

Canadian Literature Symposium 2009

PROGRAMME

Double-Takes: Intersections between Canadian Literature and Film

Friday, May 1st.

4:00 - 7:00 Registration in English Department Foyer (3d Floor, Arts Hall, 70 Laurier Ave., East)

7:30 - 9:00 Welcome, Frans De Bruyn, Department Chair

Opening Address

Paul Quarrington (Toronto): "But . . . That Is Not What I Wrote!" (ARTS 257)

Introduced by Gerald Lynch (U. Ottawa)

9:00 - 10:30 Wine and Cheese Reception (ARTS 509)

Saturday, May 2nd.

9:00 - 10:30 **Session One: Consider the Source**

Chair: Jordan Berard (U. Ottawa)

Albert Braz (U. Alberta): "The Director's Medium: Richard Attenborough's De-Authorization of Grey Owl"

Christa Zeller Thomas (U. Ottawa): "Superstars in the Wilderness: The Double Mediation of Susanna Moodie's Roughing It in the Bush and Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada"

Jessica Duffin Wolfe (U. Toronto): "Visual Realism in the Wild: Ernest Thompson Seton's Anticipation of Documentary Film"

10:45 - 12:00 **Session Two: "Leading Lights" (I): Filming Alice Munro**

Chair: Marissa McHugh (U. Ottawa)

Nadine Fladd (U. Western Ontario): "Stunning and Strange': Iceland as Memory and Prophecy in Alice Munro's 'The Bear Came Over the Mountain' and Sarah Polley's Away from Her"

Robert McGill (Harvard U.): "Fidelity, Nation, Adaptation: 'The Bear Came Over the Mountain' and Away from Her"

12:15 - 1:30 Lunch (Jazzy Restobar)

1:30 - 2:30 **Plenary Presentation (I)**

Peter Dickinson (Simon Fraser U.): "Reading Canadian Film Credits: Adapting Institutions, Systems, and Affects"

Introduced by David Jarraway (U. Ottawa)

2:45 - 4:00 **Session Three: The "Poetry" of Film**

Chair: Sue Bowness (U. Ottawa)

Peter Webb (Concordia U.): "Raspberries for Hitler: Chaplin's The Great Dictator and Klein's The Hitleriad"

Tania Aguila-Way (U. Ottawa): "Griersonian 'Actuality' and Social Protest in Dorothy Livesay's Documentary Poems"

Andrew Burke (U. Winnipeg): "The Nature of Things: Coupland, Cinema and the Canadian Seventies"

4:15 - 5:30 **Session Four: Double-Trouble (I): Personal and National Identity**

Chair: Sara Frampton (U. Ottawa)

Ruth Bradley-St.Cyr (U. Ottawa): "Sisters in the Wilderness: The Mythologizing of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill"

Brian Johnson and Jennifer Henderson (Carleton U.): "Maddin, Melodrama, and the 'Pre-National'"

Tanis MacDonald (Wilfrid Laurier U.): "‘Something’s Missing’: Exploding Girlhood in The Tracey Fragments"

7:30 - 10:30 Symposium Banquet (Byward Market Venue T.B.A.)

Banquet Address

Katherine Monk (CanWest News): "Why Sex Really Matters to Canadian Literature and Cinema"

Introduced by Carmela Coccimiglio (U. Ottawa)

Sunday, May 3rd.

9:00 - 10:30 **Session Five: Lost in Translation?**

Chair: Markus Bohlmann (U. Ottawa)

Bradley Clissold (Memorial U.): "The Functional Rhetoric of High Modernism in The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz"

Katherine McLeod (U. Toronto): "Filming Music: Adapting Transnational Sound in The English Patient and Fugitive Pieces"

Kathleen Patchell (U. Ottawa): "Sullivan Entertainment’s Secularization of Anne of Green Gables"

10:45 - 12:00 **Session Six: "Leading Lights" (II): Filming Mordecai Richler**

Chair: Paul Graves (U. Ottawa)

Natalia Vesselova (U. Ottawa): "Why They Cannot Get It Right: A Reader’s Notes about Richler on Screen"

Angela Arnold (Independent Scholar): "‘A Regular Prince among Men’: Judging Duddy Kravitz"

12:15 - 1:30 Buffet Lunch (Glen Clever Room)

1:30 - 2:30 **Plenary Presentation (II)**

Jim Leach (Brock U.): "The National-Realist Text: Imagining the Impossible Nation in Contemporary Canadian Cinema"

Introduced by Mary Arseneau (U. Ottawa)

2:45 - 4:15 **Session Seven: "Adaptation": Successes and Failures**

Chair: Jennifer Blair (U. Ottawa)

Christine Evain (École Centrale de Nantès): "Narrative Structure and Narrative Voices in The English Patient Film and Novel: A Comparative Study"

Carmela Coccimiglio (U. Ottawa): "[I]t’s my nature”: The Role of Hagar Shipley’s Pride in The Stone Angel Novel and Film"

Gregory Betts (Brock U.): "Dialogic Phantasy in Three Adaptations by Bruce McDonald"

John O’Connor (U. Toronto): "As for Sinclair Ross’s Unfilmed ‘House’: The Failed Cinematic Adaptations of As For Me and My House"

4:30 - 5:30 **Session Eight: Double-Trouble (II): Gender and Sexuality**

Chair: Jessica Fuchs (U. Ottawa)

Sylvain Duguay (Concordia U.): "Dulling the Edge: Adapting Queer Audacity from Stage to Screen"

Elsbeth Tulloch (U. Laval): "Adapting Men to New Times: Engagements with Masculinity in Jacques Godbout’s IXE-13 and John Howe’s Why Rock the Boat?"

5:45 - 6:30 **Concluding Film Critics’ Roundtable**

Sandra Abma (CBC TV "Arts Report"), Chair

Geoff Pevere (Toronto Star)

Katherine Monk (CanWest News)

Jay Stone (Ottawa Citizen)

ABSTRACTS OF KEYNOTE SPEAKERS and INVITED PRESENTERS

“But...that is not what I wrote!”

Paul Quarrington, Toronto

Several years ago, Paul Quarrington's Governor General's Award-winning novel *Whale Music* was made into a feature film. Quarrington himself wrote the screenplay—more exactly, he wrote or co-wrote any number of drafts, usually working with the prospective directors. (Atom Egoyan was associated with the project for several months; ultimately it was made by Richard J. Lewis, a [then] young hot-shot with an armful of awards.) Quarrington became intrigued with the problems of book-to-screen adaptation. In this presentation he will detail the process, as well as consider many questions: how do you choose what to leave out, films being much smaller than novels?; how do you approximate the Voice, which supplies fiction with its subtextual basis?; what obligations does the screenwriter have to the original writer or his/her audience? The presentation will be accompanied by film clips from *Whale Music*; as well, Quarrington will show *Pavane*, the short film he made in 2008 based on his novel *The Ravine*.

Reading Canadian Film Credits: Adapting Institutions, Systems, and Affects

Peter Dickinson, Simon Fraser University

In this paper I approach the question of film adaptation's *credibility* by developing the multiple meanings of “credit” (belief in a story; acknowledgement of services rendered; extending financial payment). I first review the institutional structures at work in the issuing of tax credits for Canadian-made films, focusing on the tax-shelter era of the 1970s and 80s, and on current proposed amendments to Bill C-10. In the second section I turn my attention to the star system in Canada, looking at the ways in which the casting of certain actors in high-profile adaptations is employed to add further lustre to these projects. Finally, I examine how we credit (or don't credit) our affective responses to film by discussing various anti-normative emotions that are in some senses constitutive of a larger theory of post-AIDS queer spectatorship, and that coalesce around a series of film shorts adapted from literature.

Why Sex Really Matters to Canadian Cinema

Katherine Monk, Vancouver Sun

The recent flurry over sex and perceived obscenity in Canadian cinema isn't new. Canadian lawmakers, cultural organizations and most of all Canadian filmmakers have been wrestling with the role and profile of sex on screen for decades. From the moment Linda Lee Tracey's *Not a Love Story* explored the nooks and crannies of the pornography industry from a female point of view, Canadians have taken a decidedly different stance on images of sexuality - one that arguably sets us apart from the rest of the world. Canadian writers and directors have demonstrated an ability to see sex as magical, loving act - as well as social yoke designating place and status. By pulling at the root imagery surrounding the sexual act, Canadians have succeeded in not only questioning the status quo, we've pulled apart one of the most controversial elements of modern cinema, and modern society, with clinical elegance. This presentation will look at significant moments of sex on screen, the public's reaction, and why we need to embrace the sexual embrace as something more than sex: It may well be the symbol of our very nation.

The National-Realist Text: Imagining the Impossible Nation in Contemporary Canadian Cinema

Jim Leach, Brock University

“Nation” and “realism” are two of the most contested terms in contemporary film studies, not least in critical discussions of Canadian cinema. In my book *Film in Canada*, I coupled these terms to characterize the project of John Grierson when he came to Canada in 1939 as the first commissioner of the National Film Board. This project was based on a wager that documentary realism could prove the existence of Canada as a nation. I was drawing an analogy with Antonio Gramsci's concept of the “national-popular,” and the tradition of realism in Canadian cinema has often been seen as an obstacle to the creation of a popular cinema, to the point that Canadian cinema comes to seem non-existent to many filmgoers. In this paper, I want to develop further some of the implications of the linkage between nation and realism and to

explore the way this tradition has been adapted and contested in the work of three major Canadian directors: Atom Egoyan, Denys Arcand, and Guy Maddin.

ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTERS

Griersonian “Actuality” and Social Protest in Dorothy Livesay's Documentary Poems

Tania Aguila-Way, University of Ottawa

Beginning in the late 1930s, Dorothy Livesay wrote a series of socially significant radioplays for the CBC. However, her involvement with the radio breached two of the central priorities of the high modernist project - its emphasis on the need to police the boundary between “high” and “mass” culture and prevent the “misuse of art for political effect” (Goldman 14). I argue that Livesay legitimized her foray into “mass” culture by aligning herself with the Griersonian tradition of documentary cinema, framing her radioplays as literary incarnations of the “experimentations originally made by Grierson in film” (“Documentary” 269). After tracing the aesthetic and political motivations behind Livesay’s appropriation of the Griersonian documentary, I explore the representational and ideological tensions that resulted from this cross-media migration, exploring the possibility that Livesay’s manifest aim to create documentaries charged with “political criticism” (“Overview” 128) was hijacked by residual elements of the hegemonizing pedagogical impulses present in Grierson’s original model.

“A regular prince among men”: Judging Duddy Kravitz

Angela Arnold, Independent Scholar

It’s been said that Mordecai Richler’s best fiction produces a kind of multi-focal effect, a blurring of image that emphasizes the problems of judging. The film version of Richler’s *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* suggests that effect, drawing viewers into a sympathetic relationship with Duddy while simultaneously forcing them to adopt a critical perspective. Viewers’ responses to Richard Dreyfuss’s portrayal of this troubled and troubling young man are influenced by cinematic tools that coax them into exercising their judgment. In fact, the success of the film can be attributed in part to the relative ease in which the novel’s provocative textual strategies are effectively translated into filmic ones. This paper examines the connection between readership and spectatorship, indicating the ways in which both novel and film encourage audiences to sit in judgment of Duddy, thereby becoming aware of how difficult it is to establish a code by which to live honourably in the modern world.

Dialogic Phantasy in Three Adaptations by Bruce McDonald

Gregory Betts, Brock University

In his article contesting the importance of fidelity to analysis of cinematic adaptations of literary sources, Robert Stam concedes one important exception to his *post*-fidelity theory: a feeling of “outraged negativity” that occurs as the private phantasy of a symbolic literary narrative is externalized and rigidified in a particular cinematic representation. Similarly, while contemporary scholars of Canadian literary adaptations almost uniformly begin their analysis with an explicit rejection of fidelity for its moralistic appeal and implications, they generally also strive to develop a comparative framework that includes the study of conscious deviation and alteration of the narrative. My paper will discuss how three adaptations (two feature-length and one short) by Canadian independent filmmaker Bruce McDonald — *Dance Me Outside* (1995), *Hard Core Logo* (1996), and *Elimination Dance* (1998) — anticipate the feeling of violation of personal phantasies of literary works by thematically integrating the discourse of fidelity (and phantasy) into his adaptations.

Sisters in the Wilderness: The Mythologizing of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill

Ruth Bradley-St. Cyr, University of Ottawa

Often called the “grandmothers of Canadian Literature” Catharine Parr Traill and Susanna Moodie certainly clung tenaciously to the writing gift, despite backwoods conditions and roughing it to make a life in the new world. Most Canadians, however, seem to have learned about the life and writings of Traill and Moodie from Charlotte Gray’s joint biography, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Lives of Susanna Moodie and*

Catharine Parr Traill (1999) and the film that followed in 2004. This paper attempts to chart the evolution of the mythologizing of Traill and Moodie that has culminated in the *Sisters in the Wilderness* film. Do we admire Traill and Moodie simply because they were tough and persevered? Or do we actually admire them for the books they produced? Are Traill and Moodie really “not for modern readers,” as Gray suggests, or has she done them a complete disservice?

The Director's Medium: Richard Attenborough's De-Authorization of *Grey Owl*

Albert Braz, University of Alberta

Richard Attenborough's 1999 film *Grey Owl* raises a series of questions about the relation between cinema and literature. While the film claims to be “based on a true story,” it never identifies its source, or sources. The sole screenwriter listed is William Nicholson, yet anyone familiar with Grey Owl's writings will recognize that the film borrows extensively from his best-selling memoir *Pilgrims of the Wild*. It is possible that the reason Attenborough (or Nicholson) conceals the conservationist's authorial contribution to *Grey Owl* is that the film is divided against itself, both sanitizing the protagonist's story and suggesting that his transformation from an Englishman into an Indian is transparent. However, the more likely explanation is that cinema is a director's medium, and directors like to entertain the illusion that they are always the authors of the narratives they film.

The Nature of Things: Coupland, Cinema and the Canadian Seventies

Andrew Burke, University of Winnipeg

Objects occupy a privileged place in the work of Douglas Coupland. From the commodity landscapes that populate his fiction to the nationalist bric-à-brac that clutters the *Souvenir of Canada* project, Coupland has long been interested in how seemingly inert things can generate intense affective force and be subject to all manner of passionate attachment. This paper examines the convergence of cultural memory, everyday materiality, and the national past in Coupland's work. It focuses on how nostalgia for the nation emerges at the moment of globalization and details some of the political problems inherent in such sentimentalizations, but also considers the way in which everyday objects can serve as the vehicle for the affective reconstruction of a disappearing world, both personal and public. This fascination with residual objects, I argue, need not necessarily be understood as politically retrogressive, but rather is something that reveals the limits and losses of the present.

The Functional Rhetoric of High Modernism in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*

Bradley Clissold, Memorial University

Ted Kotcheff's 1974 film adaptation of Mordecai Richler's *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* effectively stages how encounters with avant-garde modernist cultural production—in the form of the Cohen bar mitzvah film-within-the-film—create their own socio-economic demand through a conspicuous niche marketing of symbolic capital—the honor, prestige, and recognition that accompanies elite cultural products and functions to legitimize their privileged cultural status. As an object of art that foregrounds innovatively fragmented aesthetics (rapid montage editing that strangely juxtaposes divergent images) and difficult reception (because it refuses to adhere to expected conventions of narrative continuity and traditions of home movies), the film noticeably unnerves its first audience. My paper will investigate how this particular scene functions from textual adaptation to screen presentation to highlight (with irony) vernacular modernist reception practices, as well as the paradoxical commitments of modernist cultural production that rely on an apparent hostility towards mass culture to increase its perceived values, both economic and aesthetic.

“[I]t's my nature”: The Role of Hagar Shipley's Pride in *The Stone Angel* Novel and Film

Carmela Coccimiglio, University of Ottawa

Margaret Laurence's 1964 novel *The Stone Angel* follows Hagar Shipley who, at age 90, is lately “rampant with memory” (Laurence 5). In particular, she recalls memories which point to her prideful nature. Pride has led Hagar to make choices that turned out to be damaging, even lethal, to herself and others. The structure of the novel, with its parallelisms between events that Hagar recollects and her actions in the present time, functions as the vehicle by which Hagar can retrospectively see the damage that her pride has caused and its continued effects in the present, thereby allowing her to acknowledge and, to a degree, resolve past mistakes before she passes away. Kari Skogland's recent adaptation of the novel for the screen

illustrates a similar narrative trajectory; however, I will argue that the film fails to register the full depth of Hagar's pride. With the exclusion of several telling scenes from the novel, the film's attempt to centrally locate Hagar's pride by reminding viewers of the novel's most potent symbol echoed in its title may be, in the end, as hollow as the angel's eyes.

Visual Realism in the Wild: Ernest Thompson Seton's Anticipation of Documentary Film

Jessica Duffin Wolfe, University of Toronto

This paper interrogates Ernest Thompson Seton's construction of realism in *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898), and historicizes his innovation in genre by placing his work as an early incident in the history of Canadian documentary film. Seton introduces his work as a collection of near-documentary stories about the lives of animals. Since his animal characters do not speak, he is widely credited with the invention of the non-anthropomorphizing animal story. While his narrative visualizations of wild animals align him with later documentary filmmakers, Seton's tales progress according to tropes derived from literature (the split personality, the hero-outlaw, the female lure). By fitting the animal "other" into classic Western narrative patterns of human subjects, Seton's stories project ideologies onto the wild, create speculative ethnographies of animals, and parallel the oppressions and fictions latent in the ethnographic motive and epistemological assumptions of documentary film in its first decades. This paper asks therefore whether or not we can read Seton as a documentary filmmaker born before his time—not an author who is belated in Harold Bloom's sense, but an auteur who is early.

Dulling the Edge: Adapting Queer Audacity from Stage to Screen

Sylvain Duguay, Concordia University

The Canadian stage (including Québécois theatre) has born productions that have profoundly marked the imaginary of queer audiences at home and abroad. A dozen of those Canadian plays with queer characters have been transposed to the screen, and this passage has very often meant that some (or much) of the aesthetic and narrative audacity has disappeared during the adaptation process. This presentation will draw on adaptation, performance and reception theories to explore this change. Concentrating on Brad Fraser's own adaptation of his play *Poor Super Man* into the movie *Leaving Metropolis*, and on Robert Lepage's own adaptation of his (and Marie Brassard's) play *The Polygraph*, I will ask how Canadian film, with its art/commerce central dichotomy, leaves room for experimentation on the formal and narrative level.

Narrative Structure and Narrative Voices in *The English Patient*: Film and Novel—A Comparative Study

Christine Evain, École Centrale de Nantes

Both the novel and film *The English Patient* are characterized by their complex narrative structures which include multiple shifts of timeframes and narrative voices. This paper attempts to establish how these strategies contrast or echo each other. What becomes of the different narrative voices and narrative complexity in the screen adaptation? How do the multiple flashbacks function in the film in relation to the novel? Much of the artistic quality is present in the screen adaptation in spite of, or, more correctly, thanks to the great liberty taken by the film director who did not choose to be faithful to the integrity of the original work, but rather to base *the integrity of the film* on the original work. Highlighting the techniques involved allows us to gain a better understanding of why novel and film have now become universally acknowledged examples of CanLit's success in both artistic forms.

“Stunning and Strange”: Iceland as Memory and Prophecy in Alice Munro's “The Bear Came Over the Mountain” and Sarah Polley's *Away From Her*

Nadine Fladd, University of Western Ontario

Alice Munro's work over the last two decades indicates a sustained engagement with medieval literature, particularly the Old Icelandic sagas and eddas. In “The Bear Came Over the Mountain,” Munro translates the physical violence and motifs of betrayal in battle, the ending of the world, and prophecy in stories such as *Egil's Saga* into more quotidian, realist studies of emotional violence: the betrayals, endings and new beginnings in marital relationships. In both Munro's story and Sarah Polley's film adaptation, *Away From Her*, the idea of Iceland comes to represent memory and repetition. This paper explores the ways in which the concept of Iceland as a symbolic shorthand for memory is “translated” into film, through colour and images that serve a similar function to Munro's allusions to the national literature of Iceland.

Maddin, Melodrama, and the “Pre-National”

Brian Johnson and Jennifer Henderson, Carleton University

This paper intervenes in the increasingly dominant reading of Canadian culture and history in terms of the trope of gothic hauntings by proposing another genre as lens. Focussing on melodrama and its emphasis on heavily stylized gestures and the hyper-intensified affect of the domestic sphere, the paper examines how these dimensions of the genre articulate the relation between childhood, nostalgia, and narratives of nation in Guy Maddin’s *Brand Upon the Brain, My Winnipeg*, and the film treatment, *The Child Without Qualities*. Although Maddin’s films return obsessively to scenes of his childhood and are often read as confessional, they also contain ironized fragments of a nationalist imaginary that defamiliarize a certain masculinist metanarrative of nation. We argue that his films can be read as offering a primitivist counter to the Canadian nationalist narrative of manly maturation through a mode of critical nostalgia rooted in a “pre-national” childhood perception resistant to allegorical significance. The paper ends by gesturing toward some of the ways in which this set of questions about melodrama, childhood, and nation might be carried into the examination of literary works.

“Something’s missing”: Exploding Girlhood in *The Tracey Fragments*

Tanis MacDonald, Wilfrid Laurier University

Maureen Medved’s *The Tracey Fragments* (1998) is one in a series of recent Canadian literary narratives of explosive girlhood and the only one that has been adapted to film. These first-person narratives highlight proto-feminist examinations of rebellion and its costs; in each narrative, an adolescent female tells her story of self-exile from mainstream ideas of femininity, only to be trapped by her desires and her isolation. Bruce McDonald’s film version of *The Tracey Fragments* (2007) borrows liberally from anxious female transformations in recent horror film, emphasizing Tracey’s transformation from persecuted geek-girl to wandering monster. By situating the film as a puberty horror, McDonald emphasizes the monster’s knowledge that “something’s missing” (the film’s advertising tag) while playing on the character’s sense that she is “just a normal girl who hates herself.” By tracing the tensions between Tracey’s literary monologue, and Tracey’s image as filmic performance, this paper will examine the difficulties in visual representation that haunts the explosive girl narrative.

Fidelity, Nation, Adaptation: “The Bear Came Over the Mountain” and *Away From Her*

Robert McGill, Harvard University

Alice Munro’s story “The Bear Came Over the Mountain” and its cinematic adaptation by Sarah Polley, *Away From Her*, demonstrate that notions of fidelity with regard to artistic adaptation are more than incidentally connected to issues of interpersonal fidelity. For instance, an adapting artist may choose to take up the symbolic role of the source text’s lover or of its filial legatee. Moreover, *Away From Her* suggests that artists might play out similar roles with regard to their national cultural milieus. In that light, one might view Canadian literature and film as ongoing processes not merely of survival but of adaptation in order to maintain a voice both domestically and internationally.

Filming Music: Adapting Transnational Sound in *The English Patient* and *Fugitive Pieces*

Katherine McLeod, University of Toronto

Both Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient* and Anne Michaels’s *Fugitive Pieces* are written through music. Not only does music inform plot and characterization in both of these novels, but it also reflects the culturally hybrid spaces that the characters inhabit. The critical question, then, for directors Anthony Minghella and Jeremy Podeswa is how to translate the global significance of music in each novel into a film soundtrack that is just as politically compelling. Building upon Linda Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) and Sneja Gunew’s concept of “transcultural improvisations” (*Haunted Nations* 2004), my paper argues that the music in *The English Patient* and *Fugitive Pieces* provides a starting place from which to consider the larger impact of how a film’s soundtrack can speak to issues of Canadian multiculturalism.

As For Sinclair Ross's Unfilmed “House”: The Failed Cinematic Adaptations of “As For Me and My House”

John O’Connor, University of Toronto

This paper will investigate the two complicated and ultimately unsuccessful attempts to adapt Sinclair

Ross's iconic 1941 masterpiece "As For Me and My House" to the screen: the first time by Peter Pearson and Michael Milne, and the second by Margret Kopala. The paper will draw not only on evidence in the screenplay (written by Graeme Gibson) but also on Ross's correspondence with the filmmakers and his own agent about film rights, and will further incorporate comments Ross made to me in hundreds of hours of conversation in Vancouver in the final six years of his life. Those discussions often considered whether a successful cinematic adaptation of this novel was even possible and why Ross believed it was not. My presentation will be further contextualized by examining Ross's 37-page letter in response to a proposal to adapt this novel to the stage. More broadly, I will frame the discussion with some general remarks on works by Ross that were made into films (3 short stories, some more than once—by the NFB and Atlantis) and on the stillborn proposals to turn Ross's other 3 novels into films. My interest in this subject has most recently led (in May 2008 at Univerista' Ca' Foscari in Venice) to a presentation on the late-1950s failure by Julian Roffman to transform "The Well" into a film. There is much to be said about the hoped-for or actual intersection between Ross's literary imagination and its adaptability to a cinematic treatment, and I look forward to exploring some of its implications at the "Double-Takes" conference in Ottawa next May.

Sullivan Entertainment's Secularization of *Anne of Green Gables*

Kathleen Patchell, University of Ottawa

In 1985, Sullivan Entertainment's two-part four-hour miniseries adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables* garnered a viewing audience of 5.6 million when it premiered in Canada, making it the highest-rated drama in CBC history; the five-disc DVD version released for the Montgomery centenary in April 2008 continues on Indigo/Chapters' bestseller list. Unlike the multifaceted academic criticism that has engaged with the novel, the screen version eliminates many of the novel's complexities, including its religious aspects: the depiction of Anne's spiritual growth, the exposure of the deadness of the Avonlea Presbyterian Church, and the portrayal of a model clergy couple to illustrate Montgomery's ideal Church. I will examine the scenes and characters that have been deleted, changed, or added that relate to Anne's spiritual journey and to the Church, and then suggest reasons for these changes and their impact on the visual rendering of Montgomery's classic novel.

Adapting Men to New Times: Engagements with Masculinity in Jacques Godbout's *IXE-13* and John Howe's *Why Rock the Boat?*

Elsbeth Tulloch, Laval University

This paper will examine the degree to which Jacques Godbout's *IXE – 13* (1971), an ONF adaptation of Pierre Saurel's spy novel serial, and John Howe's *Why Rock the Boat?* (1974), an NFB adaptation of William Weintraub's reporter's novel, transform representations of masculinity. Given that the adaptations follow a key period in the second wave of the Canadian women's movement, the paper will situate the films within what E. Anna Claydon views as manifestations of a "crisis in masculinism" in contemporary film rather than what scholars more frequently term a "crisis in masculinity." While both adaptations deploy humor, Godbout's film seems to revel in this crisis, mocking and caricaturing the original text, while Howe's film seems to sidestep it, attempting to shore up staid conventions. These differences suggest divergent underlying responses from the NFB's French- and English- language studios to the sense in this period that patriarchal privilege was being challenged.

Why They Cannot Get It Right: A Reader's Notes About Richler On Screen

Natalia Vesselova, University of Ottawa

The screen versions of Mordecai Richler's works include *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (1974) and a recent CBC production of *St. Urbain's Horseman* (2007). Although *Duddy Kravitz* was commercially successful, glorified by critics and awarded with several prizes, including the highly prestigious Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival, it leaves a keen reader of Richler with a feeling of being deceived. *St. Urbain's Horseman*, despite its pertinent casting and a vibrant script, is yet another disenchantment. There is no doubt that both films treat Richler's novels very tactfully and try to stay as close to the original as possible (in the case of *Duddy Kravitz*, Richler himself, as is well known, participated in the project and approved almost every detail). The problem is that the material they tackle resists the very idea of being filmed. Cinema and literature are two completely different languages of artistic expression, and the process of filming a literary work is essentially that of translation. Translation theory suggests (and practice proves) that certain works can be rendered into another language more

accurately and with less damage to the meaning than others; prose translates far better than poetry; narratives centered upon action translate far better than those focusing on the interconnection of words. The same principle is applicable to novels and their cinematic versions: just as poetry, according to Robert Frost, “is what gets lost in translation,” the art of words is what cannot be screened. While, for example, nineteenth-century “critical realism” fiction with its sound plots provides reliable material for numerous movies, literary works, preoccupied with subtler things than a story and portraying characters with means other than descriptions, lose much more of their meaning on the way to the silver screen. This paper presents an analysis of Richler’s novels’ immunity to successful film adaptations and the deep generic incompatibility which reduced *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* to a picaresque and *St. Urbain’s Horseman* to a family drama.

Raspberries for Hitler: Chaplin’s *The Great Dictator* and Klein’s *The Hitleriad*
Peter Webb, Concordia University

In 1940, Charles Chaplin released *The Great Dictator*, his most controversial film, using laughter as a weapon against the megalomaniacal excesses of Adolf Hitler. Inspired by Chaplin’s film and Pope’s *The Dunciad*, A.M. Klein published the mock-epic poem, *The Hitleriad*, in 1944. Although both artists were initially proud of their creations, both eventually felt that they had failed to acknowledge the extremity of Nazi atrocities, anticipating the concerns of such critics as Theodor Adorno and Hayden White about the ethics of “poetic” or “artistic” evocations of the Holocaust. Using a comparative approach to *The Great Dictator* and *The Hitleriad*, this paper addresses the ethics of parody in both film and literature, making a case for the continued relevance of cinematic and poetic humour in resisting corrupted power.

Superstars in the Wilderness: The Double Mediation of Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush* and Catharine Parr Traill’s *The Backwoods of Canada*
Christa Zeller Thomas, University of Ottawa

This essay argues that a 2004 CBC documentary and DVD, entitled *Sisters in the Wilderness*, turns the lives of Moodie and Traill into models of nation-building amid adversity, while greatly unifying the women’s own, often fragmented narratives. Despite reciting lengthy passages from both *Roughing It* and *Backwoods*, the “biopic” is expressly based, not on these two texts, but on a 1999 biography of Moodie and Traill by Charlotte Gray. In a process of double mediation, the film goes beyond its textual sources and creates several unities not inherent in the literature- thereby producing its own “text,” focused on the nation’s history rather than on literary value or interest. My study probes the implications of this adaptation and asks *inter alia*, why Moodie’s and Traill’s texts require such double mediation in the first place.

Film Critics’ Roundtable

Chair: Sandra Abma, Arts Reporter, *CBC TV*

Katherine Monk, *Vancouver Sun*

Geoff Pevere, *Toronto Sun*

Jay Stone, *Ottawa Citizen*