

## *History of the Book in Canada: The View from Here*

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### Résumé de l'article

Les projets de recherche portant sur une histoire du livre nationale sont à la fois informatifs et provocateurs : informatifs quant aux données qu'ils rassemblent et aux savoirs qu'ils diffusent, et provocateurs quant aux omissions et aux limites qui leur sont inhérentes. Le projet *History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada* (3 vol., 2004-2007) a constitué une occasion remarquable pour un grand nombre de chercheurs de partout au pays de se pencher sur quantité d'aspects de la culture de l'imprimé dans un contexte de plus en plus multiculturel. Ils se sont intéressés à la notion d'auteur, à l'édition, à la distribution et au lectorat. De plus, le projet a posé les bases d'études subséquentes portant sur des sujets qui se sont révélés sous-exploités et continue d'inspirer de nouveaux travaux. L'équipe de direction de *HBIC/HLIC*, qui travaillait dans les deux langues officielles, a instauré un modèle de diffusion bilingue des travaux de recherche, chose étonnamment rare dans le domaine des humanités au pays. Sur le plan national, les trois volumes publiés, ainsi que les nombreuses études auxquelles ils ont donné lieu, ont également enrichi la connaissance qu'ont les Canadiens de ce qu'ils sont. Sur le plan international, le projet a permis à un pays relativement modeste du point de vue de l'histoire mondiale du livre d'affirmer sa présence. Les historiens du livre étant de plus en plus conscients du fait qu'il leur faut situer leurs travaux dans des contextes transnationaux, nous les invitons à s'inspirer de ce qui s'est fait en la matière au Canada.

# ***HISTORY OF THE BOOK IN CANADA: THE VIEW FROM HERE***

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\* Editor's note: The following text is taken from remarks contributed to the roundtable, "Inheriting the National Histories of the Book / L'héritage des grands projets nationaux d'histoire du livre," held on the occasion of the 23rd Annual Conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing, "The Generation and Regeneration of Books / Générations et régénérations du livre." The traces of oral presentation have therefore been retained. Moreover, the audio file includes exchanges with the audience that followed the roundtable. The audio file is accessible here : [http://www.usherbrooke.ca/grelq/fileadmin/sites/grelq/documents/Colloques/SHARP\\_2015/Table\\_ronde\\_projets\\_nationaux\\_2015-07-07\\_1.mp3](http://www.usherbrooke.ca/grelq/fileadmin/sites/grelq/documents/Colloques/SHARP_2015/Table_ronde_projets_nationaux_2015-07-07_1.mp3)

## **ABSTRACT**

National book history projects are both informative and provocative: informative for the resources they assemble and the knowledge they promote, and provocative for their omissions and limitations. The *History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada* (3 vols 2004-2007) provided a remarkable opportunity for a large community of researchers across the country to investigate myriad aspects of Canada's print culture in an increasingly multicultural population. Their focal points included authorship, publishing, distribution, and reading. The project established a baseline for subsequent studies in areas that were revealed to be under-researched and it continues to inspire new scholarly investigations. Working in both official languages, *HBiC/HLIC's* editorial team forged a model for bilingual scholarly dissemination, a format that is surprisingly rare in the humanities in Canada. At the national level, its three volumes and many offshoots have enriched Canadians' knowledge about themselves; at the international level, the project has established the presence of a relatively small country within the realm of global book history. As international book history scholars become increasingly conscious of the need to situate their investigations within trans-national contexts, we invite them to consider Canada's stories and examples.

Les projets de recherche portant sur une histoire du livre nationale sont à la fois informatifs et provocateurs : informatifs quant aux données qu'ils rassemblent et aux savoirs qu'ils diffusent, et provocateurs quant aux omissions et aux limites qui leur sont inhérentes. Le projet *History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada* (3 vol., 2004-2007) a constitué une occasion remarquable pour un grand nombre de chercheurs de partout au pays de se pencher sur quantité d'aspects de la culture de l'imprimé dans un contexte de plus en plus multiculturel. Ils se sont intéressés à la notion d'auteur, à l'édition, à la distribution et au lectorat. De plus, le projet a posé les bases d'études subséquentes portant sur des sujets qui se sont révélés sous-exploités et continue d'inspirer de nouveaux travaux. L'équipe de direction de *HBC/HLIC*, qui travaillait dans les deux langues officielles, a instauré un modèle de diffusion bilingue des travaux de recherche, chose étonnamment rare dans le domaine des humanités au pays. Sur le plan national, les trois volumes publiés, ainsi que les nombreuses études auxquelles ils ont donné lieu, ont également enrichi la connaissance qu'ont les Canadiens de ce qu'ils sont. Sur le plan international, le projet a permis à un pays relativement modeste du point de vue de l'histoire mondiale du livre d'affirmer sa présence. Les historiens du livre étant de plus en plus conscients du fait qu'il leur faut situer leurs travaux dans des contextes transnationaux, nous les invitons à s'inspirer de ce qui s'est fait en la matière au Canada.

In his "Conclusion" to the *Literary History of Canada* (1965), Northrop Frye famously stated that "the Canadian sensibility" is "less perplexed by the question 'Who am I?' than by some such riddle as 'Where is here?'"<sup>1</sup> That question remains relevant fifty years later, at SHARP's 2015 meeting in Montreal, a city marked by the confluence of numerous Canadian cultures, to consider the legacy of national book histories. In the late 1990s, SHARP conferences featured a pre-conference roundtable, chaired by Ian Willison (University of London) and John Cole (Library of Congress), where representatives of national book history projects reported on their progress and compared notes.<sup>2</sup> Participants shared a sense of commonality regarding the impossible task of containing their specific country's unruly book history in finite numbers of words, pages, and volumes. In the first of their columns in *SHARP News*, Willison and Cole claimed that national projects "have led the way in book history studies" and that they would produce not only information, but also foundational infrastructures: "These collaborative national projects are especially noteworthy because of the substantial resources they have harnessed from research institutions, libraries, foundations, university presses and governments." Hence, in their view, "the successful launching and continued progress of an increasing number

of national publishing projects, taken together, begin to converge on what we can think of as a de facto world history of the book.”<sup>3</sup>

How rosy was this vision—and how feasible? Now that many multi-volume enterprises have reached completion, how readily can those of us who were deeply involved in a particular national book history project generalize about the larger impact of the national book history movement? Today, does a world history of the book seem desirable, let alone possible? We all know that book history has to start somewhere, with something specific such as an enduring text, or the activities of certain individuals, or the story of a language group or region, or the impact of a political unit, or the transmission of an idea. Should new book histories be shaped within national paradigms, or in contestation of their hegemony, or in relation to new structural models?<sup>4</sup> What can we learn from completed national book history projects, such as the one from here?

## **Editorial Choices: What is a Book? What is Canada?**

Cautions accompanied the *History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada* (hereafter *HBiC*) from the outset. At our project's founding conference in 1997, Robert A. Gross reminded us that “The spotlight on ‘nation’ can conceal as much as it reveals” because “Nation, book, gender, class” are unstable categories that “refer to processes and relationships, not to states of being.”<sup>5</sup> Self-questioning typical of the scholarly mind imbues Michael Suarez's outline of “Historiographical Problems and Possibilities in Book History and National Histories of the Book,” which was eloquently addressed by Patricia Fleming, co-general editor and principal investigator on *HBiC*'s SSHRC grant, who shares Suarez's view that “Book history is an interdisciplinary endeavour that scholars may creatively undertake *together*.”<sup>6</sup> As our cross-disciplinary editorial team of bibliographers, historians, and literature scholars struggled to define the framework and contents of our project, we confronted the slippery parameters of “book history” and of national identities, both literal and theoretical. Geography proved easy to manage: Canada's boundaries have not fluctuated as much as those of many European states, and we readily agreed that our present-day borders would determine our geographical focus (in contrast to the American project, whose volumes tend to introduce states and territories as they joined the Union).<sup>7</sup> For

example, although Newfoundland had been a separate colony since 1610 and did not join Confederation until 1949, we cover the island's print history from the time of first European contact in the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Cultural delineation proved more problematic. Because the territory that became Canada has historically been a crossroads of British, French and American cultures, we situate the Canadian experience within the colonial triangle created by these three powers on top of pre-existing Indigenous communities, and within the global environment resulting from their political and cultural empires. This complex scope caught the attention of Jeremy Dibbell in his review of all three volumes for *SHARP News*: "The history of the book in Canada, highlighted by complicating linguistic, political, geographic, social factors, not only makes for interesting reading but offers a model for future studies and much fertile ground ripe for further exploration."<sup>9</sup> Our focus was not the history of the *Canadian* book—which would have been more limited—but the history of the book *in Canada*, duly recognizing the high proportion of material read by Canadians that has always come from abroad, along with the desire of Canadian writers to reach large international markets and the efforts of Canadian publishers to negotiate with the big guys beyond our borders.

The more choices we had to make, the more questions we confronted. If "the book" is regarded as a concept that extends beyond the codex, how far can it be taken? To embrace every form of literacy and communication, including singly produced "texts" such as embroidered samplers, tombstones and *livres d'artiste*?<sup>10</sup> To practices that are closer to *aide-mémoire* than to formalized systems based on language or images? To such utilitarian items as city directories and telephone books—the latter perhaps the most ubiquitous printed item in modern Canadian households? With a focus on "print in the lives of Canadians," all our volumes include common reading materials such as newspapers and magazines. Because the spread of the printing press is one of our narratives, Volume 1 (Beginnings to 1840) also looks at other products, from currency to election materials, business forms, and health notices;<sup>11</sup> Volume 2 (1840-1918) includes sheet music, cookbooks, and posters and handbills.<sup>12</sup>

In a 2003 discussion piece published in *SHARP News*, Eva Hemmungs Wirtén worried about national histories becoming "vehicles for nation-state construction,"<sup>13</sup> implicitly questioning Benedict Anderson's model of print

shaping the nation; I think that this concern has shadowed national projects productively, given the questioning nature of scholarly enquiry. Specific instances of globe-trotting authors, printers, and booksellers whose trans-border activities challenge national models of book history<sup>14</sup> provide welcome points of interrogation by rattling the frameworks that national projects place on the international circulation and reception of print. At the same time, we can't forget that nations shape print: through taxes, legislation, import and export controls, censorship, education, literary prizes, and other forms of regulation and reward. In the words of Jason McElligott and Eve Patten, "the potential blurring of national specificity in the interests of transnational readings has been identified by some as a serious concern, risking in many cases both the dilution of proximate political, economic, and social landscapes, and the sidelining of pertinent questions about the engagement of print within an immediate geo-political environment."<sup>15</sup> The importance of integrating national and international models of book history motivated two upcoming Canadian scholars working on the late nineteenth century. While a student researcher with *HBiC*, Eli MacLaren pursued a doctoral project on book publication across the Canadian/American border in order to pin down complexities of copyright and production that transgressed the limits of both national book histories. Similarly inspired to query normative nationalism, Alison Rukavina examined the tangled networks of the international colonial book trade. Both their dissertations have yielded important books.<sup>16</sup>

## Language Matters

Situating our project in relation to other national histories of the book heightened our awareness that language issues are more critical here in Canada than in most other Western countries. Many major projects, such as those in Australia, Britain, France and the US, concentrate on the history of print in just one language, whereas we continually juggled the dual narrative of French and English Canada.<sup>17</sup> Editors of other multi-language national book cultures likewise had to make choices. *A Nation and its Books: A History of the Book in Wales* (1998), published in one volume, integrates sections about the production and supply of texts in the Welsh language, whereas the multi-volume *Oxford History of the Irish Book* separates the single volume dedicated to *The Printed Book in Irish, 1567-2000* from the three volumes covering *The Irish Book in English*. Articles in the *Yearbook for Dutch Book*

*History's* issue of 2013, devoted to book history around the world, suggest that scholars in European countries whose print cultures involve multiple languages tend to prioritize one language at a time.<sup>18</sup> Canada's unique situation required a different approach.

Because most Canadians reside within 200 kilometres of the American border, American economic and cultural domination has been inescapable. In addition to a colonial link to Britain that long inhibited the development of domestic publishing, all aspects of Canada's English-language book history have been influenced by the looming presence of the United States, with ten times our population. Canada's French-language book history, on the other hand, was shaped by a sense of isolation that often led to protectionist self-sufficiency. To trace the history of the book in Canada, therefore, required continual pursuit of two narrative streams, one English and one French. These stories sometimes run parallel to one another, sometimes follow differing paths, and occasionally converge.

We chose to integrate the cultures of the two major languages, in line with Canada's national policy of bilingualism, even though bilingual scholarly projects are surprisingly rare in the humanities. We worked in both French and English, with each volume's pair of editors comprising an anglophone and a francophone. Like the country itself, the project is asymmetrical, as evidenced in its very title—*History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada*—and we were challenged to balance our representation of the two founding language groups.<sup>19</sup>

The asymmetry of Canadian history is evident across the entire project. In Volume 1 (Beginnings to 1840), which opens with first colonial contacts and concludes with the Act of Union that joined Upper and Lower Canada, French Canada receives substantial attention due to the primacy of French settlement. In Volume 2 (1840–1918), which covers an era of industrial and demographic expansion, the balance swings towards English concerns. By the modern era of Volume 3 (1918–1980), English Canada dominates due to its larger population and greater geographical spread. All three volumes interweave the book histories of Canada's "two solitudes." Although Hugh MacLennan originally selected this phrase (taken from Rilke) as the title of his 1945 novel in order to describe a balanced relationship between Canada's foundational European cultures, our experience confirms its now

common use to express cultural division: French and English university-based researchers such as historians, bibliographers and literary scholars, tend to function within separate linguistic circles, with surprisingly little cross-over. We found that many scholars met their limits when they obligingly attempted to cover their topic in the other language, only to discover the superficiality of their knowledge. In the words of reviewer Fernande Roy, “Les deux univers ne se croisent pas: ils s’ignorent plutôt” [The two spheres don’t engage; rather, they seem unaware of one another].<sup>20</sup>

Managing this linguistic chasm proved a constant concern. In Volume 3 (1918–1980), to avoid fracturing the entire volume with separate entries for English and French coverage of major subjects, we developed our own practice and terminology. We referred to the longer, parallel separate texts (on such topics as trade publishing and public libraries) as “twin bed” entries; for other topics, we created a number of “double bed” entries by “marrying” two shorter texts, one originally written in English and one in French (on such topics as children’s publishing and literary prizes). These were linked by opening and closing sections written by editors, thereby creating shotgun co-authorship among scholars who never met in person. In the process, we found that translation improved both readability and veracity; in the words of Patricia Fleming: “nothing points up the flaws in a text more effectively than putting it into another language. Imprecisions that we let pass in a first edit would come back from translation either misunderstood or so much improved that we were shamed into revising the original.”<sup>21</sup>

In addition to balancing Canada’s dual linguistic lineage, we paid attention to print in Native languages and sought to document the “Canadian mosaic”<sup>22</sup> created by immigrant communities that set up presses in their own languages. However, before 1980 there was scant collection of data concerning Canada’s unofficial languages (other than census counts of immigrants’ mother countries) and statistics relating to print production tended to group all allophone languages as “other.” To track the print history of these “others” was a consistent effort. Volume 1 looks at printing in German and in Gaelic; Volume 2 adds Icelandic, Ukrainian, Yiddish, and Chinese. For Volume 3, it was a challenge even to identify the many languages in which new Canadians read, wrote, and printed. Immigrant communities usually begin with newspapers and magazines for local



consumption, adding other genres as numbers and circumstances warrant. In 1977, “Canada claimed 122 allophone newspapers, 6 of which were dailies (5 in Chinese and 1 in Italian).”<sup>23</sup> So distinctive is this feature of Canadian life that in 1937 humourist Stephen Leacock commented, “The publication of foreign language newspapers in the Prairie Provinces of Canada has, so far as I know, no parallel in the world. The only thing one could compare it to would be a cocktail party of the League of Nations at Geneva.”<sup>24</sup> Some immigrant groups became internationally significant. For example, between 1898 and 1920, acclaimed poetry written in Alberta by Icelandic immigrant Stephan Stephansson was sent back to Reykavik for publication.<sup>25</sup> During the Soviet era, the Prairies were an internationally recognized site for publishing in Ukrainian. Following the Soviet repression of Czechoslovakia in 1968, exiles Josef Škvorecký and Zdena Škvorecká-Salivarová maintained their homeland’s literary voice from 1971 until 1994 with their Toronto publishing house, 68 Publishers, which produced over 200 titles, many of them to be smuggled behind the Iron Curtain.<sup>26</sup>

## Outcomes: “To Know Ourselves”<sup>27</sup>

Far from being definitive, national book history projects serve not only as repositories of selected knowledge but also, in the words of Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, to stimulate questions regarding “what needs to be done in the future.”<sup>28</sup> It is certainly the case that *HBiC*’s editors always viewed the project as opening new vistas for future research, rather than closing off questions with definitive answers. For example, Bertrum MacDonald’s continuing research on rural reading, initially addressed in volume 1 of *HBiC*,<sup>29</sup> led to his 2014 SHARP conference paper on “Reading Good Books: Religion in the Life of Rural Communities in Late Victorian Canada.”

The enduring effects of *HBiC* have much to do with how the project was conceived and managed. While most national book history projects compile lengthy articles by major scholars, we created a different format, in part because so little was known and so much needed to be done in a relatively short period of time. Our three volumes (doubled to six by translation) collect short articles and case studies by 172 individuals, many of whom never thought of themselves as book historians. Their areas of expertise include Jewish studies, Black studies, art, music, women’s studies, education,

recreation, medical history, Native studies, and theology. Some were senior scholars and some were graduate students. Methodologies varied as our authors developed a Canadian version of Robert Darnton's communication circuit. Some scholars preferred quantitative analyses associated with the *Annales* approach while others were more partial to the text-based methods of Anglo-American archival scholarship.

One of the major outcomes of *HBiC* has been the creation of a cross-disciplinary research community whose views on the significance and legacy of the project were collected in two casual surveys – the first in 2007 when we produced our final report to SSHRC, and the second in 2014, in preparation for this SHARP panel. In 2007, when asked to list research and publications that could be considered offshoots of the core project, our authors cited dissertations and fellowships, numerous articles, book chapters, reference book contributions, conference papers, invited lectures, and at least five books. *HBiC* also inspired an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada on 125 years of its own publishing history and underpinned several large research grants for new projects, including Penney Clark's ongoing work on the history of educational publishing and Ruth Panofsky's history of the Macmillan Company of Canada. Our contribution to research infrastructure included a suite of databases that now languish at Library and Archives Canada.

Many of these accomplishments have borne further fruit, as revealed in 2014. Some respondents mentioned *HBiC*'s contribution to knowledge about Canada's diverse geographical regions and cultural enclaves, with special emphasis on the exchange of information between English and French Canada. Some cited specific chapters that they find useful in their research and teaching—especially those that concern mainstream and minority publishing—and several suggested the custom packaging of chapters across the volumes for dissemination to students. Digitizing the entire three-volume set would be ideal, but obtaining permission from 172 authors (several now deceased) is a daunting prospect. When invited to identify gaps that invite further research, many mentioned the need for attention to the complex history of reading. In addition to inspiring the usual scholarly results such as articles and conference presentations, *HBiC* is giving rise to new knowledge through the *Dictionnaire historique des gens du livre au Québec* under development at the Université de Sherbrooke, innovative

applications of digital technologies such as the use of GIS to map book history, and the collaborative project on early twentieth-century mass-circulation magazines based at the University of Alberta.<sup>30</sup> New topics that emerge in relation to the book histories of other countries prompt us to think about their relevance to Canada. For example, how does Ellen Gruber Garvey's recent highlighting of scrapbooks in American book culture apply to the many scrapbooks created by author L.M. Montgomery, or to the manuscript albums maintained by women in Quebec?<sup>31</sup> That *HBiC* did much to train the next generation of scholars is evident in the very successful 2015 SHARP Conference in Montreal, whose three primary organizers (Josée Vincent, Eli MacLaren, and Sophie Montreuil) were youthful researchers at project sites in Sherbrooke, Toronto, and Montreal.<sup>32</sup>

While the three *HBiC* volumes include basic attention to Native print culture, from early contact texts in Aboriginal languages through the later rise of Indigenous authorship, libraries, and publishing, we knew that deeper treatment would have to come from experts in the quickly developing field of Indigenous textual studies.<sup>33</sup> The significance of this dimension of Canada's book history, identified by Germaine Warkentin in a landmark essay,<sup>34</sup> is now being addressed through "The People and the Text: Indigenous Writing in Northern North America to 1992," a collaborative effort led by my Simon Fraser University colleague Deanna Reder, with co-applicants Margery Fee and Daniel Heath Justice at the University of British Columbia, that has just received a five-year grant from SSHRC. With considerable input from Aboriginal communities, their team will contribute to the call for the decolonization of book history voiced by Trish Loughran (among others)<sup>35</sup> by interrogating the position of Aboriginal texts and communication systems within European models of literary history and print culture. One of the foundational components of this new project is the development of protocols for the history of Aboriginal textuality. In the words of this project's leaders:

The leap from one tradition of interpretation to another requires some insight into ways of knowing, of getting and conveying knowledge, and of interpreting narrative. Writers familiar with Indigenous and settler culture attempt to transform the audiences, to make a change in the world through words. This common aspiration in Indigenous creators comes in large part through the colonial situation: faced with an ongoing destruction of

language, culture, and land, Indigenous speakers and writers need to reach a large and potentially hostile audience. Many writers set out to explain one culture with a distinctive epistemological system to an Other that was often busily trying to eradicate it.<sup>36</sup>

With the original *HBiC* project, we decided to conclude our primary focus with the year 1980, at the threshold of the many changes that relate to publishing, libraries, authorship and reading then being wrought by the brave new world of digitization, within the shifting parameters of globalization. If there is to be a volume 4 to address Canada's participation in the post-1980 era of new media, the list of topics would include changes to the local environment (with regard to such areas as the CBC, cultural support systems, newly identified reading communities, and shifts in the Canadian book industry often documented in *Quill & Quire*) and to a host of innovations that have been felt world-wide such as fan fiction and zines; graphic novels and non-fiction; electronic publishing, marketing and distribution (from Abebooks to Amazon); digital modes of preservation and research; the list goes on. Perhaps the younger generation of scholars (including many who participated in *HBiC*) will choose to undertake this endeavour.

## Where is “Here” in Global Book History?

It is relatively easy to document the role of *HBiC* in helping to fulfill the desire of Canadianists “to know ourselves.” Less visible is the project's international reach. Several reviewers appreciated *HBiC*'s contextualization of Canada's book history within wider frameworks; David Finkelstein's opinion that the entire project presents “a narrative arc charting not so much a national history as a trans-national history”<sup>37</sup> was echoed in Roger Osborne's review of Volume 3, which he felt will “make a significant contribution to the emerging interest in transnational histories of the book.”<sup>38</sup> Underlying these comments is the twenty-first century shift in book history from the national to the post/trans/inter/national. As the various English-language national projects released their first volumes in the 1990s, the turn of scholars to international aspects of the field became evident in books whose titles proclaim their scope: *Across Boundaries* (2000), *Worlds of Print* (2004), *Books Without Borders* (2008), *Books Between Europe and*

*the Americas* (2011), *The Book: A Global History* (2013) and the five-volume collection of essays, *History of the Book in the West* (2010). All include compelling arguments about the need to expand or overcome the boundaries of national book histories, to examine the overarching issues of international book history, and to examine concerns and entities that challenge national paradigms.

What is the place of Canada and of Canadian elements in this new enterprise, as it exists to date? WorldCat shows that the set of *HBiC* tomes is held by some 300 libraries around the world. The above named volumes contain more than 200 essays, three of which directly concern Canada, all written by participants in *HBiC*.<sup>39</sup> (As well, other essays in these volumes occasionally mention Canadian sites in relation to the US-based North American book trade.) The latest addition to this list, *The History of the Book in 100 Books* (2014), includes one significant title associated with Canada—James Evans’ prayerbook in Cree syllabics printed at Norway House in 1841—and passing reference to the Canadian origins of dime novel entrepreneur George P. Munro, whose fortune from his mass market publishing business in New York later sustained Dalhousie University.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps 1–1.5% is Canada’s due proportion of attention, in the grand scheme of things; we may occupy a lot of geographical space, but fewer people live here than in California. Or perhaps it just takes time to be noticed: in Leslie Howsam’s *Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book* (2015), two essays make use of *HBiC* to bring Canada into discussions of the international book trade and of bibliographical methodologies for book history.<sup>41</sup> As well, it is encouraging to see that Canadian scholars occasionally insert Canada into the international sphere by using Canadian examples in their discussion of general topics, as in many of the essays in Darcy Cullen’s *Editors, Scholars, and the Social Text* (2012)—notably Rosemary Shipton’s discussion of relationships between authors and editors—and in Alan Galey’s focus on Johanna Skibsrud’s *The Sentimentalist* in his analysis of bibliographical approaches to e-books.<sup>42</sup> But this is scarcely an international trend, and appearances of Canada in international publications are unpredictable. The healthy sprinkling of Canadian details in the *Oxford Companion to Book History* (2010) can likely be attributed to Patricia Fleming’s participation as an Associate Editor; this volume’s thematic index cites 55 references to Canada, in contrast to 40 for Australia and 21 for New Zealand.<sup>43</sup> In contrast, Martyn Lyons’ *A History of Reading and Writing in the*

*Western World* (2010) reflects its author's nationality in its attention to Australia and omission of Canada (albeit Burkina Faso makes an appearance). Although scholars sometimes dispute the view that national book history facilitates international book history,<sup>44</sup> the case of Canada suggests otherwise. Without the weighty *HBiC* volumes to show that Canada has a book history, we would likely receive even less attention from external scholars and editors.

Over the centuries, Canada has touched international communities of print in various dimensions. These include the textualization of many Indigenous languages, largely using the roman alphabet but also in the hieroglyphic script of the M'ikmaq (dating from 1676) as well as the syllabic script of the Cree (first printed by James Evans in 1840) which was soon adapted to create the Inuktitut syllabary in use today.<sup>45</sup> The many volumes of *Jesuit Relations* sent from New France to Paris during the seventeenth century were avidly read for information about the new world and also as travel literature. As a country composed largely of immigrants, Canada has fostered diasporic print cultures in scores of languages. In the twentieth century, Canadians invented the regional library system, pioneered in the 1930s in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia.<sup>46</sup> Before the era of the Man Booker Prize (won by Michael Ondaatje in 1992, Margaret Atwood in 2000, and Yann Martel in 2002), our international literary contributions ranged from John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" (1915), seldom identified as Canadian by the millions around the world who recite this poem every November 11th, to major interventions in popular culture likewise not often known to have originated in Canada. These include Ontario's Leslie MacFarlane, the first real person to write under the "Franklin W. Dixon" pseudonym credited as author of the Hardy Boys and other popular series produced by the American Stratemeyer syndicate,<sup>47</sup> and the global empire of Harlequin romances, which began in the middle of the Canadian Prairies and now has its headquarters in Toronto.<sup>48</sup> The last decades of the twentieth century saw the establishment of a number of international scholarly editorial projects in Canada, such as the Burney Centre at McGill and the Bertrand Russell Research Centre at McMaster.<sup>49</sup>

Let me conclude with two instances that show how the national and the international intersect in relation to the "here" of Canada: the first is a British book now canonized in Canada, and the second is a Canadian book

that is read around the world. Samuel Hearne's account of his extraordinary travels across the northern tundra, undertaken between 1769 and 1772 on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company, was posthumously published in London in 1795 as *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*. This record of a colonizing capitalistic enterprise reads as an adventure narrative replete with a climactic massacre, buttressed with encyclopedic anthropological and biological details to entertain and educate a curious British readership. Over the centuries, as British interest declined, the book was taken up as a classic Canadian tale of exploration, recounted for the general reader in 1958 by Farley Mowat and in several versions for juvenile readers.<sup>50</sup> At the literary level, it has inspired poetry and fiction; at the academic level, it remains in the spotlight as a contact narrative inflected by complications of authorship and production.<sup>51</sup>

My second example is L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*. Written and set in the tiny province of Prince Edward Island and first published in Boston in 1908, this engaging orphan novel is still read around the world and watched in its various dramatizations in nearly 40 languages by thousands of children who have little interest in the precise location of Anne's home (unless their parents take them on a pilgrimage to Green Gables Heritage Place in Prince Edward Island National Park). In the 1920s, the Anne series provided a test case for the rights of local printers in Australia.<sup>52</sup> By the time of her death in 1942, Montgomery had made a fortune from international sales; today, dedicated American, European and Japanese fans and scholars continue to probe every conceivable aspect of her writings and her life. Studies of the transformative nature of the book's translations and of the reception of *Anne Around the World* (to cite the title of a recent collection of articles)<sup>53</sup> demonstrate Montgomery's ongoing participation in transnational book history in line with the call from Martyn Lyons and Jean-Yves Mollier for greater emphasis on translation studies and the study of cultural transfers.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, the national context remains important for such issues as copyright, local culture, and national ideology, which shaped the content as well as the production and reception of Montgomery's two dozen books (as well as some 500 stories and a similar number of poems). National interest has also enabled the publication of her journals, scrapbooks, and correspondence—all prepared by Canadian scholars and issued by Canadian presses—as well as the ongoing biennial

Montgomery conferences at the University of Prince Edward Island that encourage national and international scholarship.

Writer Hugh MacLennan frequently cited a Hollywood movie mogul who explained to him that Canadian stories were unappealing because “Boy meets girl in Paris, France, that’s great. ... Boy meets girl in Winnipeg and who cares?”<sup>55</sup> One of the concerns of global book studies is to care about the Winnipegs and other distinctive locales in which writing and publishing and reading take place. It is evident that in creating a book history for Canada, *HBiC* carved out a small Canadian space on the international map of print culture. We invite the rest of the world to visit us here, more often.

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Carole Gerson is a professor in the department of English at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, BC. With Jacques Michon, she co-edited volume 3 (1918-1980) of *History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada*. Her extensive publications on Canada’s literary and cultural history focus on women writers, including the Mohawk poet, Pauline Johnson. Her recent book, *Canadian Women in Print, 1750-1918* (2010), which applies principles of print culture analysis to a wide range of authors, won the Gabrielle Roy Prize for Canadian criticism. In 2013 she received the Marie Tremaine medal from the Bibliographical Society of Canada.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Northrop Frye, *The Bush Garden* (Toronto: Anansi, 1971), 220.

<sup>2</sup> Ian R. Willison and John Y. Cole, “1998 International History of the Book Projects Roundup,” *SHARP News* 8.1 (Winter 1998-99), 6-7; Ian R. Willison and John Y. Cole, “1999 International History of Book Projects Roundup,” *SHARP News* 9.1 (Winter 1999-2000), 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> Willison and Cole, *SHARP News* 8.1, 6.

<sup>4</sup> See Sydney Shep, “Books in Global Perspectives,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*, ed. Leslie Howsam (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015), 53-70.

<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Gross, “Books, Nationalism, and History,” *PBSC/CSBC* 36.2 (1998): 107-23 (118-19).

<sup>6</sup> Michael Suarez, S.J., “Historiographical Problems and Possibilities in Book History and National Histories of the Book,” *Studies in Bibliography* 56 (2003/04): 141-170; Patricia Lockhart Fleming, “National Book Histories and the Legacy of *History of the Book in*



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Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada," *PBSC/CSBC* 46.1 (Spring 2008): 35-42 (42).

<sup>7</sup> The first volume of the History of the Book in America, *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, deals only with the original thirteen colonies. Hispanic print culture isn't discussed until the fourth volume (1880-1940), and all five volumes omit Alaska and Hawaii, which became states in 1959.

<sup>8</sup> William Barker, "Books and Reading in Newfoundland and Labrador," *HBiC* 1: 361-8.

<sup>9</sup> Jeremy Dibbell, rev of Fleming et al, *History of the Book in Canada* vols 1-3, *SHARP News* 20.3 (2011): 7-8 (8).

<sup>10</sup> Claudette Hould, "The livre d'artiste," *HBiC* 3: 372-4.

<sup>11</sup> Patricia Kennedy, "Scrip: Printing Eighteenth-Century Currency," *HBiC* 1: 227-9; John Hare, "An Election in the Press: Lower Canada, 1792," *HBiC* 1: 219-20; Patricia Lockhart Fleming, "Printing an Election: Upper Canada, 1836," *HBiC* 1, 220-2; Patricia Kennedy, "Printing for Public and Private Business," *HBiC* 1: 222-7; Eli MacLaren, "*Facies cholericæ*: The Record of Cholera in Print," *HBiC* 1: 303-6.

<sup>12</sup> John Willis, "Business by the Book: The Mail-Order Catalogue," *HBiC* 2: 412-3; Elizabeth Driver, "Cookbooks," *HBiC* 2: 408-11; Michel Brisebois, "Posters and Handbills," *HBiC* 2: 111-15.

<sup>13</sup> Eve Hemmungs Wirtén, "Surveying the (Battle)field: Book History, SHARP, and the Guerilla Tactics of Research," *SHARP News* 12.1 (Winter 2003): 4-5 (4).

<sup>14</sup> See Sydney Shep's account of Samuel Revans in her essay, "Imagining Post-National Book History," *PBSA* 104:2 (2010): 253-68 (262-65), and David Finkelstein, "Nineteenth-Century Print on the Move: A Perilous Study of Translocal Migration and Print Skills Transfer," in *The Perils of Print Culture*, ed. Jason McElligott and Eve Patten (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan 2014): 150-66.

<sup>15</sup> Jason McElligott and Eve Patten, "The Perils of Print Culture: An Introduction," *The Perils of Print Culture* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014): 1-16 (10).

<sup>16</sup> Eli MacLaren, *Dominion and Agency: Copyright and the Structuring of the Canadian Book Trade 1867-1918* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2011); Alison Rukavina, *The Development of the International Book Trade 1870-1895* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> While the overall American project includes attention to Spanish in vols 4 and 5, it omits other languages such as French and German.

<sup>18</sup> See Peter R. Frank, Johannes Frimmel and Murray G. Hall, "Book history in Austria," and Stijn van Rossem, "Book History in Belgium: who harbours the harbourless?," *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse boekgeschiedenis* 20 (2013): 79-88; 99-109.

<sup>19</sup> As a cultural entity, Quebec is not only more self-contained than English Canada but has also more thoroughly researched and documented itself, through such bodies as

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GRÉLQ (Groupe de recherche sur l'édition littéraire au Québec), founded in 1982 by Jacques Michon at the Université de Sherbrooke. At the government level, the mandate of the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) is to collect all Quebec imprints and publications concerning Quebec, maintaining a retrospective and current bibliography. Hence its catalogue offers an inclusive corpus that makes it possible to quantify genres, languages, authors, publishers, and the like, in line with *Annales* methodology. For the rest of Canada, there is no similar resource.

<sup>20</sup> Fernande Roy, rev of *HBiC*, vol 3, *Mens: revue d'histoire intellectuelle de l'Amérique française*, 9.2 (2009): 275-82 (277-78).

<sup>21</sup> Patricia Lockhart Fleming, "National Book Histories and the Legacy of *History of the Book in Canada/Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada*," *PBSC/CSBC* 46.1 (April 2008), 41.

<sup>22</sup> The term entered Canada's national discourse via John Murray Gibbon, *The Canadian Mosaic: The Making of A Northern Nation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1938).

<sup>23</sup> Catherine Owen, "Allophone Publishing," *HBiC* 3: 297-304 (301). Particularly helpful was the *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, whose timely appearance in 1999 documented the recent dramatic shifts in Canada's cultural identity. The editors of this hefty volume identified 119 ethnocultural groups, one of which—Aboriginal Peoples—is subdivided into twelve sections.

<sup>24</sup> Stephen Leacock, *My Discovery of the West* (Toronto: Allen, 1937), 157-8.

<sup>25</sup> Paul Hjartarson, "Icelandic Authorship in Canada," *HBiC* 2: 136-9.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Schonberg, "Sixty Eight Publishers." Historical Perspectives on Canadian Publishing. <http://hpcanpub.mcmaster.ca/case-study/sixty-eight-publishers>; accessed 15 June 2015.

<sup>27</sup> The phrase comes from the title of Thomas Symons' report: *To Know Ourselves: the Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies*. Ottawa, ON: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1975.

<sup>28</sup> Wirtén, "Surveying the (Battle)field: Book History, SHARP, and the Guerilla Tactics of Research," *SHARP News* 12.1 (Winter 2003): 4-5 (5).

<sup>29</sup> Bertrum MacDonald, "Print in the Backwoods," *HBiC* 1: 184-87.

<sup>30</sup> See Fiona A Black, "Construing the Space of Print Culture: Book Historians' Visualization Preferences," in *Geographies of the Book*, ed. Miles Ogborn and Charles W.J. Withers (Farnham Surrey; Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2010), 79-108; the website for the Modern Magazines Project is [modmag.ca](http://modmag.ca).

<sup>31</sup> Julie Roy, "Le réseau épistolaire comme horizon d'écriture au tournant du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle: des «protoscriptrices» canadiennes en quête de visibilité." <http://egodoc.revues.org/octobre2002/docs/D987612/VS987712.htm>.

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<sup>32</sup> Other student researchers who have gone on to significant careers include Sarah Brouillette and Travis de Cook, both on faculty at Carleton University, and Frédéric Brisson, now Director of the Regroupement des éditeurs canadiens-français.

<sup>33</sup> A significant milestone is the founding of the Indigenous Literary Studies Association in 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Germaine Warkentin, "In Search of 'The Word of the Other': Aboriginal Sign Systems and the History of the Book in Canada," *Book History* 2 (1999): 1-27.

<sup>35</sup> Trish Loughran, "Books in the Nation," *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*, ed. Leslie Howsam (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2015): 36-52 (48-51).

<sup>36</sup> From their grant application, quoted with permission.

<sup>37</sup> David Finkelstein, "Cold Type," rev of *HBiC*, vols 1-3. *TLJ* (14 Sept 2007): 22-23 (23).

<sup>38</sup> Roger Osborne, rev of *HBiC*, vol 3. *University of Toronto Quarterly* 78.1 (2009): 368-69 (368).

<sup>39</sup> Fiona A. Black, "Beyond Boundaries: Books in the Canadian Northwest," in *Across Boundaries*, ed. Bill Bell, Philip Benet and Jonquil Bevan (Winchester, Hampshire, UK: St Paul's Bibliographies; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2000), 91-115; François Melançon, "Print and Manuscript in French Canada under the Ancien Régime," in *Books between Europe and the Americas: Connections and Communities, 1620-1860* ed. Leslie Howsam, and James Raven (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 83-103; Patricia Lockhart Fleming, "Canada," in *The Book: A Global History*, ed. Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen (Oxford UP, 2013): 670-81. The latter initially appeared in the *Oxford Companion to Book History* (2010).

<sup>40</sup> "Missionary Printing in Canada" and "Pulp Fiction, Victorian Style," Robert Cave and Sara Ayad, *The History of the Book in 100 Books* (Buffalo NY: Firefly Books 2014): 188-89, 193; Judith Fingard, "MUNRO, GEORGE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, accessed June 20, 2015, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/munro\\_george\\_12E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/munro_george_12E.html).

<sup>41</sup> Alistair McCleery, "The Book in the Long Twentieth Century"; Katherine Bode and Roger Osborne, "Book History from the Archival Record," both in *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*, ed. Leslie Howsam (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015): 162-180, 219-36.

<sup>42</sup> Rosemary Shipton, "The Mysterious Relationship: Authors and Their Editors," in *Editors, Scholars, and the Social Text*, ed. Darcy Cullen (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2012): 44-66; Alan Galey, "The Enkindling Reciter: E-Books in the Bibliographical Imagination," *Book History* 15 (2012), 210-47.

<sup>43</sup> Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woodhuysen, eds., *The Oxford Companion to the Book* vol 1 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010), xxix-xlvii.

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<sup>44</sup> Rukavina, *The Development of the International Book Trade*, 8.

<sup>45</sup> “Inuktitut syllabary.” *Omniglot: The On-line Encyclopedia of Writing Systems and Languages*.” <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/inuktitut.htm>; accessed 17 August 2015.

<sup>46</sup> Lorne Bruce and Elizabeth Hanson, “The Rise of the Public Library in English Canada,” *HBiC* 3: 429-35.

<sup>47</sup> Marilyn S. Greenwald, *The Secret of the Hardy Boys: Leslie McFarlane and the Stratemeyer Syndicate* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio UP, 2004).

<sup>48</sup> Archana Rampure, “‘Harlequin Has Built an Empire,’” *HBiC* 3: 185-8.

<sup>49</sup> For Burney see <http://burneycentre.mcgill.ca/index.html>; for Russell see <http://russell.mcmaster.ca/brproject.htm>.

<sup>50</sup> Farley Mowat, *Coppermine Journey* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1958, rpt 1990); juvenile versions include Ronald Syme, *On Foot to the Arctic* (New York: William Morrow, 1959), and Mary Hamilton, *The Sky Caribou* (Toronto: Peter Martin, 1980).

<sup>51</sup> See John Newlove’s poem “Samuel Hearne in Wintertime” and Don Gutteridge’s suite of poems *Coppermine: The Quest for North*, Pauline Holdstock’s novel, *Into the Heart of the Country*, and the many articles about the book by I.S. MacLaren.

<sup>52</sup> Richard Nile and David Walker, “The ‘Paternoster Row Machine’ and the Australian Book Trade, 1890-1945,” in *A History of the Book in Australia* vol 2, ed. Martyn Lyons and John Arnold (St. Lucia: U of Queensland P, 2001), 3-18 (14).

<sup>53</sup> Jane Ledwell and Jean Mitchell, ed., *Anne Around the World: L.M. Montgomery and Her Classic* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2013) includes articles about Montgomery’s publication and reception in Iran, Chile, Turkey, Sweden, and Japan. Irene Gammel discusses Iran, China, Japan and Germany in “An Enchanting Girl: International Portraits of Anne’s Cultural Transfer,” in *Anne’s World: A New Century of Anne of Green Gables*, ed. Gammel and Benjamin Lefebvre (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2010).

<sup>54</sup> Martyn Lyons et Jean-Yves Mollier, “L’histoire du livre dans une perspective transculturelle,” *Histoire et Civilisation du Livre. Revue internationale*, no.8 (Nov 2012): 9-20.

<sup>55</sup> Hugh MacLennan, *On Being a Maritime Writer* (Sackville, NB: Centre for Canadian Studies, Mt Allison University, 1984), 23. The anecdote first appeared in his essay, “Boy Meets Girl in Winnipeg and Who Cares,” *Scotchman’s Return and Other Essays* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1960).

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