Both Livesay and Wayman were dedicated creative writing mentors. However, within the SFU English department, Wayman reflected, as a discipline "creative writing wasn't much honoured." A part of the reason for this, Wayman asserted, was the division in the 1960s at UBC, the training ground of SFU faculty such as George Bowering and Lionel Kearns, between the "experimental writers" in the English Department (Warren Tallman, Tish) and "the Canadianists" in the Creative Writing Department (Earle Birney, Dorothy Livesay). "In George Bowering's mind and Lionel Kearns's mind," Wayman suggested, "creative writing was associated with a particular kind of writing that they weren't much interested in, that they thought was backwards. ... They associated it with a kind of writing that seemed to them to belong to the past rather than the future."<sup>129</sup> While other resident writers involved themselves in debates centring on university culture (Symons) and literary aesthetics (Livesay), Wayman's observations additionally lit upon the development of the discipline of English at SFU, which resisted introducing creative

writing as a major field of instruction. While a creative writing course was offered at SFU on an almost annual basis under the direction of various faculty members, including Fred Candelaria, d.h. sullivan, Lionel Kearns, Sheila Delany, and, less frequently, George Bowering, in this period it was also regularly the realm of visiting authors, such as Purdy, Symons, Ryga, Livesay, and Thomas, most of whom stayed on for an extra semester beyond their residency to teach. By the mid-1980s, under the chairship of Sandra Djwa (1986-94), the department was developing an increasingly professionalized presence, and while many faculty members remained or emerged as creative authors, research programs and the publication of scholarship and criticism became the order of the day. In the long gap between residency appointments at SFU after 1986, faculty members periodically revisited the notion of hiring a resident author; however, creative writing's low standing among departmental priorities during the prolonged period of austerity remained the major factor in its discontinuance.<sup>130</sup>

While it lasted, SFU's writer-in-residence program and the writers it supported were of high interest to faculty members, many of whom were committed to fostering contemporary literature. In 2004, Peter Buitenhuis, who served as department chair, with one interruption, from 1975 to 1981, recalled that the departmental Search and Hire Committee, the committee responsible for selecting writers-in-residence, typically engaged in "long debates" about nominations, "which is why I think we got such a good variety of poets, novelists, and dramatists."<sup>131</sup> The committee solicited nominations from the department as a whole, usually eliciting an enthusiastic response. In 1978, for example, it received 19 recommendations, a deluge that sent the committee back to the

department in search of further direction. On this occasion, the departmental minutes record a protracted discussion about the nomination process and the purpose of the appointment. One professor “felt that the department should try to avoid replication of areas covered by internal people,” while another recommended the committee consult with those department members teaching Canadian literature “since the appointment of a writer-in-residence presented an opportunity for these faculty members to consult with him or her.”<sup>132</sup> The minutes do not regularly record the names of the authors considered for the position, although in 1978 western Canadian poets Fred Wah, Florence McNeil, and Susan Musgrave were also shortlisted, and in other years the names of Robertson Davies, Margaret Atwood, Margaret Laurence, and Alice Munro were put forth; the latter three were offered appointments.<sup>133</sup>

Generally, SFU directed its funding toward working writers who were actively publishing and whose critical reputations were generally less well established than the resident authors at U of T. This tendency grew out of the department’s strong interest, testified to by its curriculum, in regional and avant-garde writing. An examination of the SFU English department’s syllabi from 1965 to 2000 reveals that the department’s choices of resident writers reflected some of the authors whose works were already being taught in general literature courses and dedicated Canadian courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In all cases, at least minimal inclusion in the curriculum *before* a residency appointment was typical, while sustained inclusion in the years *after* an appointment was less certain. Looking at monograph publications by prose writers, we see that some have remained on curriculum to the present day, while others have fallen away. Scott Symons’ *Place d’Armes* (McClelland and Stewart, 1967) – the title that so

alarmed U of T president Claude Bissell – first appeared on a graduate course on Canadian literature in 1970; it was taught regularly at the undergraduate and graduate levels for a decade, making only one further appearance in 1985. The work of the two BC prose writers, Jack Hodgins and Audrey Thomas, endured longer, although by no means following parallel paths. Hodgins' short stories and novels, on the curriculum since 1980, were featured prominently in visiting professor Eli Mandel's 1981 undergraduate course "Island/Coast/Interior," which examined the oeuvres of Hodgins, Robert Kroetsch, and Daphne Marlatt. Following this regionally focused course, *The Invention of the World* and *Spit Delaney's Island* continued as strong presences in upper-level Canadian courses through to the 1990s. In contrast, the work of Audrey Thomas has been largely represented by short stories in anthologies, most notably in Carole Gerson's *Vancouver Short Stories* (UBC Press, 1985), which was regularly on the syllabus from 1986. Thomas's novels appeared fleetingly until the late 1980s, when they began featuring mainly in courses devoted to women's writing or to the literature of the region.

The playwrights also present unparallel trajectories. George Ryga's *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* (Talonbooks, 1970), about the death of a young Native woman on the streets of Vancouver, which had debuted at the Vancouver Playhouse during the Centennial of 1967 and was the first English-language play performed at the new National Arts Centre in Ottawa in 1969, and his *Captives of the Faceless Drummer* (Talonbooks, 1971) were regularly taught in first-year drama courses from first publication to the close of the 1970s. *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* alone made a comeback through its inclusion in Jerry Wasserman's *Modern Canadian Plays* (Talonbooks, 1985, plus subsequent editions), remaining on the syllabus through the 1990s in both first-year and upper-level Canadian

courses. In contrast, the plays of Cam Hubert (Anne Cameron), remembered by Peter Buitenhuis as “a radical writer with radical views,” who was selected for her strengths as a dramatist,<sup>134</sup> appeared only briefly in the classroom. Her play, *Rites of Passage*, which was issued as a number of *Room of One’s Own*,<sup>135</sup> made an appearance on an SFU syllabus in 1980, the year before her residency; *The Twin Sinks of Allan Sammy* was anthologized in *Five New Plays* (Playwrights Co-op, 1978), which was a textbook in 1983. Cameron’s retellings of Nookta stories, which were her focus at the time of her residency, were absent from the curriculum in the wake of the cultural appropriation debates of the 1980s and 1990s, until her *Daughters of Copper Woman* (Press Gang, 1981) was included in a 1997 course focused on the depiction of Natives in literature which problematized writing by non-Aboriginal authors. Unlike Ryga’s *Rita Joe*, which was groundbreaking in featuring a Native cast and whose theme of urban violence and direct treatment of inter-cultural conflict remained a site of debate at the close of the century, Cameron’s work, which borrowed from traditional Native culture, settled in a more marginal position.

The work of poets in the curriculum is more difficult to trace. McFadden’s *Letters from the Earth to the Earth* (Coach House, 1968) appeared as an optional text for first-years in 1969, and his *The Poet’s Progress* (Coach House, 1977) was taught in “Introduction to Poetry” in 1979, as well as in an upper-level undergraduate Canadian poetry course in 1981. The required readings for Sandra Djwa’s 1979 Canadian Literature graduate course on “Little Magazines of the 1940s” included Livesay’s memoir *Right Hand, Left Hand* (Press Porcepic, 1977). Livesay was the only SFU writer-in-residence to have been anthologized in Carl F. Klinck and Reginald E. Watters’



*Canadian Anthology* (W.J. Gage, rev. ed., 1966; and 3rd rev. ed., 1974), one of the most commonly assigned anthologies, along with Gary Geddes' *20th Century Poetry and Poetics* (Oxford, 1969), and Gary Geddes and Phyllis Bruce's *15 Canadian Poets* (Oxford, 1970), whose third incarnation, edited by Geddes, *15 Canadian Poets x 2* (1988), also included poems by Livesay. As a wider selection of anthologies became available in the 1980s, the work of Livesay, McFadden, and Wayman were included in texts such as Margaret Atwood's *New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse* (1982).

What conclusions can be drawn about the relationship between the residency program and the construction and contestation of literary canons at SFU? As at U of T, the program has been shown to reinforce, rather than disrupt, the curriculum already in place; while at U of T, the result was a relatively conservative selection of recognized authors, at SFU, the residency, like the curriculum, showcased emerging west-coast writers. Not surprisingly for a department which has remained invested in the production and study of new writing, an author's inclusion in the SFU residency program has not been shown to guarantee a continued presence on the curriculum in the years beyond the author's residency.

While it may be observed that the work of the women writers – representing only three of the nine authors hosted by the university – has fared less well than that of their male counterparts, several additional comments should be made. Firstly, other women writers, who have not served as resident authors, notably Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood, and Joy Kogawa, have been among the most consistently taught authors in the department. Secondly, while Livesay, Thomas, and Cameron did not become fixtures on the “national Canadian” curriculum, their significance has been affirmed in a variety of

other ways by the institution. Cameron's papers are held by SFU Library's Special Collections, which focuses on contemporary North American literature. Along of the past resident authors, Livesay (1987) and Thomas (1994) have been awarded honorary doctorates by the university, which has largely recognized distinguished British Columbians. These women authors, along with Margaret Laurence (1977), P.K. Page (1990), and Joy Kogawa (1993), represent a significant portion of the women so honoured by SFU<sup>136</sup> and attest to the significance of these female authors as cultural figures in an otherwise male-dominated environment. Thirdly, the work of Daphne Marlatt, who became the inaugural resident author of the reinstated program in 2005, has been regularly on syllabi since the 1970s, including selections in several key regional and national anthologies, as well as her full-length works. Over the years, Marlatt has worked within the department in various capacities; her founding, with Barbara Godard, Gail Scott, and SFU English Professor Kathy Mezei, of the feminist journal *Tessera*, which published out of SFU from 1984 to 1988, is one example of Marlatt's continuing scholarly and literary contributions. Marlatt, faring better than all previous SFU writers-in-residence, has also been the focus of a number of honours and graduate theses completed in the department.<sup>137</sup> In sum, Marlatt's career at SFU may be seen to have elements in common with that of early resident authors at U of T, for whom the residency appointment in many cases represented a laurel for a pre-eminent author with scholarly interests and a substantial, critically acclaimed body of work.

The roots of the writer-in-residence program at SFU are located in the excitement felt at the young university during the 1970s, when new publishers, periodicals, and literary works were springing up that challenged Toronto as the centre of literary activity.

SFU's residency program, like its curriculum, reflected a strong interest in emerging writers and new forms of literary expression. The department itself was a site of competing notions of literary value, a creative campus that drew on contemporary literature of its own region in constructing Canadian literature.

### **Memorial University of Newfoundland: Island to nation**

The writer-in-residence program at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) reflects markedly different struggles than those in evidence at U of T and SFU. Residency appointments at MUN have been primarily aimed at developing local writing communities and creating a bridge between those groups and larger literary centres outside the province. The first resident authors in Newfoundland were writers-in-the-community sponsored through the MUN Extension Service, an outreach branch of the university, in the 1970s. Following debates within the English department in the mid-1980s, the university partnered with the Canada Council in the 1990s to bring resident authors to the St. John's campus (See Table 4.3). These local and visiting writers worked extensively with the arts community in the city and occasionally with the Sir Wilfred Grenfell College campus (est. 1975) in Corner Brook, which hosted its own long-term writer-in-residence, Newfoundland poet and playwright, Al Pittman, from 1998 until his death in 2001. MUN's institutional purview, combined with the specific literary history of Newfoundland, which became Canada's newest province in 1949, makes the university a compelling site for the study of the production of Canadian literature in the final decades of the 20th century.

**Table 4.3**  
**Writers-in-Residence at Memorial University of Newfoundland,**  
**St. John's campus, 1991-2000**

Year	Writer
1991-2	Kevin Major
1992 fall	Jane Urquhart
1993-4	Wayne Johnston
1995 winter	Marilyn Bowering
1996 summer	Jay Meek
1999 fall	Guillermo Verdecchia

Source: Memorial University of Newfoundland, Department of English Language and Literature.

Having begun as Memorial College in 1926, MUN achieved university status shortly after Newfoundland's confederation with Canada in 1949. The university's role was envisioned as the protector and promoter of the arts in the province; in the words of future premier Joseph Smallwood in 1947, the institution would be "a dynamo, a powerhouse, in the inculcation and dissemination and encouragement of a distinctly Newfoundland culture," making special contributions in the fields of folklore, history, literature, and social studies of Newfoundland and Labrador.<sup>138</sup> The regional focus has continued. Today, the university's mission statement, adopted in 1993, recognizes "a special obligation to educate the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador, to undertake research on the challenges this province faces and to share its expertise with the community."<sup>139</sup>

The writer-in-residence program at MUN reflects the commitment to foster local culture, in both its "traditional" and contemporary forms. The first writers-in-residence in Newfoundland were community writers sponsored through the university's Extension Service, which administered courses and organized community groups in urban and rural

areas of the province. Established in 1961, for nearly thirty years MUN Extension was itself evidence of the expansive role the university was to play in the province's cultural affairs. Particularly significant for the artistic community of St. John's was the service's Visual and Performing Arts Section, which operated for eleven significant years from 77 Bond Street (formerly Bishop Spencer School), before moving to another downtown location on Duckworth Street in 1984. In the 1970s and early '80s, "Bond Street" represented "a resource and meeting centre, a clearing house for current arts information and a crossroads for many disciplines."<sup>140</sup> It was the central workshop, rehearsal, and meeting space for local artists and performers, including musical acts, theatre troops such as Sheilagh's Brush, Rising Tide, and Codco, and authors' groups, notably the Newfoundland Writers' Guild.<sup>141</sup> During this time of intense artistic activity, Bond Street received occasional funding from the Canada Council and also used its own operating budget to support "resident specialists" in visual art, drama, music, and literature; these included Newfoundland novelist Percy Janes, who conducted a drop-in workshop in 1976,<sup>142</sup> and then locally based poet Seán Virgo in 1978.

In an interview in 2005, Virgo remembers his residency being arranged in a spontaneous fashion, when Edythe Goodridge, head of the section and curator of the art gallery operated by the Extension Service,<sup>143</sup> found money to pay him for the work in music, visual art, theatre, and writing in which he was already engaged.<sup>144</sup> One of these projects was a reading series held at Bond Street and another was the launch of *TickleAce*, a magazine of the literary and visual arts, which Virgo founded with Tom Dawe, Adrian Fowler, Lynda Hendrickson, and Neil Murray and whose first four issues (1977-8) were published by the Extension Service. The history of *TickleAce* is in some

ways emblematic of the Newfoundland writing scene. While today it takes its place among other little magazines of Canada, such as *The Fiddlehead* (Fredericton, est. 1945) and *Grain* (Saskatoon, est. 1973), in featuring writers from across Canada and aiming at a national readership, upon its launch it focused on the here and now, ignoring the national context and its peer publications springing up in other parts of Canada. *TickleAce* proclaimed the arrival of a Newfoundland literature, which it romantically located as originating in a sense of place (more connected to the British Isles than to Canada) rather than a literary tradition, as the explanation of its title, adapted from an entry in *The Birds of Newfoundland* (Department of Natural Resources, Province of Newfoundland, 1951), given in its first issue, indicates:

KITTIWAKE ...

Local names: Tickle-Ace; Tickle-Lace; Tickle-Ass; Lady-bird; Lady. ...

Despite its delicate and fragile appearance, the Kittiwake is perfectly at home upon the North Atlantic, drinking the salt water, sleeping upon the waves and seldom coming to land except to nest. Often seen sitting on tops of icebergs.

The Tickle-Ace is a great traveller. Many of those which are raised in the Old World find their way to this side of the Atlantic. Unlike most other gulls, they are not given to scavenging.<sup>145</sup>

In the manner of Vancouver's *New: West Coast*, which appeared at the same time, *Tickle-Ace*'s early issues, produced by the original editorial board, divided its space between two literatures, the "modern" and the "traditional." Aimed at a Newfoundland audience, the magazine sought to represent the province culturally and geographically and welcomed both experienced writers and those who had never before published.<sup>146</sup> Like

many Bond Street endeavours, *TickleAce* engaged working artists, serious amateurs, and hobbyists in a collaborative local production.

The work of MUN Extension through the 1960s and '70s may be viewed through the larger lens of provincial support for the arts in Newfoundland. Ronald Rompkey has described the provincial arts policy as passing through three stages. The “developmental” stage (approximately 1949 to 1978) saw the establishment of institutions to support the arts in the towns and the outports, the arts being seen as an area that had historically taken low priority in the struggle for subsistence. Newfoundland needed to “catch up” and so saw the creation of the Arts and Letters Competition (est. 1951), the MUN Extension Service (1961-89), the St. John’s Folk Arts Council (est. 1966), and the Division of Cultural Affairs (est. 1971). Many of these initiatives were concerned with both preserving the traditional arts, such as folk music, and promoting new work. The “nationalistic” stage (approximately 1979 to 1988) focused on preserving Newfoundland’s “characteristic way of life” that was seen, as were the province’s natural resources, to be threatened by confederation with Canada. For a time, the Division of Cultural Affairs offered a Publishers’ Assistance Program for local writers and the literary presses that had begun appearing in the late 1960s, including Jespersion Press (est. 1969), Breakwater Books (est. 1973), Harry Cuff (est. 1980), and Creative Book Publishing (est. 1983).<sup>147</sup> The Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council (est. 1980) was created to fund the visual, performing, and literary arts, and to preserve folk arts and crafts. The tone for the third stage identified by Rompkey, the “industrial” stage (from 1989), was set by the report of the Arts Policy Review Committee, chaired by MUN professor Patrick O’Flaherty and appointed by the government of Clyde Wells. Called

*Drawing Conclusions* (1990), the O’Flaherty report “reflected the tendency to define cultural policy in terms of consumer products, one already established by the federal Applebaum-Hébert report (1982).”<sup>148</sup> *Drawing Conclusions* focused on the economic benefits of a strong arts sector; other government and independent reports of the 1990s followed its lead. Much of the subsequent arts funding has been focused on touristic festivals, many of them commemorating historical events.

The artistic boom in St. John’s of the 1970s and ’80s, then, built on the infrastructure of the “developmental” stage and inspired by the zeitgeist of the “nationalistic” stage, resulted in a “literary renaissance” that was, for the most part, resolutely local. The publishing sector, in particular, as Sandrine Ferré-Rode has demonstrated, built itself on local history and poetry, two genres with limited appeal outside the region.<sup>149</sup> Through MUN Extension, a network of writers emerged, who would be among the authors to publish with local presses such as Jespersen, Breakwater, and Creative. Charter members of the Newfoundland Writers’ Guild (est. 1968), such as Helen Fogwill Porter, Geraldine Rubia, and Bernice Morgan, met as young homemakers in a MUN English Department evening class and later became instructors in MUN Extension.<sup>150</sup> Their first collective publication was *From This Place: A Selection of Writing by Women of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Jespersen, 1977), published for the International Year of Women, and one of many regional anthologies in this period, others of which were produced for the educational market.

Print has been a medium traditionally inaccessible to many Newfoundlanders; the explosion in writing and publishing in the 1970s represented a profound cultural change for both the “pioneers” and their audiences. Many of the writers involved with the guild



have viewed their work emerging directly from oral and populist roots; some work in the genres of social realism, melodrama, and referential poetry, genres traditionally overlooked by academic critics but valued by local audiences who, according to Danielle Fuller in *Writing the Everyday: Women's Textual Communities in Atlantic Canada*, “recognize the knowledges embedded in the stories and in the telling, or realization, of those stories.”<sup>151</sup> Fuller’s study, which provides a welcome introduction to the work of these women authors and a detailed analysis of the interconnected “textual communities” of the Atlantic provinces and their various positionings within and, more often, outside literary canons, is useful in conveying a sense of the status of these women writers within their region. For example, when the Writers’ Guild formed by breaking away from the Canadian Authors Association and becoming an independent association – thereby emphatically “not a branch of anything!” in the words of Bernice Morgan – it immediately became eligible for provincial funding,<sup>152</sup> as well as a source of pride for its members, for whom the organization gave a sense of “being taken seriously as writers.”<sup>153</sup> While the guild provided creative and intellectual support, hands-on professional concerns would become the purview of the Writers’ Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador (est. 1985). The writing community in St. John’s developed rapidly from the 1970s through a marked increase in creative writing classes, public readings, publications, and, finally, academic attention from the MUN English department, whose evolving curriculum and, later, introduction of the writer-in-residence program, are indicative of the developments on the local writing scene and within the university.

Professors in MUN's Department of English Language and Literature have long been involved in the local literary community as writers, editors, and publishers. However, unlike at SFU, for many years the local activity was not a focus in the university classroom. From the early 1950s, the English department curriculum was heavily oriented toward British literature and strongly influenced by the guiding principles of Arnoldian humanism. That the gleanings of "the best that has been taught and said" represented "the purpose and reward of literary studies" was a tenet in evidence in *Reading English* (Macmillan of Canada, 1958), a handbook for English students written by MUN professors E.R. Seary and G.M. Story, which remained a first-year textbook at the university for many years.<sup>154</sup> The focus on the "great works" of Britain, to the exclusion of the teaching of other literatures in English, was perhaps partly due to the training of the professors in the department that had hired steadily through the 1950s and 1960s. In 1970, faculty members who had received their highest degree from a British university represented one half of the twenty-eight-member department; by 1980, the percentage had decreased only slightly, and British-educated faculty accounted for seven of the ten full professors.<sup>155</sup>

Canadian and Newfoundland literatures were admitted slowly into the curriculum, along with other courses in North American and international literatures. Canadian literature was not singled out for any special emphasis. In 1964, a graduate course examining American and Canadian literature was introduced. In 1970, the department offered its inaugural undergraduate course in Canadian literature – along with two courses in Irish literature and three new American courses – a full ten years after the introduction of the first American survey course. The Canadian courses increased

fourfold in the next few years, however, bringing the curriculum more in line with that of other Canadian institutions. The study of Newfoundland literature took a different path. Concurrent with the local “renaissance,” a course in “Newfoundland Writing” was introduced in the English department in 1973, the title of which would not be changed to “Newfoundland Literature” until 1987. Although poet E.J. Pratt had been studied in introductory literature courses since 1962, and Newfoundland songs and oral literature had been typically included in folklore classes (taught originally within the English department until the formation of the Department of Folklore in 1968), this survey course was evidence of the growing interest in Newfoundland’s literary heritage as a subject of study and research, although the place of Newfoundland “writing,” past and present, among other “literatures” was by no means equal. For many years, the university calendar entry for the course, which spanned writers from Robert T. Lowell to Harold Horwood, explained that the content “should be of special interest to students in the Education Faculty who plan to make use of Newfoundland materials in their teaching.” Neither Newfoundland nor Canadian courses were required for English majors or honours students, who were firmly directed toward the periodized courses in British literature.

Unlike SFU, where some authors were featured on both national and provincial syllabi, at MUN, Canadian and Newfoundland literature courses for some time had mutually exclusive reading lists (with the notable exception of Pratt) and were taught by different faculty members. One of the pioneering scholars in the field of Newfoundland literature was Patrick O’Flaherty, who introduced the undergraduate course, contributed to several of its textbooks, and produced the first (and to date only) book-length study of

Newfoundland literature, *The Rock Observed* (University of Toronto Press, 1979), an impassioned and at times harshly critical overview of writing of and about Newfoundland. While department head in the 1980s, O'Flaherty introduced greater opportunities for the production and study of Newfoundland literature. He taught a graduate course in the subject beginning in 1984 and introduced an undergraduate course in creative writing in 1985.

Following a hiring boom in the early 1980s, Canadian-educated faculty (including a large percentage of MUN-trained professors) now represented one-half of the department. One newcomer, Canadianist Lawrence Mathews, would become a significant proponent of Newfoundland literary studies in years to come. At the time of his arrival, Mathews' familiarity with Newfoundland writing was limited to Percy Janes' *House of Hate* (McClelland and Stewart, 1970), as well as work by Harold Horwood (who also published in Toronto). In an interview in 2006, Mathews remarked, "There was no profile for Newfoundland writing [in other parts of Canada], even for a person who had a life-long interest in these things." Upon his arrival, he remembers being startled to discover "all these local presses ... and all sorts of local writers who were well known here [Newfoundland] but never heard of on the mainland." Speculating on reasons for the cultural divide, Mathews suggested that the lingering "Anglophilia" and the tendency of local writers not to "think in Canadian terms" contributed to near absence of Newfoundland writing on the national literary scene:

When I first came here in '84, it was almost unheard of for Newfoundland writers to try to publish in mainland periodicals. I remember going to a conference in 1986 and speaking to the editor of *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, Geoff Hancock,

who had just then recently received his first ever submission from a Newfoundland writer, and the periodical had been going for at least fifteen years at the time.<sup>156</sup>

Mathews, who has been teaching Canadian literature and creative writing at MUN since the mid-1980s, has since contributed to bridging the contemporary Newfoundland and Canadian scenes – including editing a special issue on Newfoundland writing in *Canadian Fiction Magazine* in 1990. Acknowledging that they may have been conceived of as separate literatures in the past, Mathews says he, as well as several of his colleagues who also teach in the area, believe that, today,

It is important for the study of Canadian/Newfoundland literature that no rigid distinction be made between the two because there is so much cross-fertilization in practical terms in the way that Newfoundland writers are widely read on the mainland and internationally, and Newfoundland writers read Canadian writers, as they read American and British writers, writers from all over the world. ...

About ten years ago I started introducing Newfoundland books into my Canadian courses ... [A]t a certain point it became obvious that Newfoundland writing was not only worthy of attention in itself, but that it was a major facet of Canadian writing.<sup>157</sup>

Since the 1990s, Newfoundland authors have been more visible nationally than ever before. Editing a special issue on the literature of Newfoundland of *Essays on Canadian Writing* in spring 2004, in recognition of the developments Mathews plays with “the conceit of writing an addendum to *The Rock Observed*” in his introductory essay, “Report From the Country of No Country.” Much, he observes, has changed in twenty-five years.

Whereas O’Flaherty had “nothing to say about poetry after Pratt and nothing whatsoever to say about drama,” Mathews points to several dramatists of the current and previous generations, and to a handful of poets who have national reputations and to others who deserve them.<sup>158</sup> Whereas O’Flaherty identified two contemporary novelists, Janes and Horwood, he considered worthy of attention, Mathews names more than a dozen prose writers; the essays in the collection represent some of the first scholarly attention – by Canadian, Newfoundland, and British critics – to some of these writers. While there had been many factors in the explosion in and the increase of critical attention to Newfoundland writing, the MUN writer-in-residence program had played a key role in propelling local writers onto the national field.

Established in 1991, nearly twenty years after the rapid development in Newfoundland literary production, the author residency program at MUN quickly became a bridge between local writers and Toronto, still the major English-language publishing centre of the country. The program has worked on several levels to encourage the emergence of St. John’s authors on the Canadian scene, including selecting nationally established Newfoundland writers for the position, as well as facilitating connections between local writers and visiting authors. Called “the primary example” of co-operation between the university and the local writing community,<sup>159</sup> the program also testifies to the continuing connections, and frictions, between the university-consecrator and the locally based arts community.

The establishment of the writer-in-residence program was the result of “intense lobbying by the Writers’ Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador [WANL] and several

MUN faculty members,”<sup>160</sup> who were aware of the Canada Council program at other universities and were keen to have something comparable for St. John’s. In 1983-4, several professors, including Roberta Buchanan (also a WANL member) and Gildas Roberts, attempted to arrange a position for Elizabeth Smart, who that year had visited St. John’s as University of Alberta writer-in-residence; however, faculty consensus was not forthcoming, and the necessary funding was unavailable.<sup>161</sup> Over the next few years, professors Buchanan, Roberts, and Philip Gardner, as well as WANL representative Helen Porter remained interested in the idea and discussed potential authors to take up the role. At one point a phone call was placed to Mavis Gallant in Paris, though Gallant declined the offer. Like U of T and other universities, such as UNB (see Chapter One), MUN looked to internationally known authors to lend status to its fledgling program. “We had nothing against having a local writer,” Porter recalls, “but we thought it would be nice to start with a bang.”<sup>162</sup>

Ultimately, however, it was a local writer who won the faculty’s support. In 1991, the committee chose Newfoundland novelist Kevin Major as the department’s first resident author. Born in 1949, Major was younger than the founding guild members and the authors of their generation and was fairly unusual in being a locally based writer who published outside the province. Following a common pattern of Atlantic Canadian writers, such as David Adams Richards,<sup>163</sup> Major had published first with a local press, Breakwater, before moving on to Clarke, Irwin; Stoddart; and New York’s Delacorte Press. While in residence, Major worked extensively with drama students at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook on a stage adaptation of his second novel, *Far from Shore* (Clarke, Irwin, 1980). Reporting to the Canada Council, Gildas Roberts credited

the residency with the establishment of “a happy town and gown relationship” effected through the participation of WANL in selecting the candidate and the regular attendance of WANL members at Major’s readings. The position was also important, Roberts asserted, in demonstrating to students “the importance we in the University attach to living writers.”<sup>164</sup> It is worthwhile to note, however, that the selection of Major, a former teacher and then author primarily of young-adult novels, was not out of line with the customary construction of Newfoundland authorship within the department, whose course on Newfoundland literature was aimed toward students in the Faculty of Education.

It was the appointment of Jane Urquhart in the fall of 1992 that infused a new energy in the local writing community and the university program. Helen Porter remembers Urquhart as the resident author who “put her whole heart and soul into it.”<sup>165</sup> For Lawrence Mathews, Urquhart also represents “the most important” writer to have held the residency position in the period under discussion. Urquhart heightened the profile of professional authorship on and off campus. She gave readings and participated in a panel, entitled “What Is an Author?” held in conjunction with the French department, and spoke on “Being a Canadian Woman Writer” in a women’s studies colloquium series.<sup>166</sup> In addition to these interdisciplinary campus activities, Urquhart gave readings with WANL and held an informal weekly seminar for invited local writers, including Lisa Moore and Michael Winter, at her sublet house. It was her involvement post-residency, however, that most impressed Mathews:

She was instrumental especially in getting the careers of Lisa Moore and Michael Winter off the ground because she made contacts with literary presses in Ontario



that led to the publication of their first books. In both cases, it was some years later, but she was the person who made the connection. ... And I think she was very helpful in raising the profile of Newfoundland writing in Ontario when she got back there ... [by] informally making people's names known.<sup>167</sup>

Urquhart's initiatives during and after her residency had a profound effect on how the literary and academic communities viewed the writer-in-residence position and the profession of authorship in contemporary Newfoundland. Subsequent visiting authors, BC poet Marilyn Bowering and Ontario dramatist Guillermo Verdecchia, would also work extensively with local writers. In his final report to the department, Verdecchia would mention his invitation to St. John's playwright Robert Chafe to be part of the developmental season of Cahoots Theatre Projects in Toronto the following year.<sup>168</sup> The contact would lead to future collaborations and increased communication between the Toronto and St. John's theatre scenes.

By the mid-1990s, the national profile of Newfoundland writing had already been raised considerably by the success of Wayne Johnston's novels, *The Story of Bobby O'Malley* (Oberon, 1985) and *The Divine Ryans* (McClelland and Stewart, 1990), both of which received some critical acclaim. When Johnston was chosen as the third writer-in-residence at MUN, it was in recognition of his status as "by far the most prominent Newfoundland writer" in Canada.<sup>169</sup> Johnston, who returned from Toronto to take up the position, taught a creative writing class, launched his fourth novel, *Human Amusements* (McClelland and Stewart, 1994), acquainted himself with St. John's authors, and carried out research for *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams* (Knopf, 1998),<sup>170</sup> the novel that would earn a cover story in *The New York Times Review of Books* (1999) and a place on

CBC Radio's *Canada Reads* (2003), among many honours. For emerging writers, Johnston's career represented both a model and a catalyst, in that it heightened the interest of agents and commercial publishers in Newfoundland authors.<sup>171</sup>

While by this time MUN had developed an "informal protocol of alternating Newfoundland and mainland writers," its relationship with the local writing community was not always smooth. Following the appointment of Johnston, the WANL representative position was dropped from the writer-in-residence committee. The rationale behind the decision, according to Mathews, was to avoid a situation in which the university was presented with "a WANL writer being put forward with a big petition of WANL names supporting that writer." Pointing to the university-consecrator's prerogative to make its own selection based on its own criteria, Mathews explained, "We didn't necessarily want to end up with the nicest writer in town or the most politically astute writer in town."<sup>172</sup> Helen Porter confirms that at least one established local author, who in her judgement would have been an "ideal" candidate, has been passed over by the university, who in recent years has turned its attention to the new generation of writers, including Kenneth J. Harvey (2001) and Lisa Moore (2004-5). Acknowledging the skill and success of such authors, Porter reflects on the "phenomenal change" in writing and publishing in Newfoundland in recent decades: comparing the careers of Bernice Morgan, who published her breakthrough novel, *Random Passage* (Breakwater, 1992) at the age of fifty-seven, and Lisa Moore, who published the Giller-nominated short-story collection *Open* (Anansi, 2002) at the age of thirty-eight, Porter catalogues the local developments since the 1950s, from the impact of the women's movement to the availability of creative writing courses and of eager, critically astute mentors. Of the

Moore generation, she concludes, “By the time they were twenty-five [years old], they were as far along as we were at forty-five. ... There will never be such a big difference again [between generations].”<sup>173</sup>

On a final note, it is worthwhile to touch on the importance of international exchanges for Newfoundland writers since the 1990s. American poet Jay Meek, one of the few authors to visit Canada through the Canada/United States/Mexico Resident Artists’ Exchange, spent two months at MUN in 1996, during which he mentored student writers and published poetry in *TickleAce*. For Newfoundland writers, travels to Scotland and Ireland have proven valuable, especially for authors with ancestral ties to and a strong sense of cultural inheritance from such nations. In 1991-2, Joan Clark participated in the Scotland-Canada Writer-in-Residence Exchange, a Canada Council program that has hosted a high percentage of authors from the Atlantic region, and garnered a following there.<sup>174</sup> In 2000, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College writer-in-residence, poet and playwright Al Pittman, who is little known in Canada outside his native province, produced *West Moon*, a play about Newfoundland resettlement, at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, an artists’ retreat in Annaghmakerrig, Ireland. Supported by the college, the Canada Council, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council, Pittman’s cross-Atlantic trip was one of several Newfoundland-Ireland collaborative arts projects which strengthened ties between Irish and Newfoundland cultural communities.<sup>175</sup>

The MUN writer-in-residence programs, the first sponsored by the Extension Service in the 1970s and the second by the English department in the 1990s, are indicative of developments in the local literary scene, as well as in the approach of the university in constructing the place of Newfoundland literature within national and

international literary canons. Noting the positive attention in the mainstream media for both literary (Moore, Winter, Michael Crummey) and popular writers (Donna Morrissey), Lawrence Mathews observes that currently there is “a certain cachet in being a writer from Newfoundland.” The tide may turn sometime, but “it hasn’t happened yet.”<sup>176</sup>

## **Conclusion**

This examination of author residencies reveals some ways in which residencies contribute to the construction of Canadian literary canons. At U of T, the program began as a student-centred campus activity and quickly became a form of public recognition for consecrated authors. At SFU, the program reflected a curriculum that challenged the literary dominance of Ontario by according a place to experimental and local production. At MUN, the goal has been similar, but the approach has differed. Whereas in my discussion of the other universities, I have outlined aspects of the symbolic production of published authors, at MUN, I have emphasized the program’s capacity to work at the ground level, to bridge the literary communities of St. John’s and the publishing centre of Toronto. While this may be seen simply as a pragmatic strategy on the part of authors (by publishing with larger, centralized firms, authors reach more readers and receive greater returns), it is equally a form of symbolic production (publishing with a widely recognized, “national” firm carries prestige, both within one’s own region and beyond). Beyond the university sphere, the popularity of Newfoundland writers has revitalized conceptions of “Canadian literature,” conceived and marketed through the 1990s as a multicultural, multi-regional conglomerate. A significant commonality between the three universities is a concern with local production: all three have chosen writers from their

respective provinces for a minimum of half the appointments. This attention to local authors signals the universities' abiding interest in fostering regional production and is the greatest factor accounting for the differing characters of the three programs – if, of course, we disregard the importance of funding, or, more often, the lack of it.

This chapter demonstrates how three institutional sites, over specific time periods, have constructed literary value within the national academic and literary fields. Operating from unique vantage points, the institutions have taken into account a number of factors in launching and maintaining writer-in-residence programs, including: institutional precedence and purview, the cultural environment of the region, and the provincial economic context. The case studies have illustrated aspects of the university's role in relation to the creative author, for whom it represents a patron (U of T), a site of creative and critical exchange (SFU), and a mediator between local and national literary communities (MUN). While residency programs, perceived as extracurricular or “luxury” positions, have often been the first items on the chopping block in periods of austerity, all three programs examined here are currently in operation, evidence that the institutions continue to identify value in supporting practicing authors and their mentoring activities. While these activities may be seen as a maturation narrative in motion, a national canon perpetually deferred, such support nonetheless translates to the student body and the local community as the institutions' serious commitment to Canadian writing, even if, as Paul Martin's work demonstrates, Canadian university curricula remain largely focused on other literatures. As Paul Gaudet of the University of Western Ontario has argued in relation to writer-in-residence programs, “Public appearances by writers are a form of publication, performance, or production; and personal contact can sometimes implant

impressions in ways that printed work cannot.”<sup>177</sup> A university author residency is a versatile mantle that can serve the academic and the literary community in many ways. As the examples of Margaret Atwood at U of T and Jane Urquhart at MUN illustrate, resident authors themselves are powerful agents in constructing the role for themselves and future writers.

While residency programs have obvious consecratory implications – mainly because they are often linked to or result from the teaching and research interests of university faculty – writer-in-residence appointments are not necessarily guarantors of long-term consecration for authors. Institutional memory is sometimes short, and when their works have been dropped from the curriculum, authors’ presences also fade from memory, especially in the absence of departmental promotional materials, such as web pages, which list past writers-in-residence in order to underscore a particular program’s prestige. The celebratory mode in which many universities now showcase their records of support for authors, however, suggests that such writer-in-residence histories will be given more prominence in the future.

**CONCLUSION:**  
**WRITERS ON THE PAGE,**  
**WRITERS ON THE MARKET**

In this dissertation, I have outlined a history of writer-in-residence programs in Canada and have discussed various issues that have arisen in and through the policy decisions of patrons (Chapters One and Two), the working conditions of writers (Chapter Three), and the impact of such programs on the status and shape of Canadian literature in university English departments (Chapter Four). Throughout these chapters, I have been especially interested in the figure of the Canadian author and how residency programs construct this public personage. While, on the one hand, individual authors are transients in public cultural and educational institutions, on the other, “writers-in-residence” have become integral presences in such spaces. Due to the longevity and wide-scale implementation of such programs, residencies represent significant points of contact between Canadian authors and their public.

In 1949, in a brief submitted to the Massey Commission, the Vancouver Branch of the Canadian Authors Association contended that authors must have a public presence in order for there to be excitement about their writing: “Canadian writers, as personalities, are almost unknown to most of the Canadian population. There can be no real interest in a person’s works when that person is less than a shadow.”<sup>1</sup> As we have

seen, the Canada Council, the granting agency that emerged from the recommendations of the commission, has endeavoured to promote the author as a public figure. Residency programs, like the council's Public Readings Program, National Book Week, and numerous other regional and municipal literary festivals have provided the opportunity for authors to meet the public face-to-face. For professional authors, participation in such encounters can make or break a livelihood. In 1976, Clark Blaise commented that, in the previous year, "I made approximately 35 times more from being Clark Blaise in the flesh than I did from being represented by my books."<sup>2</sup> In 1981, Alice Munro, writing to John Metcalf, vowed never to be writer-in-residence again and fantasized about additionally forswearing interviews, readings, and "'entertaining' questions," only to conclude this daydream with a question: "Do you think I can live on writing and keep such vows?"<sup>3</sup> By the 1990s, in the multi-million-dollar North American "entertainment industries," the use of authors as marketing tools for literary works, while a longstanding factor in book promotion, became a phenomenon ripe for academic study.<sup>4</sup> In an environment in which celebrity authors promote large-scale sales of popular books – for example, through Oprah's television book club – how have Canadian writer-in-residence programs constructed the image of the public author? What has this meant for the marketing of literature?

In the previous chapters, I have explored the role of writers-in-residence within the university as agents in possession of considerable cultural capital (Earle Birney, Margaret Atwood), able and willing to shape roles for themselves in the academic environment. They have also functioned as educators, mentoring writers and introducing authors' professional concerns and practices to the university forum (Marian Engel,



Dennis Lee, Carol Bolt), and as critics, evaluating the institutions of the university and of literary studies (Scott Symons, Dorothy Livesay). Within the public library environment and in community residency positions, I have shown resident authors to act as advocates (Gertrude Story), role models (Allan Safarik), and sages (Seán Virgo, Alden Nowlan). In both environments, resident authors are public figures, notable for their community activities, but what is their public status as artists?

The author as cultural icon has received harsh treatment in Canadian fiction, in particular, in two satiric novels set in Canada that feature writers-in-residence as protagonists. *General Ludd*, by John Metcalf, was issued by ECW Press in 1980. *Muriella Pent*, written by Russell Smith, appeared in 2004 from Doubleday Canada. Emerging from specific historical moments and representing different generations of writers, both novels exhibit anxieties about the social and cultural role of the author in Canadian society of the day. While *General Ludd* focuses on the threatened displacement of the author and the book in a technological society, *Muriella Pent*, written twenty-four years later, elucidates what John Guillory has called a “crisis in literary study,” the changing value of literature as a form of capital at the close of the 20th century. In both novels, the author residency, which situates the writer in a public and publicly funded position, is a convenient vehicle for the exploration of these issues. Metcalf’s protagonist emerges as an anti-hero, ultimately in conflict with his public, while Smith’s character rejects the public mantle that is offered to him.

The objects of satire in Metcalf’s *General Ludd* are the worship of technology, the professionalizing of the humanities, and the erosion of literary heritage, in short, as Keith Garebian has observed, “the myth of progress.”<sup>5</sup> Metcalf’s protagonist, poet James Wells,

is writer-in-residence at the fictional St. Xavier's University of Montreal, a Jesuit university famed for its Communication Arts Complex (CAC), a building built on the site of a former chapel and dedicated to state-of-the-art multimedia technology. Technology is the religion at St. Xavier's, and the notable architectural feature of the CAC is a hollow hexagonal foyer, mirrored on all sides so as to reflect multiple, fragmented images of the viewer.<sup>6</sup> The CAC foyer symbolizes for Wells much of what characterizes St. Xavier's as a cultural and educational environment: superficiality, solipsism, and disorientation.

Within such a technology-obsessed environment, writer-in-residence Wells is introduced with the customary laudatory phrases, whose superficiality is baldly evident to the poet as he ponders the university's motives for offering him a position:

I've often wondered why they go through the motions of having Writers-in-Residence. There's the zoo aspect, I suppose. And the Public Relations aspect – not only Learning but Culture too. As the Canada Council pays half the shot, they're getting all that Leaven of Creativity and Calliope and her Sisters and a funny man you can stare at for half-price. ... That they believe in patronage, pure or otherwise, is a preposterous fantasy.<sup>7</sup>

Convinced that he has been chosen as a "zoo" exhibit – he will later also refer to himself as the university's "Fool" and "Court Jester"<sup>8</sup> – Wells believes that his status *as an artist* within the institution is negligible. Feeling like an anachronism, a prop, and a diversion, he resolves to give the university what it has paid for. The writer's inaugural reading, accompanied by a lacklustre reception, sets the stage for what will become an openly combative semester, during which the alcoholic, self-indulgent, and misogynistic Wells clashes with faculty members and students.

Metcalf is at his witty best when describing Wells' encounters with those who, in the burgeoning information age, have little adeptness at reading literature and who judge the success of a creative work on the grounds of its sales potential. For example, a student working on an audio project, which is destined, the student hopes, for broadcast on commercial radio, decides to try "the cultural angle" and use Wells' poem, entitled "snow, falling," as the centrepiece of a meteorological montage. Deaf to the poet-in-residence's protests that the snow in the poem is a metaphor for the end of a romance, the student gains Wells' permission to use the poem at a face-to face meeting:

'My name's O'Malley, sir. Martin O'Malley. I'm in my last year of  
Communication.'

'I often feel that way myself,' I said.<sup>9</sup>

While seemingly resigned to the student's middling level of literacy, Wells is outraged by the jargon of the writing instructors at the university, who ask the poet to offer a reading – a *very brief* reading – in order to motivate their students in practicing "functional writing situations," which are eventually specified as the writing of diaries and telegrams.<sup>10</sup> Hostile to the idea of providing sound bites to students he sees as future functionaries, Wells engages in a heated argument with the writing staff, cutting himself off from potential involvement in the classroom.<sup>11</sup>

State patronage for authors is also a target in *General Ludd*, but primarily insofar as it is ineffective in having any influence in an environment such as St. Xavier's. We witness the poet's half-hearted attempts to draft a spy novel in which the Canada Council is the cover for "Intelligence Canada" – a novel Wells cannot get off the ground, due to the fact that Ottawa as a setting for a thriller is "an obstacle to credibility."<sup>12</sup> Metcalf's

greatest opportunity to satirize the council, however, arises when Wells dines with visiting Russian writers, whom he shocks by revealing the extent of the Canadian government's involvement in the literary arts. Accurately, if misleadingly, outlining a system in which the government pays writers to write, magazines to print, and publishers to publish, and then buys the resulting books itself, Wells paints a portrait of a Canadian public entirely indifferent to the writing produced in its own country and, finally, paradoxically, declares that, in Canada, "all literature is, in effect, *samizdat*."<sup>13</sup>

As in much of his non-fiction writing, in *General Ludd*, Metcalf dons a persona that is at once dismissive of the literary culture that exists in Canada and jealous of his place in it. In this novel, while the threat to the arts comes in the form of technological revolution, those who would resist said revolution are few and far between. Wells' often evoked friend and fellow poet, John Calverly (the name recalls "Calvary"), has already been a martyr to the cause – a death by suicide – and James Wells will also self-destruct, landing, by the end of the novel, as an involuntary patient in a psychiatric hospital.

The threats to the writer as artist are very different in Russell Smith's *Muriella Pent*, which is remarkable for the anxieties it demonstrates concerning the aims of public patronage and the status of literature as art form. Set in Toronto in 2001, the novel opens as the new municipal government has cut most funding for the arts. The Arts Action Council (Literature Committee), consisting of chair Jasminka Sthenos-Jones, Deepak Chaudry, Iris Warshavsky, Brian Sillwell, and Muriella Pent, has been left standing, apparently as a public relations move, as the city's nod to multiculturalism. As in *General Ludd*, the larger social and political environment depicted in the novel is hostile to the arts; in *Muriella Pent*, however, the real danger to the artist is what emerges as

misdirection within the arts community itself.

Within the committee, Muriella, a wealthy widow residing in the exclusive neighbourhood of Stilwoode Park, and Brian, a white, middle-class graduate student in English, are routinely cowed by Jasminka and Deepak, who frequently remind them of their “Western” bias and their inability to speak knowledgably, that is, from personal experience, of social injustices. Since the curtailing of their funding necessitated the end of catered meals, the committee lunches on spicy chickpea dishes, supplied, we are told in passing, by Jasminka’s girlfriend and Deepak’s boyfriend, which they joylessly eat in a small meeting room, unairconditioned due to Jasminka and Deepak’s allergies.<sup>14</sup> The committee is so “politically correct” – and I use this phrase to signal the novel’s attack on so-called political correctness – that all notions of “literary value” have fallen by the wayside. Muriella, whose critical credentials consist of half a master’s degree in Romanticism abandoned half a lifetime earlier, is ignorant of contemporary directions in literary studies, particularly those emerging from identity politics, challenges to the canon, and voice appropriation debates. The committee’s meetings, narrated in a third-person perspective, are usually focalized through Brian, who “basically” agrees that “Mrs. Pent was not qualified to judge” most matters that come to the committee’s attention, although he feels pity for the widow, as well as a certain allegiance.<sup>15</sup>

The Developing Regions Exchange Program provides the committee with an opportunity to fund a municipal writer-in-residence, a high-profile position for a visiting international author created in order to “contribute to an understanding of cultural diversity.”<sup>16</sup> To expedite the selection process, the committee has done away with the requirement of a writing sample: applicants are to be assessed solely on the basis of

nationality, ethnicity, and their claim to minority status.<sup>17</sup> From the moment the only viable residency candidate is introduced, however, Marcus Royston, of the former French colony of St. Andrew's, subverts the "political correctness" of the project, beginning with the application form. As part of his response to the comically conflated question six – "Please note any disabilities which you think are relevant to your application (you may include here discussions of your ethnicity or sexual orientation)" – he writes:

I am disabled by my ethnicity in that I am unable to define my ethnicity exactly and thus unable to feel any confidence about my culture of origin and at a loss in using it as ammunition for any grant applications. ... I am indeed, perhaps more than in any other way, disabled by my sexual orientation (how prescient of the Arts Action Council!), which is overpoweringly distracting at any times when purely intellectual concentration should be employed.<sup>18</sup>

In nearly every way, Marcus is a disappointment to his patrons. Reluctant to comment on the racism he has experienced or on his perspective as a postcolonial writer, Marcus is violently opposed to the idea that literature deals with "issues" and conveys "messages," and he is allergic to buzzwords, including "community" and "arts activism." Inevitably, in the eyes of most members of the Arts Action Council and the arts media, Marcus is portrayed as a sell-out anglophile: as one headline reads, "Caribbean's father of revolutionary conscience scorns artist's responsibility for social change."<sup>19</sup>

Marcus's most memorable moment of disgrace – and triumph – is a public display of recalcitrance. Asked to speak at the Metro Library during the unveiling of the library's mission plan, which describes the physical library as a centre "for interactivity, for community outreach [and] a way of uniting the community,"<sup>20</sup> Marcus gives a speech in

which he champions the library as a place *to escape* community, in order to engage in reflection and study.<sup>21</sup> His comments, spoken regretfully but forcefully, threaten the continuance of his appointment, though they are met with a standing ovation by the librarians. In his defence, Marcus argues that the library administration should not have assumed that their invitation to speak would result in a congratulatory address.<sup>22</sup> Regardless of his position of municipal writer-in-residence, Marcus does not speak as a public servant, but as a private artist.

Insofar as it sustains its satire, *Muriella Pent* may be seen as a backlash novel, a response to what John Guillory has termed “a crisis in the form of cultural capital we call ‘literature,’”<sup>23</sup> an aspect of which stems from the issue of “representation” and “a certain confusion which both founds and vitiates the liberal pluralist critique of the canon, a confusion between representation in the political sense – the relation of a representative to a constituency – and representation in the rather different sense of the relation between an image and what the image represents.”<sup>24</sup> The slippage that both inflates the scale of the political triumph of canon revisions<sup>25</sup> and discounts the inevitability of the expression of aesthetic judgments,<sup>26</sup> for Guillory, indicates the need for the development of a sociology of judgment that self-reflexively examines the social institutions that assign literary value. “The argument that one should suspend judgement on behalf of the politically urgent objective of making the canon more ‘representative’ of diverse social groups invited the reactionary objection to the abandonment of ‘standards,’” Guillory observes, going on to insist, “The most politically strategic argument for revising the canon remains the argument that works so revalued are important and valuable cultural works.”<sup>27</sup> In *Muriella Pent*, no such argument has been made, and the challenge to “the establishment”

results in the status quo. The next writer-in-residence, chosen not by the original Action Committee but by Muriella's wealthy neighbours, now the major interests in the council, is a young professor from Regina, who is planning to write a book on Canadian literature "when it was at its peak," culminating in the work of Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro.<sup>28</sup> The publicly supported, community-based arts-for-social-change model has failed utterly.

While *General Ludd* attacks state patrons for their perceived inefficacy, *Muriella Pent* targets public patronage as a site of conflicting agendas, none of them primarily concerned with the arts. At the level of the Arts Action Council, a social agenda is at play, while at the government levels, more overt political aims are being pursued. Unbeknownst to the literature committee and city hall, the federal Department of External Affairs had engineered Marcus's residency in exchange for a tariff agreement opening the St. Andrew's market to Canadian beer.<sup>29</sup> Like Wells' communication student, the government officials are using "the cultural angle" for economic ends. In both *General Ludd* and *Muriella Pent*, then, the author is a marginalized figure, a cultural token in a society primarily concerned with technological and economic pursuits. It is a bleak picture – and one that is perhaps overstated. Although the fictional authors flop as cultural icons, how do they do as artists? What relationships are depicted, if any, between authors and readers?

Given the novels' portrayal of authors as ineffectual and awkward presences in the public arena, it is not surprising that the overall portrait of the circulation and the cultural significance of literary works confines such works to a small sphere of operation. In the few fictionalized accounts of Canadian residencies I have encountered, books are



awkward objects of exchange, their value as commodities often compromised by the traces of the authors' hands. In an early scene in *General Ludd*, Wells idly explores the local bookshops in search of his own work:

The first bookshop didn't carry poetry at all. The second had five copies of my last book, obviously their unsold first order. I signed my name large in them with my felt pen to render them unreturnable to the publisher, thus ensuring my royalty, then introduced myself with bonhomie to the manager and informed him of my gracious gesture. He was obviously aghast but managed a weak smile as we shook hands.<sup>30</sup>

The symbolic capital of celebrity authorship is undercut in short stories as well. In Norman Levine's "Thin Ice" (1979), discussed earlier, the stranded writer-protagonist, upon taking quick inventory of the objects in his possession, chooses to sell a copy of his own novel to a second-hand book dealer, who he hopes will not notice that he has marked some passages in pen in preparation for a reading. Judging that there would be no advantage in doing so, he does not reveal he is the author, and she pays him the going rate.<sup>31</sup> In Wayne Johnston's "Catechism" (2005), a Regina Public Library writer-in-residence, who has descended into disconsolate anonymity by haunting the city's adult-movie stores, abruptly and comically unveils his public identity when he presents an autographed (and dedicated) copy of his novel to a prostitute – herself operating under a pseudonym – following a dismally unsuccessful sexual encounter.<sup>32</sup> In Levine's and Johnston's stories, the authors approach their audiences from positions of embarrassed vulnerability, and neither transaction delivers for them what it has promised. As a vandal, a vagabond peddler, and a john, the writers depicted in all three narratives are shown to

participate in a kind of underground economy, a black market of cultural goods, in short, the traffic in *samizdat* as described by Metcalf.

And yet, in the two novels under discussion here, there are vital connections depicted between author and reader, in both cases portrayed as one-to-one, intimate relationships. In *General Ludd*, Wells' only confidant and ally is Kathy, an English professor, his lover, and one sensitive reader. In *Muriella Pent*, an irony is that Marcus Royston – although an effectively inspiring and disruptive writer-in-residence – has not produced any poetry in nearly twenty years. His first poetic accomplishment, a poem to Muriella, which, reproduced as an intertext, closes the novel, is a token of gratitude and evidence of personal connection. Meaningful, private acts of reading do occur, even as the public presence of the author fails to make an impact.

The satires of Metcalf and Smith are important for demonstrating authors' ongoing interrogation – in fiction, as well as off the page – into the meaning of public patronage for artists, the social and economic position of the author in Canadian society, and the power of literary authors as contributors to critical discourses in English studies. They do not, however, deserve the last word. Far more numerous are the thoughtful and upbeat reports of authors themselves on the positive aspects of their terms as writers-in-residence. Writers such as Miriam Waddington, Adele Wiseman, Maria Campbell, and Dennis Lee, among many others, have written compellingly on the value of their residency work for themselves and for the individuals and institutions with whom and for whom they work. While authors have demonstrated varying degrees of comfort with the public aspects of their appointments, the selection of residency positions available and the flexibility they offer should not be overlooked. Moreover, it is clear that every

residency appointment resonates with its own synergy, emanating from the connections between writers-in-residence and their public, especially those between resident authors and the writers they mentor. Resident authors' amazement at the variety of people who seek their services and at the vast range of writing these individuals produce never ceases and is perhaps the most consistently art-affirming element in resident authors' work: their clients' conviction in the enduring power of the written word.

To take one final example, Lorna Crozier, while writer-in-residence at the Regina Public Library in 1984-5, reported that she was "delighted by the response" to her work and enjoyed "going to the office every week to see what new adventures await me."<sup>33</sup> While Crozier was an enthusiastic mentor to many library patrons, her interest in the other visitors who shared the public space was also aroused. In a poem entitled "The Regulars" written during her residency, Crozier describes some of the people who are drawn, day after day, to the library, "[gathered] from cold, wordless rooms" to sit in the warmth of the reading room, surrounded by books. In the silence, after the lights go out, the poet tells us:

One of the books on the shelves  
is telling their story, writing their names  
in delicate longhand on the title page.<sup>34</sup>

While I have outlined a history of writers-in-residence here, I believe that these fascinating programs will also continue to "tell own their stories," chapter by chapter, and especially on title pages, in years to come.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Canada Council for the Arts Writer-in-Residence Appointments, 1965–2000**

<u>Report Year</u>	<u>Author, Host Institution</u>	<u>Dates of Residency</u>
1965-6	Norman Levine, University of New Brunswick	1965-1966
1966-7	Dorothy Livesay, University of New Brunswick	1966-1967
1967-8	George Bowering, Sir George Williams University Martin Hunter, University of Toronto Mordecai Richler, Sir George Williams University	1967-1968 1968 spring & fall 1968-1969
1968-9	W.O. Mitchell, University of Calgary Alden Nowlan, University of New Brunswick	1968-1969 1968-1969
1969-70	Frank Davey, Sir George Williams University Alden Nowlan, University of New Brunswick	1969-1970 1969-1970, 1970-1971
1970-1	Claire Martin, University of Ottawa Gaston Miron, University of Ottawa Peter Such, Erindale College, University of Toronto Hans Werner Theodor Tolle, Acadia University	1972 winter 1971 winter 1971-1972 1971-1972
1971-2	Morley Callaghan, University of Windsor Jacques Languirand, University of Ottawa	1971-1972 1973 winter
1972-3	Margaret Laurence, Trent University John Metcalf, University of New Brunswick	1974 winter 1972-1973
1973-4	Dave Godfrey, Erindale College, University of Toronto Louise Maheux-Forcier, University of Ottawa Michael Ondaatje, York University Al Purdy, Loyola College Leo Simpson, University of Ottawa	1973-1974 1974 winter 1973-1974 1973-1974 1974 winter
1974-5	Matt Cohen,* University of Alberta Dave Godfrey, Erindale College, University of Toronto Gérald Godin, University of Ottawa Robert Kroetsch, University of Calgary Dennis Lee, Trent University Dorothy Livesay, University of Manitoba John Metcalf, University of Ottawa Alice Munro, University of Western Ontario John Newlove, Concordia University Michael Ondaatje, York University Al Purdy, University of Manitoba	1975-1976 1974-1975 1976 winter 1975 fall 1975 fall 1974-1975* 1975 fall 1974-1975 1974-1975 1974-1975 1975-1976

1975-6	Robert Kroetsch, University of Lethbridge	1976 winter
	John Metcalf, Concordia University	1976 winter
	John Newlove, University of Western Ontario	1975-1976
	Scott Symons, Simon Fraser University	1976 winter
	Tom Wayman, University of Windsor	1975-1976
	Adele Wiseman, University of Toronto	1975-1976
1976-7	Austin Clarke, Concordia University	1976-1977
	Gary Geddes, University of Alberta	1976-1977
	Harold Horwood, University of Western Ontario	1976-1977
	Robert Kroetsch, University of Manitoba	1976-1977
	Dorothy Livesay, University of Ottawa	1977 winter
	John Newlove, University of Toronto	1976-1977
	George Ryga, Simon Fraser University	1977 winter
1977-8	Carol Bolt, University of Toronto	1977-1978
	John Robert Colombo, Mohawk College, Hamilton, ON	1978 winter
	Marian Engel, University of Alberta	1978-1979
	Ralph Gustafson, Bishop's University	1977-1978
	Jack Hodgins, Simon Fraser University	1977 fall
	Joy Kogawa, University of Ottawa	1978 winter
	Al Purdy, University of Western Ontario	1977-1978
1978-9	Silver Donald Cameron, College of Cape Breton	1978-1979
	Ralph Gustafson, Bishop's University	1978-1979
	Jack Hodgins, University of Ottawa	1978-1979 one term?
	Patrick Lane, University of Manitoba	1978-1979
	Irving Layton, University of Ottawa	1978-1979 one term?
	Dennis Lee, University of Toronto	1978-1979
	Eli Mandel, Regina Public Library	1978-1979 [?]
	David McFadden, Simon Fraser University	1979 spring
	Judith Merrill, Centennial College, Toronto, ON	1978-1979 one term?
	Len Peterson, Concordia University	1978-1979
	Leo Simpson, University of Western Ontario	1978-1979
	Tom Wayman, University of Alberta	1978-1979
	Rudy Wiebe, University of Calgary	1978-1979
1979-80	Silver Donald Cameron, College of Cape Breton	1979-1980
	Maria Campbell, University of Alberta	1979-1980
	Timothy Findley, University of Toronto	1979-1980
	Jacques Godbout, Carleton University	1979-1980 six weeks
	Patrick Lane, University of Ottawa	1980 winter
	Dorothy Livesay, Simon Fraser University	1979-1980 fall
	W.O. Mitchell, University of Windsor	1979-1980
	Yvette Naubert, University of Ottawa	1980 winter
	John Newlove, Regina Public Library	1979-1980
	Joe Rosenblatt, University of Western Ontario	1979-1980
	F.R. Scott,* Concordia University	1979-1980

1980-1	Anne (Cam) Cameron, Simon Fraser University	1981 spring
	Matt Cohen, University of Western Ontario	1981 winter
	Lorna (Uher) Crozier,	
	Cypress Hills Community College, SK	1980-1981
	Marian Engel, University of Toronto	1980-1981
	Sylvia Fraser, University of Western Ontario	1980 fall
	Roland Giguère, University of Ottawa	1981 winter
	Harold Horwood, University of Waterloo	1980-1981
	Joyce Marshall, Trent University	1980-1981
	John Metcalf, Concordia University	1980-1981
	W.O. Mitchell, University of Windsor	1980-1981
	George Ryga, University of Ottawa	1980 fall
	Andreas Schroeder, Regina Public Library	1980-1981
Phyllis Webb, University of Alberta	1980-1981	
1981-2	Louky Bersianik, University of Ottawa	1982 winter
	Earle Birney, University of Western Ontario	1981-1982
	Maria Campbell, Regina Public Library	1981-1982
	Harold Horwood, University of Waterloo	1981-1982
	Patrick Lane, University of Alberta	1981-1982
	Irving Layton, University of Toronto	1981-1982
	W.O. Mitchell, University of Windsor	1981-1982
	Anne Szumigalski, Saskatoon Public Library	1981-1982
	Audrey Thomas, Simon Fraser University	1982 spring
Michel Tremblay, Concordia University	1981-1982	
1982-3	Gérard Bessette, University of Ottawa	1982 fall
	Austin Clarke, University of Western Ontario	1982-1983
	Graeme Gibson, University of Waterloo	1982-1983
	Lionel Kearns, Concordia University	1982-1983
	Patrick Lane, Saskatoon Public Library	1982-1983
	Dorothy Livesay, University of Toronto	1983 spring
	Janet Lunn, Regina Public Library	1982-1983
	Daphne Marlatt, University of Manitoba	1982 fall
	Brian Moore, University of Toronto	1982 fall
	Elizabeth Smart, University of Alberta	1982-83
	Fred Wah, University of Manitoba	1983 winter?
Tom Wayman, Simon Fraser University	1983 spring	
1983-4	Clark Blaise, David Thompson University Centre, BC	1983 fall
	Mavis Gallant, University of Toronto	1983-1984
	David McFadden, University of Western Ontario	1983-1984
	Susan Musgrave, University of Waterloo	1983-1984
	Ken Norris, McGill University	1983-1984
	Madeleine Ouellette-Michalska, University of Ottawa	1983 fall
	Andreas Schroeder, University of Winnipeg	1983-1984
	Samuel Selvon, University of Alberta	1983-1984
	Audrey Thomas,* David Thompson Univ. Centre, BC	1984 winter
	Guy Vanderhaeghe, Saskatoon Public Library	1983-1984
Sean Virgo, Regina Public Library	1983-1984	
Adele Wiseman, Concordia University	1983-1984	

1984-5	Gérard Bessette, Université du Québec à Montréal	1984-1985
	Sandra Birdsell, Winnipeg Public Library	1985-1986
	Silver Donald Cameron, Univ. of Prince Edward Island	1985-1986
	Lorna Crozier, Regina Public Library	1984-1985
	Margaret Hollingsworth, Concordia University	1985 [winter?]
	Monica Hughes, University of Alberta	1984-1985
	Gwendolyn MacEwen, University of Western Ontario	1984-1985
	John Marshall, Malaspina College, B.C.	1984 fall
	David McFadden, Metropolitan Toronto Library	1984-1985 May-Oct.
	Susan Musgrave, University of Waterloo	1984-1985
	Erika Ritter, Concordia University	1984 fall
	Leon Rooke, University of Toronto	1984-1985
	Samuel Selvon, University of Winnipeg	1984-1985
	Samuel Selvon, University of Calgary	1985-1986
	Geoffrey Ursell, Saskatoon Public Library	1984-1985
Guy Vanderhaeghe, University of Ottawa	1985 spring	
1985-6	Edna Alford, Regina Public Library	1985-1986
	bill bissett, University of Western Ontario	1985-1986
	Maria Campbell, John M. Cuelenaere Library, SK	1985-1986
	Madeleine Gagnon, Université du Québec à Montréal	1985-1986
	Graeme Gibson, University of Ottawa	1985 fall?
	Michèle Lalonde, University of Ottawa	1985 fall
	Patrick Lane, Concordia University	1985-1986
	Gwendolyn MacEwen, University of Toronto	1985-1986
	Daphne Marlatt, University of Alberta	1985-1986
	Joe Rosenblatt, Saskatoon Public Library	1985-1986
	Sean Virgo, University of Waterloo	1985-1986
Miriam Waddington, Metropolitan Toronto Library	1986 June-Dec.	
1986-7	Clark Blaise,* Concordia University	1986-1987
	Robert Bringhurst, University of Winnipeg	1986-1987 one term
	Silver Donald Cameron, Nova Scotia College of Art & Design	1987-1988
	Jean-Marc Dalpé, University of Ottawa	1986 fall
	Frances Duncan, University of Winnipeg	1987 winter
	Madeleine Gagnon, Université du Québec à Montréal	1986-1987
	Sharon Pollock, Regina Public Library	1986-1987
	Ray Smith, University of Alberta	1986-1987
	Gertrude Story, Saskatoon Public Library	1986-1987
	Anne Szumigalski, Winnipeg Public Library	1987-1988
	Audrey Thomas, University of Ottawa	1987 winter
	Sean Virgo, University of Waterloo	1986-1987
	Adele Wiseman, University of Western Ontario	1986-1987
1987-8	Sandra Birdsell, University of Waterloo	1987-1988
	Roo Borson, University of Western Ontario	1987-1988
	Paul Chamberland, Université du Québec à Montréal	1987-1988
	Mary di Michele, Regina Public Library	1987-1988
	Leona Gom, University of Alberta	1987-1988
	Janette Turner Hospital, University of Ottawa	1987 fall

	Al Purdy, University of Toronto	1987-1988
	Lois Simmie, Saskatoon Public Library	1987-1988
	Adele Wiseman, University of Prince Edward Island	1987 fall
1988-9	Sandra Birdsell, University of Waterloo	1988-1989
	Elizabeth Bourget, University of Ottawa	1988 fall
	Louis Dudek, University of Ottawa	1988 fall
	Martyn Godfrey, Edmonton Public Library	1988-1989 June–Dec.
	Jim Green, Yukon Education, Libraries & Archives	1989-1990 Sep.–Feb.
	Kristjana Gunnars,* Regina Public Library	1988-1989
	David Helwig, St. Laurence College, Kingston, ON	1988-1989
	Wayne Johnston, Regina Public Library	1989-1990
	Janice Kulyk Keefer, Univ. of Prince Edward Island	1989 fall
	Tim Lilburn, University of Western Ontario	1988-1989
	Douglas Lochhead, Mount Allison University	1988-1989 Oct.–Mar.
	Gaston Miron, Université de Montréal	1988-1989
	Monique Proulx, Université du Québec à Montréal	1988-1989
	Erika Ritter, University of Toronto	1988-1989
	Chris Scott, Concordia University	1988-1989
	Samuel Selvon, Saskatoon Public Library	1988-1989
	Carol Shields, University of Ottawa	1989 fall
	Glen Sorestead, Saskatoon Public Library	1988-1989
	Gertrude Story, University of Winnipeg	1988 fall
	Geoffrey Ursell, Winnipeg Public Library	1988-1989
	Fred Wah, University of Alberta	1988-1989
	Bronwen Wallace,* University of Western Ontario	1988-1989 [one term?]
	Helen Weinzwieg, University of New Brunswick	1988-1989
	Adele Wiseman, University of Windsor	1988-1989
1989-90	Nancy Bauer, University of New Brunswick	1989-1990
	Dionne Brand, University of Toronto	1990-1991
	Ann Copeland, Mount Allison University	1990 fall
	Mary di Michele, Concordia University	1989 fall
	Madeleine Gagnon, Université de Montréal	1989 fall
	Leona Gom, University of Winnipeg	1990 spring
	Kristjana Gunnars, University of Alberta	1989-1990
	Margaret Hollingsworth, University of Western Ontario	1989-1990
	Irving Layton, Concordia University	1990 spring
	Douglas Lochhead, Mount Allison University	1989-1990 Oct.–Mar.
	Fernand Ouellette,* University of Ottawa	1989 fall
	Raymond Plante, Université du Québec à Montréal	1989-1990
	Candace Savage, Saskatoon Public Library	1990-1991
	Merna Summers, Winnipeg Public Library	1990-1991
1990-1	Sandra Birdsell, University of Alberta	1991 winter
	Gregory M. Cook, University of Waterloo	1990-1991
	William (Bill) Gaston, University of New Brunswick	1990-1991
	Kevin Major, Memorial University of Newfoundland	1991-1992
	David Adams Richards, University of Alberta	1990 fall
	Leon Rooke, University of Western Ontario	1990-1991
	Vittorio Rossi, Concordia University	1990-1991



	Marie José Thériault, Université du Québec à Montréal	1990-1991
	Pierre Trottier, University of Ottawa	1990 fall
	Jane Urquhart, University of Ottawa	1990 fall*
	Adele Wiseman, University of Windsor	1990-1991
1991-2	Sandra Birdsell, University of Prince Edward Island	1991 fall
	Neil Bissoondath, University of Ottawa	1991 fall
	Michel-Marc Bouchard, University of Ottawa	1992 fall
	Hélène Brodeur, University of Ottawa	1991 fall
	Arlette Cousture, Université du Québec à Montréal	1991-1992
	Christopher Dewdney, University of Western Ontario	1991-1992
	Madeleine Gagnon, Université du Québec à Rimouski	1991-1992
	Michel Garneau, Bibliothèque municipale Eva-Senécal, QC	1991-1992 [4 mos?]
	William (Bill) Gaston, University of New Brunswick	1991-1992
	Jacques Godbout, Université de Montréal	1991-1992
	Patrick Lane, Bishop's University	1991-1992 [one term]
	Judith Merrill, University of Toronto	1991-1992
	Gail Scott, Concordia University	1991-1992
	Gertrude Story, Yukon Education, Libraries & Archives	1991-1992 Sep.-Feb.
	Merna Summers, University of Alberta	1991-1992
	Sean Virgo, Saskatoon Public Library	1991-1992
1992-3	Roo Borson, Concordia University	1993 [winter]
	Maria Campbell, Yukon Educ., Libraries & Archives	1994 Jan.-May
	Trevor Ferguson, University of Alberta	1992-1993
	Judith Fitzgerald, University of Windsor	1992-1993
	Daniel Gagnon, Université du Québec à Montréal	1992-1993
	Elisabeth Harvor, Ottawa Public Lib. & Carleton Univ.	1993 summer & fall
	Tomson Highway, University of Toronto	1993-1994
	Suzanne Jacob, Université de Montréal	1992-1993
	Wayne Johnston, Memorial Univ. of Newfoundland	1993-1994
	Janet Lunn, University of Ottawa	1993 fall
	Daphne Marlatt, University of Western Ontario	1992 fall
	Don McKay, University of Alberta	1992-1993
	Madeleine Monete, Université du Québec à Montréal	1992-1993
	Daniel David Moses, University of Western Ontario	1993 spring
	Susan Musgrave, University of Western Ontario	1992-1993
	Daniel Poliquin, University of Ottawa	1993 fall
	David Adams Richards, University of Ottawa	1992 [one term]
	Peter Dale Scott, Erindale College, Univ. of Toronto	1992-1993 [one term]
	Sharon Thesen, Concordia University	1992 [one term]
	Audrey Thomas, University of Toronto	1993 spring
	Rhea Tregebov, North York Public Library	1993 Jun.-Oct.
	Jane Urquhart, Memorial University of Newfoundland	1992 fall
	Betsy Warland, Saskatoon Public Library	1992-1993
	Armin Wiebe, Saskatoon Public Library	1992-1993
	Dale Zievoth, University of Prince Edward Island	1992 fall
1993-7	<i>No writers-in-residence</i>	

1997-8**	Nicole Brossard, Université du Québec à Montréal	1998 winter
	Brian Brett, Yukon Educ., Libraries & Archives Branch	1998 winter
	Robert Bringham, U of Western Ontario	1998-1999 Sep.-Mar.
	Maria Campbell, University of Saskatchewan	1997-1998
	Peter Christensen, Okanagan University College	1999 winter
	Karen Connelly, Okanagan University College	1998-1999 Oct.-Jan.
	[Elisabeth Harvor ?], Concordia University	1997 [spring?]
	Elisabeth Harvor, Saskatoon Public Library	1998-9
	Suzanne Jacob, Université du Québec à Montréal	1997 fall
	Tim Lilburn, Regina Public Library	1998-1999 Sep.-Jun.
	Richard Sanger, University of New Brunswick	1998-1999 (half grant)
	Don Trembath, St. Albert Public Library	1998 Mar.-May
1998-9**	André Brochu, Corporation du camp littéraire Félix	1999 Aug.-Oct.
	John Livingstone Clark, Saskatoon Public Library	1999-2000
	Lynn Coady, Green College, Univ. of British Columbia	2000 winter
	Emma Donahue, University of Western Ontario	1998-1999 (half grant)
	Hélène Dorion, Université du Québec à Montréal	1999 [winter?]
	Glen Downie, Medical Humanities, Dalhousie Univ.	1999 Sep.-Nov.
	Louis Hamelin, Université du Québec à Montréal	1998 [fall?]
	Cynthia Holz, Toronto Public Library, North Region	1999 Sep.-Dec.
	John Steffler, Concordia University	1998-1999 (half grant)
Guillermo Verdecchia, Memorial University of Newfoundland	1999 fall	
Colleen Wagner, University of New Brunswick	[1998-1999?]	
1999-2000**	Edna Alford, Saskatoon Public Library	2000-2001 (9 mos.)
	Lillian Allen, University of Windsor	2000-2001
	Jan Andrews, Ottawa Public Library, Metcalf Branch	2000-2001 Oct.-Apr.
	Sandra Birdsell, McMaster University	2001 spring
	Sandra Birdsell, Regina Public Library	2000 fall
	Roo Borson, Green College, Univ. of British Columbia	2000 fall
	François Charron, Université du Québec à Montréal	1999 fall
	Austin Clarke, Erindale College, University of Toronto	1999-2000
	Diane-Monique Daviau, Univ. du Québec à Montréal	2000 winter
	Christopher Dewdey, Toronto Public Library	2000 Apr.-Jul.
	Margaret Dymont, Champlain Coll. Arts Society (Trent)	2000 fall
	Douglas Fetherling, University of New Brunswick	1999-2000
	Christiane Frenette, Camp littéraire Félix	2000 Aug.-Oct.
	M.T. Kelly, McMaster University	2000 fall
	Karen MacCormack, University of Western Ontario	1999-2000 (half grant)
	Robert J. Sawyer, Richmond Hill Public Library, ON	2000 Apr.-Jun.
Eden Robinson, Yukon Education, Libraries & Archives	2000 Feb.-July	
David Solway, Concordia University	1999-2000 (8 mos.)	
Harry Thurston, Acadia University	2001 Jan.-Mar.	

Sources: Canada Council for the Arts, Annual Reports, 1965/66-1999/2000, except \*Library and Archives Canada, Canada Council for the Arts fonds, RG 63; and \*\*Canada Council for the Arts, Documentation and Reference Centre, Ottawa.

**APPENDIX B**  
**Canada/Scotland Writer-in-Residence Exchange Fellows, 1978–97**

<u>Canadian Author*</u>	<u>Scottish Author, Host Institution</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Graeme Gibson	Liz Lochhead, York University	1978-9
Ken Mitchell	Cliff Hanley, York University	1979-80
Dennis Lee	Robin Jenkins, York University	1980-1
Fraser Sutherland	William Watson, Trent University	1981-2
Kent Thompson	Andrew Greig, Trent University	1982-3
Fred Cogswell	Ron Butlin, University of New Brunswick	1983-4
Alistair MacLeod	Walter Perrie, University of British Columbia	1984-5
Audrey Thomas		1985-6
	William McIlvanney, Simon Fraser University	1986-7
Ray Smith		1987-8
	Brian McCabe, Malaspina College, BC	1988-9
Robert Bringhurst		1989-90
	John Glenday, University of Alberta	1990-1
Joan Clark		1991-2
	Tom Pow, University of Alberta	1992-3
Christopher Heide		1993-4
	Kathleen Jamie, University of Western Ontario	1994-5
Ven Begamudré		1995-6
	Ali Smith, Trent University	1997

Source: Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, Ottawa.

\*All Canadian authors were based at the University of Edinburgh.

## ABBREVIATIONS

LAC	Library and Archives Canada
MUN	Memorial University of Newfoundland
SAB	Saskatchewan Archives Board
SFU	Simon Fraser University
SWG	Saskatchewan Writers Guild
UNB	University of New Brunswick
U of A	University of Alberta
U of T	University of Toronto

## NOTES

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### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> E. Larrabee, "Artist and the University," 14.

<sup>2</sup> W. Faulkner, *Faulkner in the University*, vii.

<sup>3</sup> John Metcalf, "Without an 'E,'" 120; Irving Layton to Desmond Pacey, 13 March 1967, in J.D.M. Pacey, "An Unexpected Alliance," 708; University of Toronto Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, Writer-in-Residence, 1973-4, W.O. Mitchell to J.R. Evans, 31 May 1974, p. 2; LAC, Audrey Thomas fonds, LMS-0153, 3rd acc., 1994-14, box 40, "Writers' Union of Canada. Member mailings, 1973-82," Ray Smith quoted in letter from the chairman, Writers' Union of Canada, to membership, 4 November 1973; Al Purdy to George Woodcock, 3 September 1969, in *Yours, Al*, 150; Hugh MacLennan, "Author as Teacher," 6; Scott Symons quoted in I. DeVries, "'I'm Looking at a Frightened, Lost Generation,'" 9; John Metcalf, *General Ludd*, 141; University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, John Metcalf fonds, MsC 24, file 24.8.9, Alice Munro to John Metcalf, 31 December 1980; Margaret Laurence to Al Purdy, 14 August [1970], in M. Laurence and A. Purdy, *Friendship in Letters*, 179.

<sup>4</sup> P.K. Jason, "Writer in the University After World War II," 64.

<sup>5</sup> G. Hollingshead, "Writer-in-Residence: Tradition of Community."

<sup>6</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, 226.

<sup>7</sup> P. Griffith et al, *Books & Print in New Zealand*, 233. The Robert Burns Fellowship was created in order "to encourage and promote imaginative New Zealand literature and to associate the writers thereof with the University" (New Zealand Book Council, "Robert Burns Fellowship.")

<sup>8</sup> Raymond M. Hughes quoted in P.K. Jason, "First Writers-in-Residence," 382.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Frost spent one week at Queen's University in 1920 or 1921, one of three guest lecturers (the others were Carl Sandburg and Bliss Carman) who spoke to Professor Royal Snow's honours English class. Frost also met with students at a party held at a faculty member's home. The recollections of several Queen's alumni, gathered by Dr. William A. Sutton in 1977, are held in Queen's University Archives, William A. Sutton papers, MC 2999, "Visit of Robert Frost."

<sup>10</sup> P.K. Jason, "First Writers-in-Residence," 377-9.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 382-3.

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- <sup>12</sup> See P.K. Jason, "Writer in the University After World War II." For works which examine artists-in-residence across the artistic fields, see also the bibliography in M. Risenhoover and R.T. Blackburn, *Artists as Professors*, 214-17.
- <sup>13</sup> P.K. Jason, "Writer in the University After World War II," 47.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.
- <sup>15</sup> W. Van O'Connor, "Writer and the University," 56, 63.
- <sup>16</sup> T. Weiss, "Personal View: Poetry, Pedagogy, and Per-versities," 153.
- <sup>17</sup> T. Grimes, "Preface," ix.
- <sup>18</sup> P.K. Jason, "University as Patron of Literature," 174-88.
- <sup>19</sup> Wayne Johnston, interview with the author, St. John's, 6 January 2003.
- <sup>20</sup> E. Larrabee, "Artist and the University," 12.
- <sup>21</sup> D. Netzer, *Subsidized Muse*, 67.
- <sup>22</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1974-75*.
- <sup>23</sup> D. Netzer, *Subsidized Muse*, 207, 211.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.
- <sup>25</sup> Arts Task Force, National Conference of State Legislatures, *Arts and the States*, 45.
- <sup>26</sup> E.W. White, *Arts Council of Great Britain*, 194-201.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 209-10.
- <sup>28</sup> Arts Council of Great Britain, *Twenty-ninth Annual Report and Accounts*, 27.
- <sup>29</sup> The Oxford Chair of Poetry was created in 1708 by Henry Birkhead, a Berkshire landowner, who believed that "the reading of the ancient poets gave keenness and polish to the minds of young men as well as to the advancement of more serious literature both sacred and human." Professors are elected, for a five-year term, by Oxford alumni and receive a modest honorarium. The election of W.H. Auden in 1956 began a trend of selecting poets for the position, most of whom also possessed considerable academic qualifications. Auden, who approached his duties as an American-style writer-in-residence, acting as a mentor to students, admitted in his inaugural lecture, "You have chosen for your new Professor someone who has no more right to the learned garb he is wearing than he would have to a clerical collar" (quoted in "Education of a Poet," 361). Canadian poet-professor Anne Carson stood for election in 2004, but was defeated by scholar Christopher Ricks.

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- <sup>30</sup> E.W. White, *Arts Council of Great Britain*, 209-10; H. Moore, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, 85; Leeds University, "Poets at the University of Leeds"; see also D. Chatterjee and B. Tebb, *Sixties Press Anthology of Gregory Fellows' Poetry*.
- <sup>31</sup> J.A. Sutherland, *Fiction and the Fiction Industry*, 150.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 148, 150.
- <sup>33</sup> M. Church, "Taking up Residence," 30.
- <sup>34</sup> Arts Council of Great Britain, *Room for a Writer?* pp. 3, 5, and 6.
- <sup>35</sup> Arts Council of Great Britain, *48th Annual Report, 1992/93*, p. 18.
- <sup>36</sup> Arts Council of England, *Annual Report, 1998*, p. 27.
- <sup>37</sup> See, for example, John Ezzard, "Excuse Me, Mr Kray, I can Teach You to Spin a Good Yarn [John Row as prison writer-in-residence]," 5 January 1999; Jeremy Gavron, "Saved by a Sentence [Jeremy Gavron in residence at the Mount Prison in Hertfordshire]," 7 January 1999; David Ward, "Writing Couplets in Praise of Singlets [Andy Croft in residence at the Great North Run and Clare Pollard in residence at Toni and Guy hair salon in Durham]," 3 May 2000, all available on *The Guardian Unlimited* home page, <http://www.guardian.com.uk/>. See also: "NB [Appointment of Mario Petrucci as poet in residence at the Imperial War Museum]," *Times Literary Supplement*, 19 February 1999, p. 16; "Bed, Bath, & Bard [Peter Sansom at Marks & Spencer]," *New Republic*, 1 June 1998, pp. 10-12.
- <sup>38</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Documentation and Reference Centre, Australia Council, "Writer-in-Residence – Orientation Suggestions," p. 1; and "Australian Council: Writer-in-Residence Program for Tertiary Institutions. Literature Board," p. 1. Documents are undated, but are stamped 20 January 1986.
- <sup>39</sup> Asialink, "Asialink Literature Residencies, 1997-2003."
- <sup>40</sup> A.M. Klein, "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape," in R. Brown and D. Bennett, *Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, 1:502.
- <sup>41</sup> P. Litt, *Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission*, 3, inner sleeve.
- <sup>42</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, 271.
- <sup>43</sup> P. Litt, *Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission*, 84.
- <sup>44</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, 224.

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- <sup>45</sup> Robert Frost quoted in P.K. Jason, "First Writers-in-Residence," 383.
- <sup>46</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, 224.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 224-5.
- <sup>48</sup> P. Litt, *Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission*, 23. A coalition of artists' groups presented a brief demanding state support for the arts to the Special House of Commons Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment (Turgeon Committee) on 21 June 1944.
- <sup>49</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, 225.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 225-6.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.
- <sup>53</sup> P. Litt, *Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission*, 6.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 180-1.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 27-8.
- <sup>58</sup> Claude Bissell quoted in B. Ostry, *Cultural Connection*, 75.
- <sup>59</sup> U. Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, 123.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 127-9, 154.
- <sup>61</sup> E. Cameron, *Hugh MacLennan: A Writer's Life*, 201.
- <sup>62</sup> H. MacLennan, "Author as Teacher," 6-7.
- <sup>63</sup> Adele Wiseman to Margaret Laurence, 8 October 1967, in M. Laurence and A. Wiseman, *Selected Letters*, 230. Wiseman did not heed her own advice: while writer-in-residence at University of Toronto in 1975-6, Wiseman worked well and above what was required, advertising her office hours as follows: "9-3 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday" (R. Panofsky, *Force of Vocation*, 129).



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<sup>64</sup> Sir George Williams University and the University of Toronto, in independent initiatives, appointed their first writers-in-residence in the same year. Both universities later supplemented their programs with Canada Council funding.

<sup>65</sup> York University Archives, Norman Levine fonds, F 0345, file 767, Norman Levine to C.B. Mackay, 3 August 1965.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, C.B. Mackay to Norman Levine, 13 August 1965.

<sup>67</sup> LAC, Desmond Pacey fonds, MG 30, D339, vol. 22, "Norman Levine correspondence, 1954, 1962-1967," Du Barry Campau, "New Man Comes to UNB: 'Let Your Son Travel – Don't Send Him to University.'" The source of this clipping is unverified; however, an editor's note indicates that it is a locally published reprint from the Toronto *Telegram*. I have been unable to locate the original article under this title in the Toronto *Telegram*.

<sup>68</sup> R. MacSkimming, *Perilous Trade*, 131.

<sup>69</sup> R. Cadwell, "Norman Levine, Novelist and Poet, 1923-2005."

<sup>70</sup> D. Pacey, Review of *Canada Made Me*.

<sup>71</sup> Two other reviews make fleeting, but provocative, mention of the people Levine depicts. In these instances the reviewers may be seen to underscore the disjuncture, which the text itself examines, between the country's self-image, as projected through art, advertising, and other print media, and the presentation of the individuals the writer encounters. Patricia Owen (*Tamarack Review* 10 [winter 1959]: 107) asserts that the "biographies" in *Canada Made Me* make "effective journalism" and "convey the confusion of purpose in many recent immigrants"; Edith Fowke (*Canadian Forum* 38 [March 1959]: 287) judges the meetings depicted by the writer to be "superficial conversations with people he obviously despises." I would argue that the exploration of "confusion of purpose," as well as the ubiquity of superficiality and hatred, is a central theme of this work.

<sup>72</sup> N. Levine, *Canada Made Me*, 34, 259.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>74</sup> York University Archives, Norman Levine fonds, F 0345, file 767, Levine's handwritten notes on verso of letter from Gertrude Gunn to Desmond Pacey, 10 September 1965.

<sup>75</sup> Levine also received several Canada Council grants: a fellowship in 1959 and arts awards in 1969 and 1971.

<sup>76</sup> R. Cadwell, "Norman Levine, Novelist and Poet, 1923-2005."

<sup>77</sup> R. Silliman, "Political Economy of Poetry," 21.

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<sup>78</sup> See F. Milligan, "Ambiguities of the Canada Council," 71.

<sup>79</sup> Writers in Electronic Residence, home page. See also T. Owen, "High Teach: Learning from the Experiences of Wired Writers"; and D. Beckstead, "I Detest School, but I Love to Learn."

<sup>80</sup> P. Kelly, *For the Arts*, 77.

<sup>81</sup> Kitchener Public Library, "About the Edna Staebler Writer-in-Residence Program." Participating writers have included: Veronica Ross (1997), Jack Batten (1998), Betty Jane Wylie (1999), Welwyn Wilton Katz (2000), John B. Lee (2001), Kathy Stinson (2002), Andrew Pyper (2003), Lyn Hamilton (2004), and Wayson Choy (2005).

<sup>82</sup> Malaspina University-College, "Ralph and Betty Gustafson Trust." According to Betty Gustafson, the chair was established following her discussions with Ron Smith of Malaspina University-College, where Gustafson had read many times (letter to the author, 11 September 2001).

<sup>83</sup> University of Winnipeg, "Margaret Sweatman '74."

<sup>84</sup> D. Davidson, "Berton House Comes Back to Life." In addition to the house, Berton contributed a large quantity of books for its library and \$5,000 to launch the program.

<sup>85</sup> D. Davidson, "Berton House Comes Back to Life."

<sup>86</sup> K. Spotswood, "Story of Berton House."

<sup>87</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, "Canada Council to Support Berton House Writers."

<sup>88</sup> Berton House Writers Retreat, home page.

<sup>89</sup> L. Davies, "Save Joy Kogawa House."

<sup>90</sup> Toronto Dollar Community Projects, "Our Vision for Kogawa House."

<sup>91</sup> "Historic Joy Kogawa House Given Another Month To Be Saved."

<sup>92</sup> R. Mickleburgh, "Firm Helps Buy B.C. Landmark."

<sup>93</sup> In 1991, John Pick noted the existence of over thirty books about the arts council's activities (*Vile Jelly: The Birth, Life, and Lingering Death of the Arts Council of Great Britain* [Doncaster, S. Yorks.: Brymill Press, 1991]). Today the list also includes: Andrew Sinclair, *Arts and Cultures: The History of the 50 Years of the Arts Council of Great Britain* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995); Richard Witts, *Artist Unknown: The Alternative History of the Arts Council* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1998); Clive Gray, *The Politics of the Arts in Britain* (Macmillan, 2000).

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<sup>94</sup> These include: Dick Netzer, *The Subsidized Muse: Public Support for the Arts in the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Gary O. Larson, *The Reluctant Patron: The United States Government and the Arts, 1943-1965* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); Joseph Wesley Zeigler, *Arts in Crisis: The National Endowment for the Arts versus America* (Chicago: a cappella books, 1994); Kevin V. Mulcachy and Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, eds., *American's Commitment to Culture: Government and the Arts* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995); and Donna M. Binkiewicz, *Federalizing the Muse: United States Arts Policy and the National Endowment for the Arts, 1965-1980* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

<sup>95</sup> S.M. Crean, *Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?*

<sup>96</sup> M. Wyman, *Defiant Imagination*, x.

<sup>97</sup> B.R. Harrison, *Canadian Freelance Writers*, Table 7.4.

<sup>98</sup> S.H. Nelson, *Bemused, Branded, and Belittled*, 76.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-2.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>101</sup> L. Mailhot and B. Melançon, *Le Conseil des arts du Canada*, 241-67.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

<sup>103</sup> R. Yergeau, *Art, argent, arrangement*, 237, 246.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 315.

## **Chapter 1: The Canada Council Writer-in-Residence Program**

<sup>1</sup> Katharine Benzekri, informal interview with the author, Ottawa, 7 April 2003. Benzekri was a staff member in the Writing and Publishing Section from the early 1970s to 1995.

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<sup>2</sup> William French's "Literary Doctor with a City-wide Practice" (*Globe and Mail*, 7 May 1985) promoted David McFadden's residency at Metro Toronto Library and generated an unforeseen number of clients for the writer; Lynne Van Luven's "Library's Writer in Residence Star on Schoolgrounds" (*Edmonton Journal*, 17 June 1989) outlines children's writer Martyn Godfrey's activities at the Edmonton Public Library; Helen Melnyk's "'Imagine! A Regular Salary!' No More Blankets" (*Edmonton Journal*, 27 October 1979) is a profile of University of Alberta writer-in-residence Maria Campbell in which the author is quoted as describing the program as "welfare for writers."

<sup>3</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Report*, 226-7.

<sup>4</sup> N. Frankel, "Council Cuts."

<sup>5</sup> The Writing and Publishing Section's awards to playwrights-in-residence in universities and libraries are discussed here. Grants to playwrights-in-residence in professional theatres, awarded by the council's Theatre Section, are excluded.

<sup>6</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 235-8-1, Policy, Canada / United States / Mexico Creative Artists' Residencies Exchange.

<sup>7</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. *Report*, 132-4.

<sup>8</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report 1963-64*, p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> A former British intelligence agent, Peter Dwyer was the first supervisor of the arts programs when the original chair of the council, A.W. Trueman, was more focused on activities in the humanities and social sciences. George Woodcock offers an appreciative portrait of Dwyer, who was "left to shape the arts side of the council's work as best his excellent taste and organizational tact allowed him" and who "made and maintained wide circles of acquaintances in the artistic community, so that he was always well aware of trends and current in the arts." See: G. Woodcock, *Strange Bedfellows*, 58-9.

<sup>10</sup> Middlebury College, "Bread Loaf Writers' Conference History."

<sup>11</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 1360, file "Periodical Appraisal," "Report of a meeting held in Toronto prior to the Canadian Conference of the Arts to discuss the policy of the Canada Council in relation to the arts, May 2-3, 1961. The Literary Arts," p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Canada Council, *Annual Report 1966-67*.

<sup>14</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 1360, file "Periodical Appraisal," "Report of a meeting held in Toronto prior to the Canadian Conference of the Arts to discuss the policy of the Canada Council in relation to the arts, May 2-3, 1961. The Literary Arts," p. 2.

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<sup>15</sup> E. Cameron, *Earle Birney: A Life*, 416.

<sup>16</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report 1960-61*, p. 36.

<sup>17</sup> See also Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1959-60*, pp. 31-2.

<sup>18</sup> T.H.B. Symons, *To Know Ourselves*, 1: 43.

<sup>19</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, file "University of New Brunswick Resident Writer 1964-67," Desmond Pacey to A.W. Trueman, 6 November 1964.

<sup>20</sup> When I began this research in 2001, Library and Archives Canada, acting in accordance with the Access to Information and Privacy Acts, censored the names of living authors from this documentation. I have not been able to fill in the gaps in all instances.

<sup>21</sup> See Desmond Pacey, Review of *Canada Made Me* by Norman Levine, *Queen's Quarterly* 66.2 (summer 1959): 328-9; and Desmond Pacey, Review of *One Way Ticket*, by Norman Levine, and *Mrs. Golightly and Other Stories*, by Ethel Wilson, in *The Canadian Forum* (March 1962): 285.

<sup>22</sup> York University Archives and Special Collections, Norman Levine fonds, F 0345, file 767, Desmond Pacey to Norman Levine, 23 October 1964.

<sup>23</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," J.F. Leddy to A.W. Trueman, 22 March 1965: "I have had a personal note from Colin Mackay who, in the absence of a New Brunswick representative on the Council, was worrying about the fate of his request for a writer in residence."

<sup>24</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Endowment Fund Application, 15 March 1965.

<sup>25</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Extract from Minutes of Meeting, 15-16 March 1965.

<sup>26</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Peter Dwyer to Desmond Pacey, 22 March 1965.

<sup>27</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Desmond Pacey to Jean Boucher, 3 December 1965.

<sup>28</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Alden Nowlan fonds, MsC 40.31.1, Desmond Pacey to Alden Nowlan, 25 March 1968.

<sup>29</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Desmond Pacey to Canada Council, 24 January 1966.

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<sup>30</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Peter Dwyer to Desmond Pacey, 1 March 1966.

<sup>31</sup> LAC, Desmond Pacey fonds, MG 30, D339, vol. 22, Dorothy Livesay correspondence, January-May 1966, also contains the relevant letters from Pacey to the Canada Council and the shortlisted writers, including most of the authors' replies: Souster (4 April 1966), Birney (12 April 1966), Waddington (12 April 1966), Roy (15 April 1966), Thériault (15 April 1966), and Buckler (18 April 1966).

<sup>32</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-67," Canada Council Memorandum, 28 April 1966.

<sup>33</sup> The substance of telephone conversations, which constituted an important part of the exchange between a council staff member and Pacey, was recorded by that staff member. Additionally, names of living persons and other information have been removed from the file by archivists at Library and Archives Canada, in accordance with the Access to Information and Privacy Acts.

<sup>34</sup> M. Beattie, "Poetry (1950-1960)," 785.

<sup>35</sup> D. Pacey, "Writer and His Public," 494.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, A.J.M. Smith's *The Book of Canadian Poetry*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Toronto: Gage, 1957) and *Modern Canadian Verse* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967); Ralph Gustafson, ed., *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1958 and rev. ed., 1967); Carl F. Klinck and Reginald G. Watters' *Canadian Anthology*, rev. ed. (Toronto: Gage, 1966).

<sup>37</sup> D. Pacey, "Introduction," xi.

<sup>38</sup> L.B. Thompson, *Dorothy Livesay*, 159, n.5: "For at least four years [in the mid- to late-1960s], the argument raged between Livesay and Weaver over whether she would be allowed to read her poetry on the radio. Livesay argued the absolute necessity of having the actual poets read their own work, as opposed to a paid reader. Earle Toppings, her Ryerson Press editor, several times warned her that offending 'czar Weaver' on this issue could be damaging to her career, causing her to be 'ostracized.'" See also P.G. Tiessen and H.F. Tiessen, "Dorothy Livesay and the Politics of Radio," 78-9.

<sup>39</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-7," Robert Weaver quoted by council staff member in memorandum to Peter Dwyer, 28 April 1966.

<sup>40</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-7," Desmond Pacey quoted by council staff member in memorandum to Peter Dwyer, 28 April 1966.

<sup>41</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-7," Desmond Pacey to Canada Council staff member, 2 May 1966.

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<sup>42</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-7," Dorothy Livesay to Canada Council, 8 June 1966.

<sup>43</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-7," Peter Dwyer to Desmond Pacey, 8 June 1966, pp. 1-2.

<sup>44</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 790, "UNB Resident Writer 1964-7," Desmond Pacey to Peter Dwyer, 10 June 1966.

<sup>45</sup> See Desmond Pacey, "Books Reviewed [Review of *The Unquiet Bed*]," *Canadian Forum* (April 1968): 21-2.

<sup>46</sup> See discussions of the continuing activities of the writing group Livesay formed at UNB: J.P. Zanes, "Where the Fiddleheads Grow and the Wind Blows Blue," 295-316; N. Bauer, "Remembering the Ice-House Gang"; C.A. Cheverie, "Brief History and Bibliography of the Fredericton Tuesday Night Writers, 1966-1983."

<sup>47</sup> D. Brant, "Revisiting Dorothy Livesay's *The Husband*."

<sup>48</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Aid to Artists, July 1976*, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> My informal interview with Katharine Benzekri (Ottawa, 7 April 2003) and council correspondence dating from the mid-1980s indicate that the council approved nearly all writer-in-residence applications to 1984-5, when for the first time the number of applications "far exceeded" the available funds. Between 1988-9 and 1990-1, one application was rejected each year. Five applications were unsuccessful in 1991-2, and three in 1992-3. Other applications in this period were recommended but not funded.

<sup>50</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 24, file 225-79-0009-6, Katharine Benzekri to Marian Engel, 19 April 1979.

<sup>51</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Advisory Arts Panel, *The Future of the Canada Council*, quoted in F. Milligan, "Ambiguities of the Canada Council," 65.

<sup>52</sup> G. Woodcock, *Strange Bedfellows*, 180.

<sup>53</sup> Naïm Kattan, telephone interview with the author, 7 April 2006.

<sup>54</sup> S. Baillargeon, "Écrivains à demeure"; for Kattan's activities at the council, see also "Naïm Kattan, pilier du Conseil des Arts du Canada"; J. Wayne, "Naïm Kattan," 10-11; N. Kattan, "Ten Years of Literature"; and N. Kattan, "Le rôle des gouvernements dans le financement des arts."

<sup>55</sup> H.R. Percy, "Canada Council and the Writer"; S.M. Crean, *Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?* 148-56; G. Woodcock, *Strange Bedfellows*, chapter 13 and 14.

<sup>56</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1967-8*, p. 42.

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- <sup>57</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1973-4*, p. 17.
- <sup>58</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1969-70*, p. 86.
- <sup>59</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Twenty Plus Five*, 8.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.
- <sup>63</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1977-8*, p. 6.
- <sup>64</sup> Canada, Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, *Report, 202-3*.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.
- <sup>66</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1983-4*, p. 5.
- <sup>67</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1986-7*, pp. 10-11.
- <sup>68</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1981-2*, p. 17. This support was originally available for travel within Canada and extended to travel to the United States in 1981.
- <sup>69</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-03-01, "Short-term Writer-in-Residence Program: Policy," Canada Council internal document, "Report on the Canada Council's Programme of Public Readings for the Financial Year 1979-80," p. 1.
- <sup>70</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-03-01, "Short-term Writer-in-Residence Program: Policy," Canada Council internal document, "Memorandum to Members of the Arts Advisory Panel: Week-long Residences." A handwritten note on the memorandum indicates that the proposal was submitted to the panel in September 1980 and unanimously endorsed.
- <sup>71</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-03-01, "Short-term Writer-in-Residence Program: Policy," Writing and Publishing Section internal document, "Programme Evaluation Sheet: Short Term Residency Program, 1985-86," p. 1.
- <sup>72</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 91, file 225-80-0015-5, Anne Szumgalski to the chairperson and members of the Saskatoon Library Board, 8 September 1982, p. 1.
- <sup>73</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 90-91/210, box 44, file 225-82-0003-7, Patrick Lane to Katharine Benzekri, September 1982



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- <sup>74</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 44, file 225-83-0011-6, Leon Rooke to Writer-in-residency Program, Canada Council, 3 July 1985.
- <sup>75</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 44, file 225-83-0011-6, Katharine Benzekri to Leon Rooke, 8 July 1985.
- <sup>76</sup> Canada, Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, *Report*, 202-3.
- <sup>77</sup> Canada, Statistics Canada, *Teachers in Universities, 1978-9*, p. 79.
- <sup>78</sup> Canada, Statistics Canada, *Teachers in Universities, 1987-8*, pp. 62-3.
- <sup>79</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-11-01, "Writer-in-Residence Program: Issues and Policy," "Programme Evaluation Sheet" [1993], p. 1.
- <sup>80</sup> N. Frankel, "Council Cuts."
- <sup>81</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-11-01, "Writer-in-Residence Program: Issues and Policy," René Bonenfant to Jocelyn Harvey, Memorandum, 15 January 1993.
- <sup>82</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-11-01, "Writer-in-Residence Program: Issues and Policy," "Programme Evaluation Sheet," [1993], p. 3.
- <sup>83</sup> See P. Jenkins in "Writer-in-Residence a Light that Could Go Out"; and R. Tregebov, "Notice of Eviction." A cautious assessment of the benefit of the program for students is supplied by J. Sirois, "Des écrivains sans-abri."
- <sup>84</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-11-01, "Writer-in-Residence Program: Issues and Policy," Minutes from TWUC meeting, *TWUC Newsletter* 21.3 (September 1993): 10; and Dave Williamson to Allan Gotlieb, 18 March 1993, p. 2.
- <sup>85</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-11-03, "Writer-in-Residence Program Issues," Paul Gaudet to Paule Leduc, 6 August 1993, p. 1.
- <sup>86</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *News Release*, 15 April 1997.
- <sup>87</sup> There was also a full-year appointment, not counted here, at Université du Québec à Rimouski.
- <sup>88</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 6130-99-0886, Application for Harry Thurston.

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<sup>89</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 6130-98-0624. Application for Glen Downie.

<sup>90</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 6130-98-0624, T.J. Murray to Canada Council, 26 January 2000.

<sup>91</sup> See T. Alderman, "Eye Examination." In the televised interview, Downie comments, "The same skills that you use when you read a poem or when you write a poem are good skills for listening to people. You have to be attentive; you have to be focussed; you have to be sensitive; you have to be flexible. You have to listen to the pauses as well as the words. You have to listen to the silences, for what the silences mean." See also: N. Robb, "Medicine's Human Side Exposed."

<sup>92</sup> Naïm Kattan, telephone interview with the author, 7 April 2006.

<sup>93</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Twenty Plus Five*, 8-9.

<sup>94</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0001-9, Katharine Benzekri to Verner Smitheram, 23 June 1992.

<sup>95</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 90-91/210, box 44, file 225-82-004-6, Michel Tremblay to [the Canada Council], 30 July 1982.

<sup>96</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0006, Gail Scott to Katharine Benzekri, 15 October 1992.

<sup>97</sup> Naïm Kattan, telephone interview with the author, 7 April 2006.

<sup>98</sup> UQAM has had a writer-in-residence annually since 1984, including Naïm Kattan in 1992-3, supported by the federal Department of Heritage. Kattan has remained at the university as adjunct professor (Naïm Kattan, telephone interview with the author, 7 April 2006).

<sup>99</sup> F. Lepage, J. Saltman, and G Edwards, "Children's Authors and Their Markets," 151-3.

<sup>100</sup> Canada, Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, *Report*, 204.

<sup>101</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Annual Report, 1983-4*, 7-8.

<sup>102</sup> Naïm Kattan, telephone interview with the author, 7 April 2006.

<sup>103</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455-11-01, "Writer-in-Residence Program: Issues and Policy," "Programme Evaluation Sheet" [1993], p.1.

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<sup>104</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 105, file 225-83-0003-6, Samuel Selvon to Katharine Benzekri, 17 January 1983.

<sup>105</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Alden Nowlan Papers, MsC 40.31.1, Alden Nowlan to Desmond Pacey, 29 March 1968.

<sup>106</sup> S.H. Nelson, *Bemused, Branded, and Belittled*, 76.

<sup>107</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 205-17-1. Walter Cairns to Katharine Benzekri, 30 June 1994; and Katharine Benzekri to Walter Cairns, 13 July 1994.

<sup>108</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Canada Council in the 1980s*, [5-6].

<sup>109</sup> M. Wyman, *Defiant Imagination*, 212.

<sup>110</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Canada Council: A Design for the Future*, 15-17.

<sup>111</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 6130-99-0885, Katherine M. Quinsey and Di Brandt to Bianca Côté, 24 September 2001.

## **Chapter 2: Saskatchewan and Alberta**

<sup>1</sup> Shirlee Smith Matheson, personal communication, 21 October 2003. Shirlee Smith Matheson, "Writer in Residence, Calgary Public Library: Closing Talk," 10 December 1998, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> M-P. Luneau and R. Panofsky, "Celebrating Authorship," 116-20. Governor General's Awards for French-language works were introduced by the Canada Council in 1959, and the categories in both languages were expanded again in 1987.

<sup>3</sup> In 2005, the Giller Prize entered into a corporate partnership, becoming the Scotiabank Giller Prize, a move that doubled the prize purse and indicates an increasingly important development in arts sponsorship in Canada.

<sup>4</sup> S.M. Crean, *Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?* 132-3.

<sup>5</sup> N. Frye, "Preface," i-ii.

<sup>6</sup> The Arts Board Act was assented to by the Saskatchewan government on 31 March 1949.

<sup>7</sup> *Statutes of Saskatchewan*, The Arts Board Act, 31 March 1949.

<sup>8</sup> Saskatchewan Arts Board, *First Annual Report, 1948-49*, p. 5.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>10</sup> Saskatchewan Arts Board, *17<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 1964*, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> The 1984 revision regulated the “development and maintenance of high standards” as the last item on the list of the board’s five objectives (Saskatchewan Arts Board, *Annual Report, 1994-95*, p. 4). All reference to the board’s power to set “standards” was abolished in the new Arts Board Act of 1997 (*Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1997*, c. A-28.001), which mandated the board to “establish adjudication processes” which gave more power to the “arts community.”

<sup>12</sup> R. Lorimer, *Harvest of Books*, 66.

<sup>13</sup> D. Kerr, *Book in Every Hand*, iv.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>15</sup> A.P. Schroeder, *Word for Word*, 26. See also: J.P. Gillese, “Creative Writing in Alberta.”

<sup>16</sup> A.P. Schroeder, *Word for Word*, 26-7.

<sup>17</sup> G. Melnyk, *Literary History of Alberta*, 2: 183-4.

<sup>18</sup> Canada, Statistics Canada, “Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.” By contrast, Alberta’s Native population was five per cent in 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Saskatchewan Arts Board, *22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report, 1969*, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> M. Shaw, “In the Beginning ...,” 1-2.

<sup>21</sup> M. Heinemann, “Saskatchewan Writers Guild,” 3.

<sup>22</sup> R. Lorimer, *Harvest of Books*, 65-7.

<sup>23</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-167, file 13, “Minutes of the Executive Meeting” 28 August 1977, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 44, “City of Regina 1978 Celebrations, Cultural Program, Special Projects” [SWG application], pp.1-2.

<sup>25</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 44, “Regina Jubilee Celebrations Projects of SWG,” p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 44, “75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cultural Committee Minutes,” 14 December 1977, p. 3.

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<sup>28</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 44. It is uncertain if all these individuals were contacted about the position. The file contains letters from John Newlove, who declined the nomination on the basis of family obligations, and Sinclair Ross, who wrote from Spain, on 27 December 1977: "It is gratifying that you should have thought of me as a possible candidate for the position of Writer-in-Residence (City of Regina), but as I am 70 next month and have health problems I reluctantly say 'no'. There is too much uncertainty; it would be unfair to let my name stand." Anne Szumigalski agreed to be nominated.

<sup>29</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-167, file 13, SWG, "Minutes of the Executive Meeting," February 1978.

<sup>30</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 44, "Contract: Writer-in-Residence."

<sup>31</sup> This office was demolished during renovations to the library in the summer of 2003 (Alice Lohans, personal correspondence, 18 December 2003).

<sup>32</sup> Eli Mandel, interview with Mildred A. Rose, Regina, 26 and 27 February 1979, SAB, acc. R-1711 and R-1712, sound recording. I have been unable to locate the letter.

<sup>33</sup> Andreas Schroeder, interview with Mildred A. Rose, Regina, 5 February 1981, SAB, acc. R-5966 and R-5967, sound recording.

<sup>34</sup> E.D. Dyck, "Introduction," xvi.

<sup>35</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, acc. R81-461, file 44, "75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Project Report," p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Eli Mandel, interview with Mildred A. Rose, Regina, 26 and 27 February 1979, SAB, acc. R-1711 and R-1712, sound recording. I have not succeeded in locating this article.

<sup>37</sup> SAB, SWG Papers, R-564, file 38, "Executive Meeting Summary, for August 25-6 in Saskatoon," *Freelance* (1979-80): 2.

<sup>38</sup> SAB, SWG Papers, R-1208, VII, 36, Frances Morrison to Susan Coley, 12 October 1979.

<sup>39</sup> SAB, SWG Papers, R-564, file 45, Minutes of the first meeting of the Writer-in-Residence Committee of the Saskatoon Public Library, 27 October 1980, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> D. O'Leary, "Religious Censorship in English Canada," 475.

<sup>41</sup> SAB, SWG Papers, R-564, file 45, Brenda Riches, "Report of Meeting of Committee to Choose a Writer-in-Residence for Saskatoon, 1981-82."

<sup>42</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 91, file 225-80-0015-5.

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<sup>43</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 45, SWG, "Statement of Support for Anne Szumigalski as Writer-in-Residence for the City of Saskatoon 1981-82," 9 December 1980.

<sup>44</sup> "Late Flash!!!!!" *Freelance* (December 1980): 44.

<sup>45</sup> SAB, SWG papers, R-564, file 45, Terrence Heath to Nik Burton, 1 February 1981.

<sup>46</sup> John Newlove, interview with Mildred A. Rose, Regina, 14 November 1979, SAB, acc. R-2022 and R-2023, sound recording.

<sup>47</sup> Andreas Schroeder, interview with Mildred A. Rose, Regina, 5 February 1981, SAB, acc. R-5966 and R-5967, sounding recording.

<sup>48</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 90-91/210, box 44, file 225-82-0014-4, Patrick Lane to Alice Turner, 1 March 1983, p. 2.

<sup>49</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0007, Seán Virgo, "Writer-in-Residence Saskatoon Public Library, 1991-92, 'Mid-term' Report," 30 December 1991.

<sup>50</sup> Saskatchewan Public Library Act, 1969, cited in D. Kerr, *Book in Every Hand*, 113.

<sup>51</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 90-91/210, box 44, file 225-82-0006-4, Ron Yeo to Katharine Benzekri, 26 April 1982.

<sup>52</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 97-98/210, box 43, file 225-87-0019-4, Zenon Zuzack to Katharine Benzekri, 21 December 1987.

<sup>53</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 4455-11-01, "Policy," Lise Henderson to Gordon Platt, 4 November 1996, p. 2

<sup>54</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 97-98/210, box 43, file 225-87-0019-4, Zenon Zuzack to Katharine Benzekri, 21 December 1987: application.

<sup>55</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 37, file 225-85-0021-2, Katharine Benzekri to Alice Turner McFarland, 14 September 1987.

<sup>56</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 36, file 225-85-0005-2, Joe Rosenblatt to Alice Turner McFarland, "Writer-in-Residence Report, 1985-1986," July 1986, p.1; LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0007, Seán Virgo, "Writer-in-Residence, 1991-92, Year-end Report," 1 June 1992, p. 1.

<sup>57</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 44, file 225-83-0004-5, Ronald Yeo to Katharine Benzekri, 1 September 1983.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, Katharine Benzekri to Ronald Yeo, 11 August 1983.

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- <sup>59</sup> A.P. Schroeder, *Word for Word*, 187.
- <sup>60</sup> "EASTEND Writers Plan Dramatic Production," *Freelance* (April 1981): 10-12.
- <sup>61</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 24, file 225-79-0020-1, Richard E. Tone to Frank Hamilton, 23 November 1981.
- <sup>62</sup> P. Fudge, "Artist-in-Residence Program Review," 8.
- <sup>63</sup> The Arts Board Act, 1997, *Statutes of Saskatchewan*, 1997, c. A-28.001, s. 4.
- <sup>64</sup> J. Morgan, "Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan Article, Saskatchewan Arts Board."
- <sup>65</sup> Paul Wilson, interview with the author, Regina, 20 August 2003.
- <sup>66</sup> SAB, Ken Mitchell papers, R-89-79, box 10, file "Saskatchewan Writers Guild – General Business: File 1," "Saskatchewan Resident Arts Program," p. 2. Some resident authors may have received only \$15,000, as the arts board decreased the stipend for artists nominated by organizations which had received funding three times in the past. Steven Smith was SWG's fourth resident writer in 1987-8.
- <sup>67</sup> Paul Wilson, interview with the author, Regina, 20 August 2003.
- <sup>68</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 37, file 225-85-0021-2, Grethyll Adams to [Katharine Benzekri], 20 December 1985.
- <sup>69</sup> Allan Safarik, email interview with the author, 6 November 2003.
- <sup>70</sup> M. Wrubleski, "Writer-in-Residence Program Worth the Wait."
- <sup>71</sup> Saskatchewan Arts Board, *Annual Report, 1999-2000*, p. 19.
- <sup>72</sup> P. Fudge, "Artist-in-Residence Program Review," 17.
- <sup>73</sup> Paul Wilson, interview with the author, Regina, 20 August 2003.
- <sup>74</sup> Saskatchewan Arts Board, *Annual Report, 2000/1*, p. 15; G. Sorestad, "Role of the Poet Laureate."
- <sup>75</sup> University of Alberta, Faculty of Arts, *Department of English Writer-in-Residence Program*.
- <sup>76</sup> University of Calgary's Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Programme, home page.
- <sup>77</sup> A.P. Schroeder, *Word for Word*, 27.
- <sup>78</sup> J.J. Douglas, *Out of the West*, 128, 204, 219, 220.

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<sup>79</sup> O. Melnyk, "MacEwan Writers in Residence Swap a Few Tales." Past resident authors held a reunion in October 2004, and some contributed to a commemorative chapbook, *Twelve Writers Remember*.

<sup>80</sup> University of Alberta, Faculty of Arts, *Department of English Writer-in-Residence Program*.

<sup>81</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1983-84/098, vol. 78, file A74-2905, [Rudy Wiebe], "University of Alberta Writer in Residence."

<sup>82</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/313, box 35, file 225-81-0015-4, Elizabeth Smart, "Report on My Year as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Alberta, from 1 September 1982 to 1 June 1983," p. 3.

<sup>83</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 105, file 225-83-0003-6, Sara Stambaugh to Katharine Benzekri, 20 December 1982; LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 44, file 225-83-0016-1, Sara Stambaugh, memo to staff and students of the Department of English, September 1984.

<sup>84</sup> LAC, Ray Smith fonds, LMS-0160, Ray Smith to Leona Gom, 31 March 1987.

<sup>85</sup> University of Alberta, Faculty of Arts, *Department of English Writer-in-Residence Program*.

<sup>86</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 37, file 225-85-0014, Bert Almon to Katharine A. Benzekri, 16 December 1985.

<sup>87</sup> Douglas Barbour, interview with the author, Edmonton, 12 November 2003.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Aritha van Herk, interview with the author, Calgary, 21 November 2003

<sup>90</sup> Fred Wah, interview with the author, Vancouver, 23 March 2004.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Susan Rudy, interview with the author, Calgary, 19 November 2003.

<sup>93</sup> Fred Wah, interview with the author, Vancouver, 23 March 2004.

<sup>94</sup> Aritha van Herk, interview with the author, Calgary, 21 November 2003.

<sup>95</sup> B. Blakey, "Wonder of Words."

<sup>96</sup> Fred Wah, interview with the author, Vancouver, 23 March 2004.

<sup>97</sup> Aritha van Herk, interview with the author, Calgary, 21 November 2003.



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<sup>98</sup> Gail Corbett, Markin-Flanagan program administrator, University of Calgary, personal communication, 10 December 2003.

<sup>99</sup> “Message from the University of Calgary.”

<sup>100</sup> Jackie Flanagan quoted in B. Blakey, “Wonder of Words.”

<sup>101</sup> A. Steele, “Collecting Canadian Manuscripts at the University of Calgary.”

<sup>102</sup> Stuart Ian McKay, personal communication, 29 November 2003.

<sup>103</sup> R.M. Stamp, “Alberta,” 56.

<sup>104</sup> Shirlee Smith Matheson, personal communication, 21 October 2003.

### **Chapter 3: Working “In Residence”**

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Laurence to Don and Anne Cameron, 20 September 1968, in M. Laurence, *Very Large Soul*, 47.

<sup>2</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021, Writer-in-Residence, 1977-8, “U of T’s Writer in Residence [interview with Carol Bolt],” *The Varsity*, undated clipping.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Mayse, email to the author, 2 February 2004.

<sup>4</sup> P. Bourdieu, “Field of Cultural Production,” 29-31.

<sup>5</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Tenth Annual Report, 1966-67*, 36.

<sup>6</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, *Aid to Writing and Publication, 1997*.

<sup>7</sup> D. Lodge, *Thinks. . .*, 132.

<sup>8</sup> G. Gissing, *New Grub Street*, 434.

<sup>9</sup> G. Melnyk, *Literary History of Alberta*, 1:168-9. Salter’s teachings have been collected in *Way of the Makers*.

<sup>10</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1983-84/098, vol. 78, file A74-2905, [Rudy Wiebe], “University of Alberta, Writer in Residence.”

<sup>11</sup> There are indications that Salter’s devotion to creative writing was self-motivated. Admitting to imperfections in his *Way of the Makers* manuscript, Salter remarked, “In apology, I shall say that my *proper duties* have never been light, and that I have never had any lengthy period of time that might be given exclusively to such as task as this” (emphasis added, V).

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<sup>12</sup> Desmond Pacey taught creative writing at UNB in the 1940s; Earle Birney taught at University of British Columbia from 1946; James Reaney offered course at University of Manitoba around 1949. Birney also initiated the first creative writing course at University of Toronto in 1941, and notes that McGill introduced an “Advanced Composition” course in the same year (*Spreading Time*, 48, 54). Christine Van der Mark submitted her novel *In Due Season* as her M.A. thesis at the University of Alberta in 1946 (W.H. New, *Encyclopedia*, 1163).

<sup>13</sup> E. Birney, “Writer and the Canadian University,” 90.

<sup>14</sup> E. Cameron, *Earle Birney: A Life*, 462.

<sup>15</sup> LAC, Ray Smith fonds, LMS-0160, box 23, file 82, Earle Birney to Ray Smith, 11 December 1973, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> LAC, Ray Smith fonds, LMS-0160, box 23, file 82 contains the survey, responses from Birney, Laurence, Alden Nowlan, Dave Godfrey, Margaret Atwood, and John Metcalf, as well as Smith’s report, “The Fairly-Well-Feathered Nest.”

<sup>17</sup> LAC, Ray Smith fonds, LMS-0160, box 23, file 82, Earle Birney to Ray Smith, 11 December 1973, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>19</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Earle Birney fonds, MsC 13, file 13.2.64.1f, Earle Birney to Mrs. Ferguson, Editor, University of Toronto Staff Bulletin, April 1967.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, J. Erdelyi, “Writer-in-Residence Looks at the State of Poetry.”

<sup>21</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Earle Birney fonds, MsC 13, file 13.2.62.6, Earle Birney to Claude Bissell, 9 June 1967.

<sup>22</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Earle Birney fonds, MsC 13, file 13.2.63.1, “Memo/Report to Principal Plumtre, Scarborough ... re. activities as W-I-R to Dec. 1, 1965”; file 13.26.18, “Report of the Writer in Residence, University of Toronto, July–December 1966”; file 13.2.61.11, “Report of the Writer in Residence, University of Toronto, January to June, 1976.”

<sup>23</sup> E. Cameron, *Earle Birney: A Life*, 461.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 470-1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 484-5.

<sup>26</sup> E. Birney, “1984 Minus 17 & Counting at U of Waterloo Ontario,” in *Ghost in the Wheels: Selected Poems*, 135.

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- <sup>27</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Earle Birney fonds, MsC 13, file 13.2.62.4, Earle Birney to Claude Bissell, 21 April 1967. Poets-in-residence Irving Layton and George Bowering were also recommended.
- <sup>28</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Earle Birney fonds, file 13.2.62.5, Earle Birney to Claude Bissell, 1 May 1967.
- <sup>29</sup> Adele Wiseman to Margaret Laurence, 8 October 1967, in M. Laurence and A. Wiseman, *Selected Letters*, 229-30.
- <sup>30</sup> Margaret Laurence to the Camerons, 21 October 1967, in M. Laurence, *Very Large Soul*, 44.
- <sup>31</sup> Margaret Laurence to Adele Wiseman, 21 October 1967, in M. Laurence and A. Wiseman, *Selected Letters*, 232.
- <sup>32</sup> Margaret Laurence to Don [Cameron], 23 October 1967, in M. Laurence, *Very Large Soul*, 45-6.
- <sup>33</sup> Margaret Laurence to Adele Wiseman, 25 June 1964, in M. Laurence and A. Wiseman, *Selected Letters*, 173.
- <sup>34</sup> Margaret Laurence to Adele Wiseman, 21 October 1967, in *Ibid.*, 235.
- <sup>35</sup> U of T, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Birney papers, MS Coll. 49, box 21, file 36, Margaret Laurence to Earle Birney, n.d.
- <sup>36</sup> U of T, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Birney papers, MS Coll. 49, box 21, file 36, Earle Birney to Margaret Laurence, 29 July 1969.
- <sup>37</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021, Writer-in-Residence, 1969-70, Margaret Laurence, "Report: Writer-in-Residence, Academic Year 1969/70," p. 2.
- <sup>38</sup> M. Laurence, *Dance on the Earth*, 190-5.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.
- <sup>40</sup> J. King, *Life of Margaret Laurence*, 275.
- <sup>41</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Earle Birney fonds, MsC 13, file 13.2.62.6, Earle Birney to Claude Bissell, 9 June 1967.
- <sup>42</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021-002, Writer-in-Residence, 1969-70, Margaret Laurence to J.H. Sword, 19 February 1968, p. 2.
- <sup>43</sup> LAC, Ray Smith Papers, box 23, file 82, Margaret Laurence to Ray Smith, 23 November 1973. For a chronology of Laurence's writing activities, see P. Morley, *Margaret Laurence*, 12. All but one of the stories collected in Laurence's *A Bird in the*

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*House* (1970) had been written between 1962 and 1967 (J. King, *Life of Margaret Laurence*, 262).

<sup>44</sup> Margaret Laurence to Al Purdy, 14 February 1976, in M. Laurence and A. Purdy, *Friendship in Letters*, 329.

<sup>45</sup> Margaret Laurence to Al Purdy, 14 August [1970], in *Ibid.*, 179.

<sup>46</sup> J. King, *Life of Margaret Laurence*, 284-5.

<sup>47</sup> Al Purdy to Margaret Laurence, 4 October 1973, in M. Laurence and A. Purdy, *Friendship in Letters*, 293.

<sup>48</sup> LAC, Ray Smith fonds, LMS-0160, box 23, file 82, Margaret Laurence to Ray Smith, 23 November 1973, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> LAC, Ray Smith Papers, box 23, file 82, Margaret Laurence, verso of returned "Writers in Residence" survey [1973].

<sup>50</sup> N. Levine, "Thin Ice," 123.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>52</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, Writer-in-Residence, 1973-74, W.O. Mitchell to J.R. Evans, 31 May 1974, pp.1-2.

<sup>53</sup> Irving Layton to Desmond Pacey, 13 March 1967, quoted in J.D.M. Pacey, "Unexpected Alliance," 708.

<sup>54</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 804, "Sir George Williams Poet-in-Residence," Neil Compton to Peter Dwyer, 19 April 1967.

<sup>55</sup> U of T, Office of the President, A85-0021, Writer-in-Residence, 1975-76, Dave Godfrey to J.R. Evans, 20 October 1975, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup> LAC, Desmond Pacey fonds, MG 30 – D339, vol. 22, Livesay correspondence Jan-May 1966, Yves Thériault to Desmond Pacey, 15 April 1966. Declining the tentative offer of an UNB appointment, Thériault admits he would have preferred a direct, firm offer.

<sup>57</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc.1983-94/224, box 49, file A-75-1752, Dave Godfrey to T.E. Tausky, 13 June 1975.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, T.E. Tausky to Dave Godfrey, 17 June 1975.

<sup>59</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Alden Nowlan fonds, MsC 40, file 40.32.31.19, Adele Wiseman to Alden Nowlan, 2 March 1976.

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- <sup>60</sup> Ibid., file 40.32.31.20a, Alden Nowlan to Adele Wiseman, 12 March 1976.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., file 40.31.6.63a, Alden Nowlan to Robert H. Cockburn, 31 May 1979.
- <sup>62</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 34, file A-77-0717, Marian Engel to Na'im Kattan, 13 December 1978.
- <sup>63</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2002-00491-9, box 184, file 6105-92-0008, Adele Wiseman, May 1991, p. 12?
- <sup>64</sup> M. Soderstrom, "The Grant Game."
- <sup>65</sup> Elizabeth Harvor, letter to the editor, *Quill & Quire* 67 (September 2001): 14; Brian Brett quoted in Terry Glavin, "Writers Receiving Peanuts," *The Georgia Straight*, 19-26 July 2001, p. 11.
- <sup>66</sup> Mona Fertig quoted in M. Soderstrom, "The Grant Game," 19, 20.
- <sup>67</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0019, Merna Summers to Greg Hollingshead, 20 July 1992, p. 2.
- <sup>68</sup> Metcalf's "Without an 'E'" is recast in the chapter entitled "Writer-in-Residence" in *Aesthetic Underground*. The latter focuses on the UNB residency and is decidedly more critical of the university's and the Canada Council's contributions to Canadian letters.
- <sup>69</sup> J. Metcalf, "Without an 'E,'" 120.
- <sup>70</sup> LAC, RG 63, vol. 1095, file A710181, R.S. Rawlings to S.P. Kirby, 30 August 1972, p. 1.
- <sup>71</sup> House of Anansi Press, "*No Pain Like This Body*."
- <sup>72</sup> J. Metcalf, *Aesthetic Underground*, 88-90.
- <sup>73</sup> F.R. Scott, "The Canadian Authors Meet," in R. Brown and D. Bennett, *Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, 1:348. See D. Irvine, "Introduction," for a discussion of how the original version of this poem provides a portrait of "the marginal, transisitional, disconsolate modernist of the late 1920s," rather than that of "the canonical persona" created by the revised, shortened version (1-2).
- <sup>74</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 37, file A-77-0784, Carol Bolt to Katharine Benzekri, 30 September 1978, p. 2.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 6. The Writer-in-Residence Conference took place at Hart House at the University of Toronto in October 1977. It was organized by students and sponsored in part by the Canada Council.

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<sup>76</sup> Margaret Laurence to Al Purdy, 5 March 1970, in M. Laurence and A. Purdy, *Friendship in Letters*, 174.

<sup>77</sup> The Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP), based in the United States, was established 1967. As of 2004, AWP's membership comprised over 22,000 individuals and 330 college and university creative writing programs in the United States, Canada, and Britain. For a description of AWP's growth, see D. Fenza, "Brief History of AWP."

<sup>78</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Alden Nowlan fonds, MsC 40, file 40.31.1.7, Alden Nowlan to Desmond Pacey, 9 April 1968.

<sup>79</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Mordecai Richler fonds, MsC 36, file 36.3.15.3a, Mordecai Richler to A. Davidson Dunton, 5 May 1971, p. 1.

<sup>80</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/313, box 35, file 225-81-0015-4, Elizabeth Smart, "Report on My Year as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Alberta from 1 September 1982 to 1 June 1983," 3-4.

<sup>81</sup> Daphne Marlatt, interview with the author, Burnaby, BC, 7 April 2005.

<sup>82</sup> Tom Wayman, interview with the author, Calgary, 20 November 2003.

<sup>83</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 97-98/182, box 55, file 225-88-0023-7, Raymond Plante, "Rapport d'activités, Raymond Plante, écrivain en résidence de septembre 1989 à avril 1990," pp. 2, 4.

<sup>84</sup> LAC RG 63, acc. 95-96/684, box 49, file 225-86-0002-4, Clark Blaise to the Committee, Canada Council, 28 January 1988, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> K. Norris, *Little Magazine in Canada*, 177.

<sup>86</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1983-84/098, box 67, file A742296, Dorothy Livesay, "Report for the Writer's Union by Dorothy Livesay: 'On Being a WIR,' U of Manitoba, 1974-75," 20 March 1976, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 91, file 225-80-0001-1, Harold Horwood, "Report on residency at University of Waterloo and affiliated colleges, 1980-81," p. 1.

<sup>88</sup> Y. Dannaway, *Once on a Tuesday Night*.

<sup>89</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021, Writer-in-Residence, 1975-76, Adele Wiseman to John R. Evans, 25 February 1976, pp. 1-2.

<sup>90</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 37, file 225-85-00141, Bert Almon to Katharine Benzekri, 16 December 1985.

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- <sup>91</sup> LAC, Ray Smith fonds, LMS-0160, box 24, file 93, Ray Smith, "It's a Privilege: A Report on My Term as Writer-in-Residence at The University of Alberta, 1986-1987," 8 April 1987, p. 7.
- <sup>92</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 95-96/684, box 49, file 225-86-0010-4, Leona Gom, "Writer-in-Residence Report, 1988," 13 April 1988, p. 1.
- <sup>93</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/313, box 35, file 225-81-0015-4, Elizabeth Smart, "Report on My Year as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Alberta from 1 September 1982 to 1 June 1983," p. 3.
- <sup>94</sup> Wilfred Watson quoted in "Poet and the University: A Symposium," 14.
- <sup>95</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 44, file 225-83-0011-6, Leon Rooke to Writer-in-residency Program, Canada Council, 2 July 1985, p. 1.
- <sup>96</sup> R. Mistry, "How Leon Rescued Me from the Bank."
- <sup>97</sup> Aritha van Herk, interview with the author, Calgary, 21 November 2003.
- <sup>98</sup> Daphne Marlatt, interview with the author, Burnaby, BC, 7 April 2005. Since the year 2000, Marlatt has been writer-in-residence at the University of Windsor (2001-2) and Simon Fraser University (2004-5).
- <sup>99</sup> Myrna Kostash, interview with the author, Edmonton, 12 November 2003.
- <sup>100</sup> Susan Mayse, email to the author, 3 February 2004.
- <sup>101</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Documentation and Reference Centre, file 6130-99-0499, Edna Alford to Carol Johner, 10 July 2001.
- <sup>102</sup> While at the RPL in 1983-4, Seán Virgo helped to edit a "Living History" project for senior citizens (LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 44, file 225-83-0004-5); Tim Lilburn also worked with seniors' writing groups in Regina in 1998-9 (Canada Council for the Arts, Documentation and Reference Centre, file 6130-97-0477).
- <sup>103</sup> LAC, RG 63, Acc. 94-95/576, box 37, file 225-85-0020-3, Katherine McCook to Katharine A. Benzekri, 9 January 1987, p. 1.
- <sup>104</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 37, file 225-85-0020-3, Miriam Waddington, "Report on Writer-in-Residence, Metro Library Toronto, June 1 - Dec.6/[86]," p. 1.
- <sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- <sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- <sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

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- <sup>108</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 90-91/210, box 44, file 225-82-0006-4, Janet Lunn to Katharine Benzekri, 21 April 1982.
- <sup>109</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 97-98/182, box 55, file 225-88-0010-2, Martyn Godfrey, "Report: Writer-in-Residence Programme, June 13 – December 5, 1989," p. 1.
- <sup>110</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0007, Seán Virgo, "Writer-in-Residence Saskatoon Public Library 1991-92: Mid-term Report," 30 December 1991.
- <sup>111</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Documentation and Reference Centre, file 6130-97-0631, Elisabeth Harvor, Mid-term Report.
- <sup>112</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 94-95/576, box 36, file 225-85-0005-2, Joe Rosenblatt to Alice Turner McFarland, "Writer-in-Residence Report, 1985-1986," July 1986, p. 2.
- <sup>113</sup> P. Greenhill, *True Poetry*, 7.
- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.
- <sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.
- <sup>116</sup> Myrna Kostash, interview with the author, Edmonton, 12 November 2003.
- <sup>117</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, Alden Nowlan fonds, MSc 40, file 40.31.6.72a, Alden Nowlan to Robert Cockburn, 11 July 1981.
- <sup>118</sup> J. Russ, *How to Suppress Women's Writing*, 95.
- <sup>119</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 24, file 225-79-0010-3, Dorothy Livesay to Naïm Kattan, 11 February 1980.
- <sup>120</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455 1103, "Program Issues," Wayne Johnston to René Bonenfant, 6 February 1994.
- <sup>121</sup> Aritha van Herk, interview with the author, Calgary, 21 November 2003.
- <sup>122</sup> Di Brandt quoted in C. Pearson, "Poet in Motion."
- <sup>123</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 6130-99-0885, Katherine M. Quinsey and Di Brandt to Bianca Côté, 24 September 2001.
- <sup>124</sup> Myrna Kostash, interview with the author, Edmonton, 12 November 2003.
- <sup>125</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/313, box 35, file 225-81-0007-4, Maria Campbell, "Writer-in-Residence Report," 18 December 1981, p. 2.
- <sup>126</sup> Bert Almon, personal interview, Edmonton, 13 November 2003.



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#### Chapter 4: University Writers-in-Residence and Canons

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Laurence to Al Purdy, 3 November 1980, in M. Laurence and A. Purdy, *Friendship in Letters*, 372.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the “new emphasis on professionalism in the sense of advanced degrees, publishing, and the mastering of modes of critical discourse” (17) in Canadian English departments from the mid-1950s, see S. Djwa, *Professing English*.

<sup>3</sup> In particular I have drawn upon the essays in Bourdieu’s *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*.

<sup>4</sup> P. Martin, “Re:Producing Culture(s),” 114.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>7</sup> P. Bourdieu, “Market of Symbolic Goods,” 124.

<sup>8</sup> P. Martin, “Re:Producing Culture(s),” 103.

<sup>9</sup> P. Bourdieu, “Market of Symbolic Goods,” 124.

<sup>10</sup> M. Fee, “Canadian Literature and English Studies,” 21.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>14</sup> P. Martin, “Re:Producing Culture(s),” 140.

<sup>15</sup> See S.D. King, “Uncomfortable Match.”

<sup>16</sup> P. Martin, “Re:Producing Culture(s),” 68-9.

<sup>17</sup> J. Guillory, *Cultural Capital*, 15.

<sup>18</sup> P. Bourdieu, “Production of Belief,” 105-6.

<sup>19</sup> See C. Gerson, “Cultural Darwinism,” 25-33; and P. Martin, “Re:Producing Culture(s),” 98-101.

<sup>20</sup> P. Martin, “Re:Producing Culture(s),” 106-8.

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- <sup>21</sup> D. Arnason, "Critical Theory and the Canadian University," 60.
- <sup>22</sup> P. Martin, "Re:Producing Culture(s)," 85.
- <sup>23</sup> F. Davey, "It's a Wonderful Life," 72.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 72-3.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.
- <sup>26</sup> Peter Buitenhuis, interview with the author, Burnaby, BC, 21 April 2004.
- <sup>27</sup> See, for example, League of Canadian Poets, *League of Canadian Poets* (1980); Writers' Union of Canada, *Who's Who* (1988); and Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers, *CANSCAIP Companion* (1994).
- <sup>28</sup> A search on Google Scholar could find no instances (2006).
- <sup>29</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 97-98/182, box 55, file 225-88-0017-5, Nancy Bauer to Roger Ploude, 29 August 1990. pp. 1, 3; and Doug Underhill, "Bauer Appointed Writer in Residence," *Miramichi Leader*, undated clipping.
- <sup>30</sup> Personal communication from Rosemary Sullivan, University of Toronto. Margaret Avison to J.M. Ham, 16 January 1980.
- <sup>31</sup> In an interview published in a campus newspaper, Gallant was asked if she resented the marketing of her "Canadian-ness" through McClelland and Stewart's strategic titling of her recent collection, *Home Truths* (1981). "After thirty years of a career elsewhere," she countered, "what difference does it make?" See M. Langille, "Mavis Gallant: Home Again."
- <sup>32</sup> Atwood has served as Berg Chair, New York University, 1986; Writer-in-Residence, Macquarie University, Australia, 1987; and Writer-in-Residence, Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas, 1989, among other appointments (University of Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Margaret Atwood papers, MS Coll. 200, finding aid). Munro was writer-in-residence at the University of Queensland, Australia, in 1980. Ondaatje was writer-in-residence at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, New York, in 2000, an appointment that was profiled in *The New Yorker*. See M. Matousek, "Dept. of Belles Lettres: A Critical Clinic."
- <sup>33</sup> Witness, for example, Shelagh Rogers' interview with Yann Martel on *Sounds like Canada* (CBC Radio One), which aired on 16 March 2004.
- <sup>34</sup> R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 173. The departments at U of T and its federated colleges (St. Michael's, Trinity, and Victoria) convened regularly as the Combined Department of English until 1975, when they became a unified department under one chairman, Milton Wilson (to 1980).

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<sup>35</sup> Sandra Djwa, personal communication, 17 October 2006. Birney taught Bissell (B.A. 1936, M.A. 1937) at University of Toronto in the 1930s.

<sup>36</sup> R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 143.

<sup>37</sup> M.L. Friedland, *University of Toronto*, chapters 33, 34, and 36.

<sup>38</sup> See R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, Appendix 2a. Bissell supervised seven of the twenty-two dissertations on Canadian topics listed.

<sup>39</sup> C. Bissell, "University and the Arts," 121-2.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 122-4.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 114-15.

<sup>42</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1970-71, N.S.C. Dickinson to A.W.R. Carrothers, 13 May 1970, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> University of Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, Earle Birney papers, MS Coll. 49, box 8, file 25, Robertson Davies to Earle Birney, 2 February 1966.

<sup>44</sup> M.L. Friedland, *University of Toronto*, 465.

<sup>45</sup> The first Advisory Committee for the Writer-in-Residence consisted of Gordon H. Roper (Trinity College), Norman Endicott (University College), Robin Harris (University College), and Don Forster (Bissell's executive assistant, later to be vice-president and provost). The following year, the committee, chaired by Roper, comprised Frank Watt (University College), J.J. Carroll (University College), John M. Robson (Victoria College), and N. Dickinson (Assistant to the President). Robertson Davies would join the committee in 1969.

<sup>46</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1968-69, Jack Ludwig to G.H. Roper, 30 September 1968.

<sup>47</sup> C. Bissell, "Politics and Literature in the 1960s," 3:9.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, "The Fire-Dweller," an interview with Margaret Laurence first broadcast on CBC Radio on 29 August 1969.

<sup>49</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1970-71, Northrop Frye to Claude Bissell, 4 December 1970.

<sup>50</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1972-73, Margaret Atwood to J.H. Sword, 3 February 1972.

<sup>51</sup> See R. MacSkimming, *Perilous Trade*, 175.

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- <sup>52</sup> R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 120, 158.
- <sup>53</sup> Committee report, quoted in R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 130-1.
- <sup>54</sup> R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 167.
- <sup>55</sup> Of the ninety-two English professors teaching Canadian literature interviewed by Paul Martin in 1997, thirteen (14 per cent) had earned a Ph.D. at the University of Toronto ("Re:Producing Culture(s)," 189).
- <sup>56</sup> This number excludes dissertations on Canadian topics written by students specializing in drama in the same time period. My calculations are based on data given in R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 241-83.
- <sup>57</sup> Madeleine Dart, who died in 1976, the same year the degree was conferred, was an assistant professor of English at Memorial University Of Newfoundland, from 1971 to 1975.
- <sup>58</sup> R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 186. The figure excludes nine drama dissertations.
- <sup>59</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1972-3, Margaret Atwood, "Report: Writer-in-Residence, Academic Year, 1972/73," p. 1.
- <sup>60</sup> Sam Solecki, interview with the author, 1 October 2002. See also: R. Sullivan, *Red Shoes*, 295.
- <sup>61</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1972-3, Margaret Atwood, "Report: Writer-in-Residence, Academic Year, 1972/73," pp. 3-4.
- <sup>62</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1973-4, undated notes from meeting.
- <sup>63</sup> See, most recently, M. Atwood, *Negotiating with the Dead*.
- <sup>64</sup> SFU Archives, Association of Canadian Publishers fonds, fonds 57, file f-57-15-1-5, Margaret Atwood, "The Writer in Canada Today," 1981.
- <sup>65</sup> U of T Archives, A85-0021/002, Office of the President, Writer-in-Residence, 1973-4, D.J. Dooley to John R. Evans, 8 January 1973.
- <sup>66</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021, Writer-in-Residence, 1976-7, D.J. Dooley to John R. Evans, 25 January 1973.
- <sup>67</sup> P. Bourdieu, "Production of Belief," 105.
- <sup>68</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1973-4, N. Dickinson to D.J. Dooley, 29 August 1973.

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- <sup>69</sup> M.L. Friedland, *University of Toronto*, 551.
- <sup>70</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1974-5, Phyllis Grosskurth and Dave Godfrey to J.R. Evans, 27 February 1975.
- <sup>71</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1975-6, D.J. Dooley to J.R. Evans, 15 February 1975.
- <sup>72</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1974-5, N. Dickinson, "Memorandum for file: Writer-in-Residence" meeting notes, 11 March 1975.
- <sup>73</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1974-5, John Evans, Memorandum to Dean R.A. Greene and Dean A.E. Safarin, 17 March 1974.
- <sup>74</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1975-6, John H. Sword, Memorandum to the President [John Evans], 29 October 1975, p. 2.
- <sup>75</sup> U of T Archives, Office of the President, A85-0021/002, 1977-8, Randall Robertson, "Writers-in-Residence Committee: Final Report," March 1978, pp. 1-3; Margaret-Ann Fitzpatrick, "Report on the Readings," March 1978; Paul McCann, "Writers-in-Residence Conference Publicity Report," March 1978.
- <sup>76</sup> Russell Brown, interview with the author, 2 October 2002.
- <sup>77</sup> "Looking for People with 'The Passion.'"
- <sup>78</sup> Personal communication from Rosemary Sullivan, University of Toronto. Dennis Lee to Germaine Warkentin, 27 December 1978.
- <sup>79</sup> D. Lee, "Perception of Poets."
- <sup>80</sup> Personal communication from Rosemary Sullivan, University of Toronto. Germaine Warkentin to J.R. Ham, 12 April 1979.
- <sup>81</sup> P. Bourdieu, "Production of Belief," 77.
- <sup>82</sup> R.S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto*, 184.
- <sup>83</sup> Personal communication from Rosemary Sullivan, University of Toronto. Sam Solecki, memo to the Chairman, English Dept., [Report of the Writer-in-Residence Committee], 4 April 1984.
- <sup>84</sup> University of Toronto Bulletin, 22 February 1982, p.3.
- <sup>85</sup> M. Langille, "Mavis Gallant: Home Again."
- <sup>86</sup> Personal communication from Rosemary Sullivan, University of Toronto. Sam Solecki to Katharine Benzekri, 5 November 1981.

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- <sup>87</sup> *University of Toronto Bulletin*, 22 February 1982, p. 3.
- <sup>88</sup> Personal communication from Rosemary Sullivan, University of Toronto. Sam Solecki, Memo to the Chairman, English Dept., [Report of the Writer-in-Residence Committee] 4 April 1984.
- <sup>89</sup> Sam Solecki, interview with the author, 1 October 2002.
- <sup>90</sup> Daniel Lang, email to the author, 15 February 2006.
- <sup>91</sup> Quoted in "Writer-in-Residence Position Examined by Committee," *University of Toronto Bulletin*, 20 September 1993, p. 5.
- <sup>92</sup> Personal communication from the Provost's Office, University of Toronto. "Report of the Committee to Review the Writer-in-Residence," November 1993, p. 4.
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- <sup>94</sup> "Urquhart Named Writer-in-Residence," *University of Toronto Bulletin*, 19 February 1996, available at: [www.utoronto.ca/bulletin/feb19\\_96/art10.htm](http://www.utoronto.ca/bulletin/feb19_96/art10.htm), accessed 24 October 2000.
- <sup>95</sup> Sam Solecki, interview with the author, 1 October 2002; on Jack McClelland, see J. King, *Jack: A Life with Writers*; and S. Solecki, *Imagining Canadian Literature*.
- <sup>96</sup> "Ellis Named McClelland Writer-in-Residence," *University of Toronto Bulletin*, 1 June 1998, available at: [www.library.utoronto.ca/bulletin/june1\\_98/art13.htm](http://www.library.utoronto.ca/bulletin/june1_98/art13.htm), accessed 23 October 2000.
- <sup>97</sup> Jack McClelland obituary, *Globe & Mail*, 16 June 2004, p. S8.
- <sup>98</sup> Rosemary Sullivan, interview with the author, 2 October 2002
- <sup>99</sup> University of Toronto, *Calendar, 2006-7*. English 252Y1 is a "survey of Canadian poetry, prose and drama, consisting of the work of at least twelve writers, at least one of them of Native Canadian origin. At least one third of the works date from before 1950, but attention is also given to very recent works. The course includes works by at least eight of the following: Moodie, Lampman, Leacock, Pratt, Klein, Ross, Birney, Davies, Laurence, Reaney, Munro, Atwood." Paul Marin also noted the naming of core authors on the U of T course in 1997-8 ("Re:Producing Culture(s)," 162).
- <sup>100</sup> Sam Solecki, interview with the author, 1 October 2002.
- <sup>101</sup> Sandra Djwa, personal communication, 9 August 2006.
- <sup>102</sup> H. Johnston, "Writing the Book about SFU." See also: H. Johnston, *Radical Campus*. The original lecture/tutorial system offered by the English Department required up to

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three faculty members to lead seminars in one professor's lecture course. According to Sandra Djwa, this system contributed to the "[blurring of] boundaries between separate fields" (personal communication, 17 October 2006).

<sup>103</sup> J. Mills, "Festival at Simon Fraser," 79.

<sup>104</sup> J. McNinch, "What Is a Canadian Poet? [interview with Al Purdy]," 13.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid; Al Purdy to Margaret Laurence, 1 February [1970], in M. Laurence and A. Purdy, *Friendship in Letters*, 165-6.

<sup>106</sup> The position itself, Purdy's first university appointment, was an indication of the poet's growing critical reputation. Purdy's *The Cariboo Horses* had won the Governor General's Award in 1965, and the first monograph about his work, George Bowering's *Al Purdy* (Copp Clark), would appear in the same year as his SFU appointment.

<sup>107</sup> See, for example, G. Bowering, "Vancouver as Postmodern Poetry," which testifies to Bowering's Black Mountain influences and argues that "The Canadian Tradition" promulgated in the 1970s represented "unitary myth-making" that was "exclusionary" to BC writers (135).

<sup>108</sup> Simon Fraser University, *Calendar, 1975-6*, pp. 107-9.

<sup>109</sup> See, for example, F. Candelaria, Introduction to *New: West Coast*, [11].

<sup>110</sup> Sandra Djwa, personal communication, 9 August 2006.

<sup>111</sup> Sandra Djwa, personal communication, 17 October 2006.

<sup>112</sup> The SFU English Department retains a nearly complete archive of syllabi of department course offerings from 1965.

<sup>113</sup> P. Martin, "Re:Producing Culture," 159.

<sup>114</sup> P. Bourdieu, "Production of Belief," 106.

<sup>115</sup> F. Candelaria, Introduction to *New: West Coast*, [11].

<sup>116</sup> For a discussion of one writer's discovery of and navigations through the literary worlds of Vancouver, see C. Wiesenthal, *Half-Lives of Pat Lowther*, esp. 146-7, 240-2.

<sup>117</sup> Personal communication from Paul Delany, Simon Fraser University. Tom Wayman to Paul Delany, 26 March 1975, p. 2-3.

<sup>118</sup> LAC, acc. 93-93/240, box 44, file 225-83-0007-2, "Simon Fraser University."

<sup>119</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1983-94/224, vol. 51, file A-75-1913, Peter Buitenhuis to Luc Jutras, 21 February 1977.

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- <sup>120</sup> I. DeVries, “‘I’m Looking at a Frightened, Lost Generation,’” 9.
- <sup>121</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 40, file A-77-0892, Ann Messenger to [Katharine] Benzekri, 29 June 1977, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>122</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 40, file A-77-0892, W.H. New to Canada Council, 29 June 1977, p.1.
- <sup>123</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 40, file A-77-0892, Geoff Hancock to Canada Council, 27 June 1977.
- <sup>124</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 40, file A-77-0892, Jack Hodgins to Rob Dunham, 19 February 1979.
- <sup>125</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 1985-86/230, box 40, file A-77-0892, Peter Buitenhuis to Luc Jutras, 23 January 1978, p. 1.
- <sup>126</sup> N. McInnis, Dorothy Livesay’s Poetics of Desire, 55.
- <sup>127</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 24, file 225-79-0010-3, Dorothy Livesay, “Report to the Canada Council re. Writer-in-Residence Term at S.F.U., September 15 to December 20, 1979,” p. 1.
- <sup>128</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 89-90/283, box 24, file 225-79-0010-3, Peter Buitenhuis to Katharine Benzekri, 11 March 1980, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>129</sup> Tom Wayman, interview with the author, Calgary, 20 November 2003.
- <sup>130</sup> Roy Miki, email to the author, 4 April 2006.
- <sup>131</sup> Peter Buitenhuis, interview with the author, Burnaby, BC, 21 April 2004.
- <sup>132</sup> SFU Archives, English Department fonds, F 25, Departmental meeting minutes, 27 April 1978, p. 5.
- <sup>133</sup> SFU Archives, English Department fonds, F 25, Departmental meeting minutes, 7 October 1976; 16 February 1978; 27 April 1978; and 16 November 1978.
- <sup>134</sup> SFU Archives, English Department fonds, F 25, Departmental meeting minutes, 10 April 1980, p. 2.
- <sup>135</sup> Cam Hubert, *Rites of Passage*, in *Room of One’s Own* 3.2 (1977).
- <sup>136</sup> Simon Fraser University, “Honorary Degrees Awarded by Simon Fraser University.” Less than twenty-five per cent of the honorary degrees awarded by SFU between 1965 and 2000 (inclusive) have gone to women.



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<sup>137</sup> Of the 340 master's theses and Ph.D. dissertations completed in the English department at SFU, forty-five have dealt exclusively with Canadian works; of these one dealt in part with Livesay's poetry. Two honours students have written extended papers on Ryga and Hodgins, respectively.

<sup>138</sup> R. Rompkey, "Idea of Newfoundland and Arts Policy Since Confederation," 269-70.

<sup>139</sup> Memorial University of Newfoundland, "Mission."

<sup>140</sup> Memorial University of Newfoundland, Division of Extension Service, *Annual Report, 1978/79*, p. 77.

<sup>141</sup> Memorial University of Newfoundland, Division of Extension Service, *Annual Reports, 1970/71-1989/90*.

<sup>142</sup> See B. Morgan, "Percy Janes and His Bond Street Writers."

<sup>143</sup> The precursor to the provincial Art Gallery of Newfoundland and Labrador.

<sup>144</sup> Seán Virgo, email to the author, 27 and 30 July 2005.

<sup>145</sup> *TickleAce* 1 (November 1977): verso of cover page.

<sup>146</sup> [Editors' Introduction], *TickleAce* 1 (November 1977): 1.

<sup>147</sup> For a detailed history and analysis of Newfoundland publishers, see S. Ferré-Rode, *L'Édition au Canada atlantique*, 215-29, 324-6.

<sup>148</sup> R. Rompkey, "Idea of Newfoundland and Arts Policy Since Confederation," 275.

<sup>149</sup> S. Ferré-Rode, "Atlantic Canada," 179-80.

<sup>150</sup> D. Fuller, "Reading Women's Writing Communities in Newfoundland."

<sup>151</sup> D. Fuller, *Writing the Everyday*, 15.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>153</sup> Helen Fogwill Porter, interview with the author, St. John's, 6 July 2006.

<sup>154</sup> E.R. Seary and G.M. Story, *Reading English*, 85.

<sup>155</sup> Information on faculty members and course offerings has been gleaned from Memorial University of Newfoundland, *Calendar*.

<sup>156</sup> Lawrence Mathews, interview with the author, St. John's, 5 July 2006.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

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- <sup>158</sup> L. Mathews, "Report From the Country of No Country," 3.
- <sup>159</sup> D. Fuller, *Writing the Everyday*, 97.
- <sup>160</sup> H.F. Porter, "Address to Convocation."
- <sup>161</sup> LAC, Elizabeth Smart fonds, LMS-0086, acc.1983-5/1987-9, box 43, file "Memorial University of Newfoundland," Roberta Buchanan to Elizabeth Smart 19 May 198[3] and 1 September 1983; Gildas Roberts to Elizabeth Smart, 16 April 1984.
- <sup>162</sup> Helen Fogwill Porter, interview with the author, St. John's, 6 July 2006.
- <sup>163</sup> S. Ferré-Rode, "Atlantic Canada," 181.
- <sup>164</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 2000-00913-1, box 123, file 6105-90-0018, Gildas Roberts to Katharine Benzekri, 1 June 1992, p. 1.
- <sup>165</sup> Helen Fogwill Porter, interview with the author, St. John's, 6 July 2006.
- <sup>166</sup> Personal communication from Gordon Jones, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Shane O'Dea to Katharine Benzekri, 12 April 1993.
- <sup>167</sup> Lawrence Mathews, interview with the author, St. John's, 5 July 2006.
- <sup>168</sup> Personal communication from Gordon Jones, Memorial University of Newfoundland. Guillermo Verdecchia to T. Murphy, 1 December 1999, p. 2.
- <sup>169</sup> Lawrence Mathews, interview with the author, St. John's, 5 July 2006.
- <sup>170</sup> Wayne Johnston, interview with the author, St. John's, 3 January 2003.
- <sup>171</sup> Toronto's Anne McDermid, Johnston's agent in the 1990s, currently represents Newfoundland authors Michael Crummey, Jessica Grant, Lisa Moore, and Michael Winter (Anne McDermid & Associates Ltd., home page).
- <sup>172</sup> Lawrence Mathews, interview with the author, St. John's, 5 July 2006.
- <sup>173</sup> Helen Fogwill Porter, interview with the author, St. John's, 6 July 2006.
- <sup>174</sup> D. Fuller, *Writing the Everyday*, 80-1.
- <sup>175</sup> P. Gill, "*West Moon* Bridges the North Atlantic."
- <sup>176</sup> Lawrence Mathews, interview with the author, St. John's, 5 July 2006.
- <sup>177</sup> Canada Council for the Arts, Reference and Documentation Centre, file 455 1103, "Writer-in-Residence Program Issues," Paul Gaudet to Paule Leduc, 6 August 1993, p. 2.

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## Conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Authors Association, Vancouver Branch, [*Brief to the Royal Commission*].

<sup>2</sup> L. Sandler, "Writers Outfacing Their Critics," 7.

<sup>3</sup> University of Calgary Library, Archives and Special Collections, John Metcalf fonds, MsC 24, file 24.8.9, Alice Munro to John Metcalf, 31 December 1980, pp. 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> Lorraine York documents current academic interest in the marketing of celebrity authors in her article "He Should Do Well on the American Talk Shows."

<sup>5</sup> K. Garebian, "*General Ludd: A Satire on Decadence*," 45.

<sup>6</sup> J. Metcalf, *General Ludd*, 108.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-9.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 225-7.

<sup>14</sup> R. Smith, *Muriella Pent*, 80, 86.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-8.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-8.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 159-65, 179.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>21</sup> An author's note reveals that Marcus's speech delivered at the library was based on comments given by Jane Jacobs "in a similar situation" in Toronto in 2000.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 184.

<sup>23</sup> Guillory, *Cultural Capital*, viii.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., vii-viii.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., viii.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., xiv.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., xiv.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 340-1.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 103

<sup>30</sup> J. Metcalf, *General Ludd*, 27.

<sup>31</sup> N. Levine, "Thin Ice," 123.

<sup>32</sup> W. Johnston, "Catechism," 54.

<sup>33</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 105, file 225-83-0015-2, Lorna Crozier to Ron Yeo and the Library Board, 9 January 1985, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> LAC, RG 63, acc. 93-94/240, box 105, file 225-83-0015-2, Lorna Crozier to Ron Yeo and the Library Board, 9 January 1985, enclosure.

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