



Special points of interest:

- First Annual Canada Week
- Canadian Poet Fred Wah to visit BSU
- British Columbia and Yukon Summer Research Institute Review
- Canadian Studies Course Offerings

FALL, 2003



CANADIAN STUDIES PROGRAM
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Canadian Studies Newsletter

Boise State University in the Pacific Northwest Canadian Studies Consortium

Boise State University is a founding member of the Pacific Northwest Canadian Studies Consortium (PNWCSC) organized in late 1986 and 1987 at meetings in Seattle and Friday Harbor, Washington. The organization and program at Boise State University serves as a clearing house for information about Canadian Studies programs, sponsors and organizes conferences and training activities, provides technical assistance to Canadian Studies programs and faculties, enhances the acquisition and sharing of library resources, organizes faculty and student exchange programs, encourages research on Canada, establishes and maintains appropriate



Map of Canada

relations with other Canadian Studies organizations, and secures funding to support its activities. The organization has grown from 16 institutional members at its founding to 36 active members at present. Boise State University represents the Idaho on the Executive Board of the PNWCSC. The Canadian Studies program at Boise State University sponsors a variety of programs including a Canadian Studies Speakers series and a film series. The Canadian Studies program offers a minor in Canadian Studies as an important compliment to many programs including anthropology, business, communications, history, and political science.

First Annual Canada Week

On April 7-11, 2003, the BSU Canadian Studies Program initiated its first annual Canada Week to celebrate the Idaho-Canada relationship through a series of business, cultural, artistic, and educational programs. Fifteen programs were offered including a seminar on "Doing Business in Canada" sponsored by the Department of Commerce, Idaho State Department of Agriculture, and the Idaho Export Council. The week began with a reception hosted by the Canadian Consulate General, Seattle and attended by local businessmen, state legislators, and by Governor Kempthorne.



Governor and Mrs. Kempthorne with Honorable Roger Simmons, Consul General of Canada, Seattle, and Consulate Staff

Canadian Speakers Series Features Canadian Poet Fred Wah

The Canadian Lecture Series and the BSU English Department Graduate Writing Program bring award winning Canadian poet, critic, and memoir writer Fred Wah to the Log Cabin Literary Center October 9, 2003 at 7:30 PM. Dr. Wah is a former professor of English at the University of Calgary, the winner of Canada's Governor General's award for poetry, and the former editor of several major Canadian literary journals including *Tish* and *West Coast Line*. Dr. Wah will be reading from his poetry and memoir *Diamond Grill* about growing up multiculturally in Western Canada.

British Columbia and Yukon Summer Research Institute

Ross Burkhardt, Associate Professor
Department of Political Science

I was fortunate to spend nearly a fortnight (9-20 July) in Alberta at the Alberta Summer Research Institute, organized by the Canadian Consulate in Seattle under the able direction of Kevin Cook (Chief Political, Economic, and Academic Officer) and sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Canadian Studies Consortium (to which BSU is a charter member). I was generously supported by the Canadian Studies program at BSU in my travels as well. The journey was simply fantastic. Eleven of us academics, from diverse disciplines (archaeology, environmental studies, history, marketing, political science, social studies), all had as our common purpose the desire to incorporate Canadian content into our teaching and research. Thus, in our seminars and activities, we were seeking a goodly dose of Canada, Western Canada more particularly, and Alberta most specifically. And we got it, in spades! Our travels took us, essentially, in a giant, 2500km loop from Calgary west and north to the Canadian Rockies in Banff and Jasper, east to the provincial capital Edmonton, to the far northern boreal forests and the oil sands operation in Fort McMurray, then to the far southwestern edge of the province in Lethbridge and back to Calgary.

What we saw and personally experienced could not be duplicated in a classroom or on film, though we will try to convey to our students the excitement of our discovering a vast and rich land. Alberta is a province teeming in natural resources, especially oil and natural gas. It is the third leading exporter of crude oil to the US and supplied 2/3 of US natural gas imports in 2002. These facts were told to us in visits to the corporate offices of Alliance Pipeline in Calgary and Enbridge Pipeline in Edmonton, as well as at the Syncrude Oil Sands extraction operation in Fort McMurray, the largest oil sands operation in the world. Two other economic points that were impressed upon us in visits to agricultural research labs at the University of Alberta in Edmonton and Lethbridge were the importance of agriculture to the Alberta economy (wheat, canola, barley, and an alliance with Idaho in potato research and production), and the utter dependency of Alberta on exports to the US. Over

88% of Alberta's exports were to the US in 2002. When the US closed the border to shipments of beef from Alberta during the BSE crisis in early summer (when one cow on an Alberta farm was adjudged to have the "mad cow" disease), it had a devastating effect on the Alberta farm economy. I was interviewed by CBC Radio and the *Lethbridge Herald* while on tour, and in both interviews this subject came up. Canadians were genuinely curious as to the US thinking on the issue. There was much more to the trip than discussions of economics. We toured the Alberta Legislature building, which houses nearly 100 years of provincial parliamentary political history, including the mace that is used to open each daily session of the Legislative Assembly. The original mace was constructed in haste as the Members realized they needed one, and a local man built it, using as its parts a spare bedpost and its figurines as well as a toilet plunger! Alberta's provincial politics



has been dominated by the Progressive Conservative Party, it holding 74 of the 83 Legislative Assembly seats. The Calgary Mayor's office was also happy to receive us, and we entered into a Western city-by-city comparison of taxation. Boise, surprisingly, has taxation policy more akin to Canadian cities such as Calgary than it does to other US cities.

We were housed mainly on university campuses throughout the tour, staying at the University of Calgary, the University of Alberta, the University of Lethbridge, and for one special evening The Banff Centre in Banff in the simply stunning Canadian Rockies. That evening was special because, after touring the Banff Centre and being awed by its location and arts-based programs and facilities (and hearing the great cellist Shauna Rolston in rehearsal for free!), we ate a five-course dinner at the Banff Springs Hotel, one of the famous Canadian Pacific Railroad hotels constructed in the late 19th century as the CPR made its way westward across the then Northwest Territory land of present-day Alberta and British Columbia. It will be hard to top such offerings as rabbit rillettes, smoked salmon mousse, cedar roasted sable fish, and Riesling ice wine. This was one of the great meals of our lives!

We heartily absorbed the expertise of many academics who made presentations at each of these campuses, learning a great deal about Canadian solutions to problems such as health care, national identity, First Nations accommodation of land claims (an ongoing issue whose complexity we glimpsed at a memorable day on the Blood Reserve near Cardston),

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Continued on page 3...

Continued from page 2...

carrying for the homeless population (as seen through the eyes of those at the Calgary Drop-In Centre) legal reasoning on issues such as same-sex marriage, and learning the ethnographic history of the Blackfoot First Nation. Also contributing to our intellectual experience were tours of excellent museums such as the Glenbow Museum in Calgary and the Provincial Museum in Edmonton, each of which were featuring aboriginal displays on the Nitsitapiisinni peoples. Alberta is both a modern province and one that is taking an interest in its antiquity.

The “fun and games” portion of the journey was as intense as the intellectual portion. We walked around the enormity of the Calgary Stampede. We climbed glaciers in the Columbia Ice Fields and stared into the utter turquoise waters of

Peyto Lake in the ice fields. We dug for dinosaur bones at a day-dig in Drumheller, where more complete dinosaur skeletons have been constructed than at any other site in North America. We saw the remains of the town of Frank, which disappeared under a mammoth rockslide that collapsed half of an adjacent mountain in 1903. We stood next to the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump and pondered the image of a herd of buffalo stampeding off of a cliff to their deaths and to a joyous slaughter of a winter’s supply of meat and hides for the Blackfeet. To get to the fun, we traveled many kilometers by motor coach, during which to amuse ourselves we would play the “Name the City” game for some 30 rounds. We plain enjoyed ourselves, the hospitality of our many hosts, and recognized that moment as well as those of the rest of our tour as a special introduction to our northern neighbor. O Canada, O Alberta.

Canadian Literature: A Very Concise Primer

Norman Weinstein, Instructor
Department of English

Canadian literature is both very old and very new. It is as old as the oral literature shared for centuries by Native Canadians in their variety of languages. It is as old as new books by Margaret Atwood or new songs in poetic form by Leonard Cohen. It has attracted a huge international readership in the last half century. And there are millions who have seen the film *The English Patient* who have a vague sense that it was transformed from a novel, but don’t realize that the novelist is Michael Ondaatje, one of Canada’s most honored writers.

Canadian literature reflects the geography of Canada, the second largest nation on earth. It also clearly reflects the multiculturalism permeating Canada’s population. A fact less noted is the fact that it is a literature written in a variety of languages. Quebec’s literature is usually written in French, Native Canadian literature is written in over a dozen different languages currently, and even Canadian literature in English is written in Canadian-English. Look at *The Oxford Book of Canadian-English Usage* for an overview of subtle but notable differences between the English used by authors in the U.S. and those in Canada.

It is a wonderful source of education and enlightenment — about the human condition in general as well as about Canada and Canadians in particular. Like all great literature it offers “equipment for living,” as the phrase was coined by the critic Kenneth Burke. It teaches lessons about how to live, what really matters beneath the everyday surfaces of life. It should be better known both in the United States and Canada and will be. Courses in this literature are spreading, and some future Academy Award winning film might just be an adaptation from a Canadian writer’s opus. Meantime, lovers of literature in this country can nourish their souls well by directing their reading habits due north.

CANADIAN STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS:

Fall 2003 Course Offerings

- CANSTD 101 **Canada: Land and People**, David Christensen, (3 credit course)
- CANSTD 297 **Canadian Literature**, Norman Weinstein (3 credit course)
- CANSTD 494/594 **Ice Age Mammals of North America**, Christopher Hill, (1 credit workshop, Oct. 25 & 26)

Spring 2004 Course Offerings

- CANSTD 102 **Contemporary Canada**, David Christensen (3 credit course)
- CANSTD 497 **Special Topics: Women in the Pacific Northwest and Canada**, Sandra Schackel (3 credit course)
- CANSTD 494/594 **US-Canada Relations: Impact of NAFTA**, Ross Burkhart (1 credit workshop, Jan. 13-Feb. 12)
- CANSTD 494/594 **Discover Canada via Canadian Jazz Composers**, Norman Weinstein (1 credit workshop, Mar. 13 & 14)



Canadian literature...clearly reflects the multiculturalism permeating Canada's population.

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2003-2004 Canadian Studies Scholarship

Kimberly S. Wing, a senior majoring in Health Information Management and minoring in Canadian Studies, is the recipient of the 2003-2004 Canadian Studies Scholarship.

In order to be eligible for the Canadian Studies Scholarship, a student must have taken CANSTD 101 and 102, have a 3.0 GPA, and officially declare the minor through the Registrar's office.

BSU Canadian Studies Program Receives Program Enhancement Grant for 2003-2004

The BSU Canadian Studies Program received a \$4900 (CDN) grant from the Canadian government in support of programs which enhance student, faculty and public awareness of Canada and Canadian issues.

Canadian Studies Grant Programs

The Canadian government provides support to faculty, students, and institutions who wish to conduct research in or about Canada or develop programs leading to discussion and increased awareness of Canadian culture, society, values and issues. Individual grants include research grants, faculty enrichment grants which support travel to Canada for purposes of study and graduate student, and senior fellowship programs supporting Canadian research. Institutional grants include program enhancement grants, matching grants and a conference grant program. Faculty and students interested in receiving grant application materials should address queries to:

Dr. Mark Plew, mplew@boisestate.edu, 208-426-3444.

- 2003-2004 Research Grant Program deadline is September 30, 2003
- 2003-2004 Graduate Student Fellowship Program deadline is October 31, 2003
- 2003-2004 Faculty Enrichment Grant deadline is October 31, 2003
- 2004-2005 Program Enhancement Grant deadline is June 14, 2004
- 2004-2005 Conference Grant Program deadline is June 14, 2004