

History versus Geography in Wayne Johnston's *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*

Perhaps no text published in the last ten years qualifies as a better example of “historiographic metafiction” than Wayne Johnston’s 1998 novel, *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*. Johnston’s retelling of Joseph R. Smallwood’s slow but relentless rise to political prominence in Newfoundland meets all requirements of the genre Linda Hutcheon sees as a distinctive feature of Canadian postmodernism (Hutcheon 13): the novel freely departs from the established biographical facts of the long-serving premier’s life; it comically undermines the linear objectivity of D.W. Prowse’s *History of Newfoundland* by replacing that magisterial 750-page text with an ironically “condensed” fifty-page summary of the same events; and its narration oscillates between two first-person points of view that interpret the same historical events from opposite perspectives.

Although the vast majority of reviewers praised the novel, the book’s most influential Canadian commentator condemned Johnston for his blatant misappropriation of the “real” Joseph R. Smallwood. Writing in the *Globe and Mail*, Rex Murphy (perhaps the most prominent cultural representative of Newfoundland on the national stage) criticized Johnston for what he called a poor attempt at “fictional ventriloquism” (D15). According to Murphy, *Colony*

drains and diminishes the Smallwood that so many Newfoundlanders still remember, producing a pastework substitute. The fictional Smallwood, the Smallwood whose thoughts and voice are rendered here, the sensitive, love-conscious and tormented Smallwood is (the adjectives are unavoidable) smaller and more wooden. (D15)

Though Murphy admits that any writer is “free to combine and invent as he or she chooses,” he argues that by virtue of the same kind of allowances, readers of historiographic metafiction are “also free to feel a disappointment if the original is within reach of memory and experience and the created version is less persuasive, or compelling or present” (D15). For Murphy, the very existence of Johnston’s fiction relies directly on the historical existence of the real Smallwood and [i]t is only with the real, historical Joey Smallwood that the story, the fable, of *The Colony of Unrequited Love* (*sic*) can oblige serious engagement” (D15).

A month after Murphy’s article appeared, the *Globe and Mail* printed an angrily worded response from Johnston. In “Truth vs. Fiction,” Johnston suggests that since *Colony* never attempts to represent objectively a specific social or temporal reality, it should not be evaluated on its adherence to the historical record. The author explains his

intention in writing *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams* was to fashion, out of the formless infinitude of ‘facts’ about Smallwood and Newfoundland, a story. A novel. A work of art that would express a felt, emotional truth that adherence to an often untrustworthy and inevitably incomplete historical record would have made impossible. (D1)

Johnston advises his readers to be open to such fictional reconfigurations and more suspicious toward the supposed objectivity of historical authority. “There is no reason for us to be so much in the thrall of our historical figures,” he argues, “that we cannot suspend our disbelief when writers of fiction ring variation on their lives” (D1).

Environmental Determinism

Although this very public and clearly divided debate introduced many general readers to the complexities of historiographic metafiction, most of the commentary written about *Colony* focuses not on the novel’s appropriation of the historical record, but on its representation of Newfoundland geography. For the vast majority of *Colony*’s reviewers, especially those outside of Newfoundland, Johnston’s novel is not so much a playful re-telling of a history they have probably never heard in its original form, as much as it is an almost naturalistic representation of a harsh physical environment they have probably never visited. With remarkable consistency, the national and international press interpreted *Colony* as a text in which the brutal topography of Newfoundland holds a deterministic power over its inhabitants. In the *New York Times*, Newfoundland is described as “a formidable entity that

will always dwarf human beings . . . a place more willful than even its toughest inhabitants” (Sante 6); in the *New Statesman*, “Newfoundland looms like a troubled deity” over the novel and “Johnston presents an awe-inspiringly barren and relentless landscape” (Hunter 3); in the *Times* of London, “Newfoundland is as much a character as Smallwood or Fielding” (Bradbury 41); in the *Toronto Star*, there is “[s]omething about Newfoundland that overpowers the imagination of its inhabitants [and] resists the mind’s attempt to impose shape and perspective (Marchand K15); in the *Calgary Herald*, “[t]he setting is entrancing and the harsh beauty of Newfoundland and its magnetic power on its inhabitants are stamped onto every page (Fertile J8).

Hans Bak’s essay, “Writing Newfoundland, Writing Canada: Wayne Johnston’s *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*,” describes *Colony* as a “hybrid” text, a work that is both a “compellingly ironic postmodern meditation on the fictionality of history” (218), and a “narrative in [the] nineteenth-century mode,” which explores a “geography that impresses itself most deeply upon its inhabitants’ souls and sensibilities” (220). Simultaneously contemporary and traditional, postmodern and naturalistic, Johnston’s text wavers between two polarities. Depending on your point of view, *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams* is either a cutting-edge masterpiece of narrative technique—a text that effectively explodes the objectivity of established historical truth and fits very nicely into the trajectory of Canadian Postmodernism established by Hutcheon—or it is a reliable, nearly realistic work of Canadian regionalism, a book that would easily fit into those now infamous thematic studies of Canadian “Survival” or the “Garrison Mentality.” In *Colony*, it seems that although we are encouraged to read history as a subjective, infinitely re-workable narrative that can be accepted, rejected, or edited at any time, we are simultaneously taught that there is nothing flexible about geographic discourse.

Johnston’s text provides several self-reflexive meditations on this subject. In one of the novel’s memorable early moments, Charlie Smallwood, Joey’s father, is slowly driven mad by his relations with a forged “autographed” copy of Prowse’s *History of Newfoundland*. Placing his inscribed copy of the *History* in the middle of the family’s kitchen table, Charlie spends weeks “talking to that book” and imagining himself in an impassioned dialogue with Prowse (69). Eventually, Charlie goes on a drunken bender and misses three days of work so he can devote all his available energy to this ongoing conversation. On the third night of this ordeal, after her husband has finally

given up for the evening and stumbled off to bed, Smallwood's mother secretly steals "The Book" and throws it out of their house into the winter darkness.

Mrs. Smallwood's passionate rejection of Prowse's *History* is a crucial, but ambivalent scene in *Colony*. If the episode simply concluded here, with such an overt denial of Newfoundland's accepted historical record, then it might be easy to fit Mrs. Smallwood's actions, and Charlie's negotiations, into a standardized interpretation of *Colony* as a postmodern historiographic metafiction. However, Johnston's narrative does not even pause to consider the historical implications of this potentially evocative dismissal of the text. Seconds after the book has been thrown away, Joey hears "a low rumbling sound, like far-off thunder" (70). Mrs. Smallwood's tossing away of Prowse's book—a text so massive Joey believes it is "not a record of the past, but the past itself, distilled, compacted to a density that [he] could barely lift" (46)—sets off an avalanche which roars past their house, destroying everything in its path and killing one of their neighbours. The next morning, a search team discovers the corpse of 83-year-old Mr. Mercer. He is found with his eyes wide open, his body frozen solid, and his mouth "stuffed with snow" (72). (A more iconic "Canadian" death would be hard to imagine.)

Predictably perhaps, the young Smallwood immediately establishes a connection between his mother's rejection of Prowse's book and the subsequent disaster. The avalanche is interpreted as a natural "judgement" on her behaviour (73). This pattern will continue throughout the text: in *Colony*, postmodern readings of history and deterministic depictions of geography often seem interdependent: Whenever the power of history is challenged and/or questioned, the power of geography is reinforced and / or acknowledged. Although we are taught that the story of the past can be retold in multiple variations, we are also reminded that the story of space is literally set in stone.

The Geographic Response to Historiography

In his influential trilogy—*Postmodern Geographies* (1989), *Thirdspace* (1996) and *Postmetropolis* (2000)—the American cultural geographer Edward Soja examines this tension between traditional readings of geography and contemporary readings of history. He suggests that the relation has always been unbalanced and that generations of thinkers have "preserved a privileged place for the 'historical imagination' in defining the very nature of critical

insight and interpretation” (PG 10). The special status that history enjoys in humanities research, Soja argues, has become so “unbudgeably hegemonic . . . that it has tended to occlude a comparable critical sensibility to the spatiality of social life” (PG 11). According to Soja, the dialectal richness of cultural geography has been greatly underestimated and underappreciated because most scholars still tend to think of social space as an intellectual void, a perfectly blank slate, unaffected by human activity and conveniently untouched by culture, politics, or ideology. In the rush to explore the fascinating complexities and the startling incongruities of historical narrative, theorists have simply taken geography for granted, positing it as a neutral, stable, and unchanging background. When scholars privilege time over space, they activate the progressive dialectic of history and simultaneously arrest any parallel possibilities for geographic discourse. In other words, history appears to “move” in time only because geography is expected to remain steadfastly immobile and perfectly “natural.” Soja suggests that our entire “critical hermeneutic is still enveloped in a temporal master-narrative” and that this narrative is so dominant it denies other ways of reading and writing geographical discourse (PG 11). To partially reverse this tendency, Soja calls for a “far-reaching spatialization” of contemporary humanities scholarship and for a brash reassertion of “the interpretive significance of space in the historically privileged confines of contemporary critical thought” (PG 11). In Soja’s writings, geography strikes back at history’s traditional dominance and claims a position of equivalent importance in the study of social life.

The reassertion of spatiality in humanities research holds the potential to realign the study of Canadian literature radically. Hutcheon’s readings of postmodernism, for example, are quite clearly influenced by this historical bias. A seemingly endless discussion of geographical identity and literary regionalism has dominated Canadian criticism for decades, but the critical readings of social space on which these debates rest have been limited. Contemporary Canadian scholars are only beginning to appreciate the “spatial turn” in recent cultural criticism. Although the idea that the physical environment can and perhaps even should exert a deterministic power over Canadian writers has been modified, challenged, deconstructed, and selectively reconstructed by many excellent contemporary scholars such as Wylie, David Jordan, W.H. New, Francesco Loriggio, and Alison Calder, the regionalist debate remains highly polarized in Canadian criticism. Most critics continue to struggle for an acceptable working definition of

regionalist literary theory or a critical methodology adequate to the complex interconnections that link subjectivity and social space.¹ As Lisa Chalykoff observes in her essay “Overcoming the Two Solitudes of Canadian Literary Regionalism,” the spatial assumptions that support most traditional studies of Canadian regionalism are “ripe for reassessment” (161).

By referencing Soja’s work and, more directly, Henri Lefebvre’s seminal text, *The Production of Space*, Chalykoff argues that most Canadian regionalist criticism can be divided into “Two Solitudes” of spatial thought. Critics who view cultural geography as an environmentally pre-determined, materialist product or a set of inert physical facts fall into Chalykoff’s “First Solitude.” These thinkers are influenced by what Lefebvre calls the “illusion of opacity” (27). They interpret social space as impenetrably “natural” or objectively “real” and generally accept the assertion that society plays “no role in the processes of spatialization” (Chalykoff 161). Regionalist critics who fall into Chalykoff’s “Second Solitude” draw their readings of geography more directly from the idealist philosophical tradition. They are influenced by Lefebvre’s “illusion of transparency” and view geography more as a mental construction or a completely imaginary creation dominated by subjective readings and writings of the landscape as versions of text (27).² In Chalykoff’s binary, critics such as Edward McCourt in *The Canadian West in Fiction* and Henry Kreisel in “The Prairie: A State of Mind” are first solitude regionalists embracing the materialist belief that “the landscape itself exercises a uniform impact on its inhabitants” (165). New’s *Articulating West and Land Sliding*, as well as Eli Mandel’s “Images of Prairie Man,” are works of second solitude regionalism because they idealistically “locate regions in mental space . . . [or] posit literary regions simultaneously as regions of the mind or of the nation-space” (174).

When we combine Soja’s critique of the dominating historical bias of humanities research with Chalykoff’s equally forceful assessment of the materialist and/or idealist tendencies that influence readings of social space in Canadian literature and apply these arguments to the study of Johnston’s novel, we begin to understand how dramatically different are *Colony*’s post-modern reading of history and its naturalistic interpretation of geography.

Smallwood’s Newfoundland or Newfoundland’s Smallwood

Although Johnston’s postmodern reconstruction of Smallwood’s life rewrites the historical record, his narrative is fused to a “first solitude” interpretation of regionalist environmental determinism.³ In *Colony*, the landscape of

Newfoundland is an active participant in the narrative and provides far more than just setting for the Smallwood-Fielding love story. As Wylie observes, “[t]hough Smallwood is the central figure of the novel, in many ways Newfoundland itself is the protagonist” (127). Smallwood is portrayed almost as a mechanical outcome or product of his geography. According to Wylie, Joey is a near anthropomorphic representation of Newfoundland’s colonial experience in the early-twentieth century. Smallwood literally stands in as “the personification of Newfoundland’s inferiority complex, the continuation of its colonial cringe, and the continuation of its economic, cultural, political, and psychological dependence as part of the Canadian Confederation” (130).

The ties that bind Smallwood to Newfoundland are clearly illustrated in the scenes that depict his first attempt to leave the colony. In Johnston’s narrative, Smallwood’s real-life journey to New York City in 1920 is interpreted as one of the major events of his life. Fielding describes the move as a transfer from a “New found land” to an “old New world” (130). Before Smallwood leaves home, he climbs to the top of Signal Hill and ponders the vast power of the sea: “I never felt so forlorn, so desolate as I did looking out across the trackless, forever-changing surface of the sea, which, though it registered the passage of time, was suggestive of no beginning and no end, as purposeless, as pointless as eternity” (131). He then walks down to the Narrows and wonders if he, like his father, who returned to St. John’s after a disastrous attempt to live in Boston, will also fail to find a place in the wider world:

I thought of my father’s stint in Boston, where he had discovered the limits of a leash that up to that point he hadn’t even known he was wearing. I wondered if like him, I would be so bewildered by the sheer unknowable, unencompassable size of the world that I would have to come back home. How could you say for certain where you were, where home left off and away began, if the earth that you were standing on went on forever, as it must have seemed to him, in all directions? For an islander, there had to be natural limits, gaps, demarcations, not just artificial ones on a map. Between us and them and here and there, there had to be a gulf. (132)

This passage conveys a first solitude reading of social space: it illustrates Smallwood’s desire for a secure environmental determinism. In the place of the “artificial” borders drawn on a map, he demands “natural limits,” a clearly established, and therefore non-negotiable “gulf” that might delimit and define his native geography. The psychological leash that pulls his father back to St. John’s is understood as another natural outcome, a causal

connection between the landscape and its inhabitants. After Smallwood has made the long train ride from St. John's to Port-aux-Basques, he boards the ferry that will carry him away from home for the first time. Because he feels it is "the appropriately romantic thing to do," he plans to stand at the railing of the ship until the island disappears from his vision (143). To Smallwood's surprise, however, Newfoundland never seems to leave his sight. The connection to his place will not be broken: "[t]hough I stood staring at it for what seemed like hours," Smallwood claims, "the island got no smaller . . . [it] was always there, as big as ever, as if we were towing it behind us" (143). When he arrives in New York after stops in Halifax and Boston, Smallwood interprets the American metropolis as the exact antithesis of his home. The comparison between these two social spaces and these two cultures—one a naturalized, starkly physical Canadian landscape and the other "a dingy maze" of urban American streets—is one of the novel's key juxtapositions (156). Like Quoyle, the protagonist of E. Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News* (the text to which *Colony* is most often compared), Johnston's Smallwood is transformed by his travels between two worlds. In both novels, the geographical portraits of the two countries are unambiguous. American social space, especially New York City, is entirely "made up," imaginary, lacking in substance, and unavoidably uncertain. Canada, on the other hand, and especially Newfoundland, is authentic, real, substantial, and metaphysically stable. Exactly as Proulx's Quoyle leaves the chaos of America behind to uncover (or rediscover) his true identity in a pure Newfoundland geography, Smallwood's sojourn in America only reinforces his commitment to his home. These two characters and these two novelists both fall back into the familiar spatial epistemologies consistently used to interpret Canadian and American cultural geography. In aesthetic terms, Canadian social space—even when it is presented in a postmodern novel—is almost always more securely realistic than American social space. After his painful five-year hiatus in the city—during which he has moved from flophouse to flophouse, gone through a fumbling proposal and break up with Fielding, and experienced both political and religious disappointment—Smallwood eventually decides to return home because he is "afraid of being pulled further into that weird [American] world . . . in which there was no telling what was and was not true" (204).

Immediately before and immediately after Smallwood's journey to New York, Johnston presents his readers with two remarkable scenes that re-establish the deterministic relation between landscape and protagonist.

Twice—once as a young journalist and again as a hopeful union organizer—Smallwood throws himself against the brutal contours of Newfoundland’s geography and both times the landscape transforms him rather than the other way around. The first of these scenes takes place in 1916 aboard the doomed sealing ship, the S.S. *Newfoundland*. Although the actual Joseph R. Smallwood never experienced this disaster first-hand, the story of the *Newfoundland* is a very real historic event.⁴ Caught in a brutal storm in 1914, seventy-seven members of the *Newfoundland*’s crew froze to death on the exposed ice of the Atlantic Ocean. Johnston redramatizes this scene and relocates it two years after the actual event in order to place his version of Smallwood onboard the ship as a cub reporter who is supposed to file romantic biographical sketches about the adventurous lives of the sealers. In Johnston’s version of the story—a highly controversial historiographic adaptation of the official record—Smallwood is actually there at sea with the men when the fateful storm hits. He spends three brutal days locked in his cabin while the ship is surrounded and slowly crushed by ice, and he is there on the deck when the lost crewmen are finally re-discovered. Smallwood sees their frozen bodies stranded on an open pan of ice and memorably describes them as a “strange statuary of the dead” (107).

For Johnston, there are many reasons why it is important that Smallwood witness this scene first-hand. In his fictional recreation, the events onboard the *Newfoundland* are interpreted as the catalysts that push Smallwood into politics and into his muddled engagement with socialist doctrine. Smallwood, the political animal, is literally *created* by the brutal confrontations—both natural and social—he witnesses onboard the *Newfoundland*. For the young Smallwood, the sealers who die on the ice are the victims not only of a harsh Newfoundland climate but of an unjust Newfoundland society. He places the blame for their deaths squarely on the shoulders of the St. John’s upper class: the unscrupulous merchants, ship captains, and owners who send their employees out into extreme conditions without any concern for their welfare. While researching the journalistic pieces he writes in the aftermath of the tragedy, Smallwood discovers that when the storm began, the crew of the *Newfoundland* were denied shelter on another ship, the *Stephano*, and sent back into the squall, eventually to their deaths. Smallwood’s experience on board the *Newfoundland* is perhaps the most important moment in the entire novel; it is also the point where Johnston’s postmodern interpretation of history intersects most dramatically with his deterministic reading of geography. In *Colony*’s definitive historiographic scene, the actions

and motivations of an entirely imaginary Joey Smallwood are directly determined by the physical environment.

This same combination of natural and cultural forces dominates Johnston's other great scene: Smallwood's heroic walk across the interior of Newfoundland. After his return from New York, Smallwood decides that, as part of his "grand, momentous homecoming," he will walk the full distance from Port-aux-Basques to St. John's in an effort to unionize the sectionmen who maintain the rail-line between the cities (213). He sets out from Port-aux-Basques in mid-August and plans to walk twenty miles a day for more than three months. In total, the journey covers more than 700 miles and cuts through some of Newfoundland's least hospitable landscape. "The Walk," as Johnston calls it, has both a pragmatic and a symbolic function for Smallwood (211). By sacrificing himself to the marginalized, non-urban Newfoundlanders who will later make up the core of his confederation-minded constituency, Smallwood, literally, takes the first steps towards establishing himself as the political champion of rural Newfoundland. At the same time, *The Walk* again reinforces his connection to the physical environment. Like his experience on the *Newfoundland*, *The Walk* makes Smallwood into the politician he later becomes. His environmentally determined union with the landscape is consummated by this journey, by walking every step of the way from one end of the colony to the other.

As he makes the journey, Smallwood is gradually worn down and reshaped by environmental conditions. Despite his egomaniacal self-confidence, Smallwood is unable to deny the influence of the Newfoundland landscape. Instead, the process is reversed and he begins to see himself as a victim of geography, an insignificant human presence standing against an unstoppable natural force. While completing a particularly arduous section of his hike down the Bonavista branch line, Smallwood realizes that he is "inching ever closer to some sort of breakdown," and that he cannot keep the landscape from intruding into his thoughts, transforming him, and remaking him in a directly causal way (220). At one of his weakest moments, he observes that, no matter how strong he believes himself to be, he can no longer combat the forces of nature. Buffeted by 120 mile-per-hour gusts, he admits that it is "impossible not to personify the wind" and that it is a "pathetic fallacy" to believe in one man's power to transform the landscape (220). Overwhelmed by the very place he is trying to embrace, Smallwood falls victim to his own misreading of geography.

Confederation as Rural Revenge

In *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*, even Newfoundland's entrance into Confederation is environmentally determined. While the wealthier urbanites of St. John's voted against Smallwood in large numbers, the Baymen of the colony's outport communities supported him with a majority that eventually won the historic second referendum on 22 July 1948. By essentially bribing the outports with the promise of baby bonuses and other socialized benefits that a union with Canada offered, Smallwood tapped into a deep reservoir of anti-urban sentiment. For many of his supporters, a vote for Confederation was a way of lashing out against the corrupt monopolies of the St. John's merchant class, a way for the "natural" environment to strike back at the city.

As Richard Gwynn points out in *Smallwood: The Unlikely Revolutionary*, the real Smallwood fashioned himself into the only viable candidate for outport Newfoundlanders by becoming the only urban politician committed enough to maintain a presence in these far-flung communities. Though the vast majority of the colony was so sparsely populated that most politicians simply ignored "the regions," Smallwood—with his trademark tireless energy—embraced these expanses of empty space and created a constituency for himself by binding together a group of voters no one before him had ever sought to unify. Using communications and transportation technologies, Smallwood's voice—delivered through the articles in his newspaper, *The Confederate*, through the radio broadcasts of his alter-ego, "The Barrelman," and, in person, through the amplified stump speeches he gave in every remote corner of the colony—became the voice of rural Newfoundland. As Gwynn describes it, Smallwood's early dedication to the outport communities bordered almost on religious fanaticism. Like a deranged, barnstorming preacher, Smallwood moved rapidly from community to community, announcing the "good news" of Confederation:

To spread his message in a country with almost no roads, Smallwood took to the air. He campaigned in an ancient seaplane that took the best part of a mile to taxi into the air . . . Bellowing down over twin loudspeakers, he flew above tiny, far-flung communities until the outharbourmen, many of whom had never seen a plane before and considered anyone connected with such machines faintly God-like, had taken to their boats and put out into the harbour. Smallwood would then land, one hand clutching a strut, the other a hand microphone. After the speech and the cheers and the shouts, he clambered back into the plane and took off—the people's champion who had cared enough to come. (99)

Smallwood's belief that "the land itself" holds a "permanent imminence" over his decisions profoundly influences Johnston's characterization. Throughout the novel, Smallwood is perpetually confronted with and continually accepts a deterministic geography. The fact that Johnston even creates a fictional scene to complement the many historic examples of Smallwood's outport consciousness only reinforces this interpretation of a political leader who was effectively "produced" by the social space he wished to govern. The introductory avalanche, the experience on the S.S. *Newfoundland*, the retreat from America's imagined social space, the death-defying walk across the colony, the countless union and campaign visits, the battle against the entrenched urban power of the St. John's merchants: all of these demonstrate Smallwood's understanding of cultural geography. In his mind, it is the environment—more powerful even than the Newfoundlanders who live on (and in) it—which demands Confederation. Johnston's poetic phrasing seamlessly combines history and geography: If the landscape is "permanently imminent," then it is always in the process of arriving at its destiny, always *nearly* here.

In this definitively postmodern Canadian novel, geographical determinism is endorsed rather than deconstructed. Even Fielding, Smallwood's consistent critic and herself a master practitioner of historiographic metafiction, shares in his awe before the colony's topography. In her final *Field Day* column, written after Smallwood's victory, Fielding observes that although "[i]t doesn't matter to the mountains that we joined Confederation, nor to the bogs, the barrens, the rivers or the rocks," it is these brute physical contours of geography which define the essential character of the colony or province (560). "These things, finally, primarily are Newfoundland," Fielding admits (562). In this formulation, Newfoundland is clearly not a nationalist ideology, nor a cultural entity, nor an imagined community. Though the colony is free to transform itself into a province, it remains, resolutely, a Rock, a "hard" Canadian place where the forces of environmental determinism continue to shape the subjectivities of inhabitants. Even as Fielding laments the cultural transformations that Smallwood has brought to her home, she understands that Newfoundland's connection to its landscape remains consistent. In a line that could well be used to describe the unique geographical epistemology that dominates much of Canadian postmodernism, Fielding suggests that "[f]rom a mind divesting itself of images . . . those of the land [will] be the last to go" (562).

NOTES

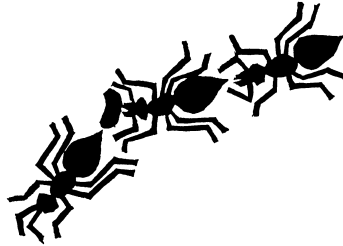
- 1 The sophistication of regionalist criticism in Canada has increased immeasurably in the last decade. During the 1990s, Wylie consistently produced one insightful essay after another: see his "Taking the Real Home to Read" (1990); "Firing the Regional Can(n)on: Liberal Pluralism, Social Agency, and David Adams Richards' Miramichi Trilogy" (1997), co-authored with Christopher Armstrong; "Ransom Revisited: The Aesthetic of Regionalism in a Globalized Age" (1998); and "Regionalism, Postcolonialism and (Canadian) Writing: A Comparative Approach for Postnational Times" (1998). Similarly, Jordan's important essay "Representing Regionalism" appeared in 1993 and was soon followed by *New World Regionalism* in 1994. Jordan also edited the collection *Regionalism Reconsidered* in 1995. This volume contains, among many other excellent essays, Loriggio's penetrating analysis of "Regionalism and Theory." In 1997, the University of Toronto Press released *New's Land Sliding*, the first book-length work of Canadian criticism to incorporate Lefebvre's theoretical arguments into its study of the country's regionalist literature. *A Sense of Place: Re-evaluating Regionalism in Canadian and American Writing*—a groundbreaking anthology of comparative essays edited by Wylie and Christian Riegel—arrived in 1998. This collection included a strong piece by Calder, "Reassessing Prairie Regionalism," as well as Davey's stinging critique of regionalist discourse, "Toward the Ends of Regionalism." In the same year *Studies in Canadian Literature* devoted an entire special issue to the question of "Writing Canadian Space." Chalykoff's essay appeared in this volume. In 2004, The University of Toronto Press launched a series of cultural studies texts, edited by Richard Cavell and Imre Szeman, devoted to "Cultural Spaces." Thus far, no literary texts have appeared in the series.
- 2 Other critics, most notably Wylie and New, reference the arguments of Soja and Lefebvre in their studies of Canadian literary regionalism, but Chalykoff's essay was the first to provide a sustained engagement with this branch of spatial theory.
- 3 For more on the relation between postmodernism and regionalism in Johnston's fiction see Jeanette Lynes' essay "Is Newfoundland Inside that T.V.?: Regionalism, Postmodernism and Wayne Johnston's *Human Amusements*." In her study of Johnston's only "Toronto Novel," Lynes argues that in *Human Amusements* a "skeptical postmodernism" combines with a "subliminal regionalism" (82).
- 4 For more on the history of the S.S. *Newfoundland*, see Cassie Brown's *Death on the Ice: The Great Newfoundland Sealing Disaster of 1914*.

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