



University of Calgary

PRISM: University of Calgary's Digital Repository

University of Calgary Press

University of Calgary Press Open Access Books

2022-06

The American Western in Canadian Literature

Deshaye, Joel

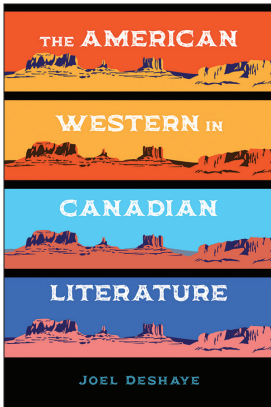
University of Calgary Press

<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/114567>

book

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Downloaded from PRISM: <https://prism.ucalgary.ca>



THE AMERICAN WESTERN IN CANADIAN LITERATURE

by Joel Deshayé

ISBN 978-1-77385-268-3

THIS BOOK IS AN OPEN ACCESS E-BOOK. It is an electronic version of a book that can be purchased in physical form through any bookseller or on-line retailer, or from our distributors. Please support this open access publication by requesting that your university purchase a print copy of this book, or by purchasing a copy yourself. If you have any questions, please contact us at ucpress@ucalgary.ca

Cover Art: The artwork on the cover of this book is not open access and falls under traditional copyright provisions; it cannot be reproduced in any way without written permission of the artists and their agents. The cover can be displayed as a complete cover image for the purposes of publicizing this work, but the artwork cannot be extracted from the context of the cover of this specific work without breaching the artist's copyright.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE: This open-access work is published under a Creative Commons licence. This means that you are free to copy, distribute, display or perform the work as long as you clearly attribute the work to its authors and publisher, that you do not use this work for any commercial gain in any form, and that you in no way alter, transform, or build on the work outside of its use in normal academic scholarship without our express permission. If you want to reuse or distribute the work, you must inform its new audience of the licence terms of this work. For more information, see details of the Creative Commons licence at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY:

- read and store this document free of charge;
- distribute it for personal use free of charge;
- print sections of the work for personal use;
- read or perform parts of the work in a context where no financial transactions take place.

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY NOT:

- gain financially from the work in any way;
- sell the work or seek monies in relation to the distribution of the work;
- use the work in any commercial activity of any kind;
- profit a third party indirectly via use or distribution of the work;
- distribute in or through a commercial body (with the exception of academic usage within educational institutions such as schools and universities);
- reproduce, distribute, or store the cover image outside of its function as a cover of this work;
- alter or build on the work outside of normal academic scholarship.



Acknowledgement: *We acknowledge the wording around open access used by Australian publisher, re.press, and thank them for giving us permission to adapt their wording to our policy <http://www.re-press.org>*

THE AMERICAN



WESTERN IN



CANADIAN



LITERATURE



JOEL DESHAYE

The American Western in
Canadian Literature

THE WEST SERIES

SERIES EDITOR: George Colpitts

ISSN 1922-6519 (Print) ISSN 1925-587X (Online)

This series focuses on creative nonfiction that explores our sense of place in the West – how we define ourselves as Westerners and what impact we have on the world around us. Essays, biographies, memoirs, and insights into Western Canadian life and experience are highlighted.

- No. 1 *Looking Back: Canadian Women's Prairie Memoirs and Intersections of Culture, History, and Identity*
S. Leigh Matthews
- No. 2 *Catch the Gleam: Mount Royal, From College to University, 1910–2009*
Donald N. Baker
- No. 3 *Always an Adventure: An Autobiography*
Hugh A. Dempsey
- No. 4 *Promoters, Planters, and Pioneers: The Course and Context of Belgian Settlement in Western Canada*
Cornelius J. Jaenen
- No. 5 *Happyland: A History of the "Dirty Thirties" in Saskatchewan, 1914–1937*
Curtis R. McManus
- No. 6 *My Name Is Lola*
Lola Rozsa, as told to and written by Susie Sparks
- No. 7 *The Cowboy Legend: Owen Wister's Virginian and the Canadian-American Frontier*
John Jennings
- No. 8 *Sharon Pollock: First Woman of Canadian Theatre*
Edited by Donna Coates
- No. 9 *Finding Directions West: Readings That Locate and Dislocate Western Canada's Past*
Edited by George Colpitts and Heather Devine
- No. 10 *Writing Alberta: Building on a Literary Identity*
Edited by George Melnyk and Donna Coates
- No. 11 *Ranching Women in Southern Alberta*
Rachel Herbert
- No. 12 *Rocking P Ranch and the Second Cattle Frontier in Western Canada*
Clay Chattaway and Warren Elofson
- No. 13 *The American Western in Canadian Literature*
Joel Deshaye



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Press

THE AMERICAN WESTERN IN CANADIAN LITERATURE

JOEL DESHAYE

The West Series

ISSN 1922-6519 (Print) ISSN 1925-587X (Online)

© 2022 Joel Deshaye

University of Calgary Press
2500 University Drive NW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2N 1N4
press.ucalgary.ca

All rights reserved.

This book is available in an Open Access digital format published under a CC-BY-NCND 4.0 Creative Commons license. The publisher should be contacted for any commercial use which falls outside the terms of that license.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION

Title: The American Western in Canadian literature / Joel Deshaye.

Names: Deshaye, Joel, 1977- author.

Series: West series (Calgary, Alta.) ; 13.

Description: Series statement: The West series ; 13 | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: Canadiana (print) 2022013927X | Canadiana (ebook) 20220139431 | ISBN 9781773852676 (softcover) | ISBN 9781773852683 (open access PDF) | ISBN 9781773852690 (PDF) | ISBN 9781773852706 (EPUB)

Subjects: LCSH: Western stories, Canadian. | LCSH: Canadian literature—American influences. | LCSH: Canadian fiction—Canada, Western—History and criticism. | LCSH: Canadian literature—Canada, Western—History and criticism. | LCSH: Canada, Western—In literature.

Classification: LCC PS8191.W4 D47 2022 | DDC C813/.087409—dc23

The University of Calgary Press acknowledges the support of the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Media Fund for our publications. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada. We acknowledge the financial support of the Canada Council for the Arts for our publishing program.

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, through the Awards to Scholarly Publications Program, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

Copyediting by Ryan Perks

Cover image: Colourbox 14882132

Cover design, page design, and typesetting by Melina Cusano

CONTENTS

	Acknowledgements	VII
★	Introduction <i>Signposts and Scales</i>	1
1	Scaling and Spacing the Genre <i>Transnationalism, Nationalism, and Regionalism</i>	43
2	Tom King's John Wayne <i>Indigenous Perspectives on the Western</i>	111
3	The Northwestern Cross <i>Christianity and Transnationalism in Early Canadian Westerns</i>	155
4	From Law to Outlaw <i>The Second World War, Westerns, and the '40s Pulps</i>	205
5	CanLit's Postmodern Westerns <i>Ghosts and the Cowgirl Riding Off into the Sunrise</i>	245
6	Degeneration through Violence <i>Contemporary Historical Westerns and Post-human Horsemen</i>	297
★	Conclusion <i>Mining the Western in the Twenty-First Century</i>	347
	Works Reproduced in Part	378
	Works Consulted	379
	Index	403

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is dedicated to the memory of Herb Wylie, who committed his generous expertise and kind advice to this book when I was still dreaming it up. If he had not been the first to encourage it, I would not have written it. Early support from Brian Trehearne and D. M. R. Bentley also gave me confidence in the project. My heartfelt thanks!

Part of chapter 2, “Tom King’s John Wayne,” was first published in 2016 in a slightly different form in the journal *Canadian Literature* (no. 225), whose editors and peer reviewers offered insightful comments that contributed to its improvement.

Most of the later chapters were earlier presented in different form at the following conferences:

- “Distant Reading and the Range in the Genre of the Canadian Western.” Canadian Society for Digital Humanities Conference, University of British Columbia, 3 June 2019.
- “Ghostmodernism and the Post-Western: Ondaatje, Eastwood, and Jiles.” Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Conference, Washington, DC, 19 April 2019.
- “Genre, Parody, and Postmodernism in Luke Price’s Smokey Carmain Westerns.” Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English Conference, University of Regina, 29 May 2018.
- “The Genre of the Quebec Western and Postmodern Regionalism in George Bowering’s *Caprice*.” Association for Canadian and Quebec Literatures Conference, University of Regina, 26 May 2018.

- “Ironies of the Western and the Public Domain in Jordan Abel’s *Un/inhabited* and *Injun*.” Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English Conference/ Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Ryerson University, 28 May 2017.
- “Transnational Nostalgia and ‘Cowboys & Riels’ in Frank Davey’s *The Louis Riel Organ & Piano Company*.” TransCanadas Conference, University of Toronto, 27 May 2017.
- “Mining the Western: Coal, Gold, and Masculinity in Gil Adamson’s *Outlander*, Patrick deWitt’s *The Sisters Brothers*, and Dayle Furlong’s *Saltwater Cowboys*.” Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Conference, San Diego, 17 April 2017.
- “The Western Genre and Adventures for Boys in H. A. Cody’s *Rod of the Lone Patrol*.” Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English Conference, University of Calgary, 29 May 2016.
- “Transnational Outlaw-Lawman: Ralph Connor and His Border Crossings.” Trans 2016 Conference of the University of Toronto Comparative Literature program, 5 March 2016.
- “The West Turns North: The Western in Canadian Literature and Culture.” Northeast Modern Languages Association Conference, Ryerson University, 30 April–3 May 2015.
- “Tom King’s John Wayne: The American Western in Canadian Literature.” Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Annual Conference, New Orleans, 1–4 April 2015.

The project in general was supported by an Insight Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada from 2017 to 2019, extended for revisions and spinoff projects into 2022. Kelley Bromley-Brits’s suggestions in helping me to shape the grant application were razor-sharp and highly productive.

In Saskatoon, Delvin Kanewiyakiho sparked my interest in contemporary Indigenous (specifically Cree) culture by explaining to me, shortly after the beginning of the millennium, that the West was still (and still is) in a state of “acute colonialism,” a realization that I had not yet admitted and acknowledged. Some of my oldest friends, Ted View, Clayton Boyer, and Dustin Kasun, expanded this horizon of knowledge in conversations about our families and their experiences.

In Montreal, Allan Hepburn at McGill suggested that I teach a course on the Western, partly because I was from the West. In one of the classes I taught there, Lana McCrea, Nicholas Cameron, and Zev Steinlauf were especially engaged and helped me to see the relevance of the Western to contemporary students and other interpreters of pop culture. Seeing the Coen brothers’ remake of *True Grit* (2010) with Benjamin S. W. Barootes led to many enlightening conversations about Westerns and medieval genres such as the epic and the romance (and on one occasion Disney’s *DuckTales*). And Ned Schantz’s insightful probes about genre, and his ideas about national monuments and landscapes in the West, were compelling as we visited the Westerns exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts.

In St. John’s, my research assistants have been invaluable. Amy Donovan conducted early bibliographical research on specific authors and advised me on geography-related topics. Collin Campbell came on board and became the digital designer of the multi-book index of generic conventions—the dataset parallel to this book—and his editorial comments throughout the process have led me to many warranted revisions of the manuscript. Elizabeth Hicks and Mandy Rowsell were enthusiastic and questioning readers of Westerns, post-Westerns, and even non-Westerns. Sam Lehman dug deeper to improve my existing bibliographies on saloons and horses. Yining Zhou and Chris Newell assisted me swiftly and cheerfully with distant reading and editorial work in the penultimate stages of the project. Melanie Hurley and Morgen Mills pursued final questions and refinements with diligence and acuity. And Ericka Making from my graduate seminar told me the likely origin of the title of Dayle Furlong’s 2015 novel *Saltwater Cowboys*, while Andrea Callanan crystallized our class’s discussions into a brilliant essay on Jordan Abel and the simulation of language loss.

My film class at Memorial helped me to develop my ideas about *Pale Rider* in many amazingly inductive discussions; I wish to give special thanks to Hailey Ryan, Cassandra Miller, and Connor Fitzpatrick. My Westerns class included Adrian Bell, who introduced me, fortuitously, to the German Western *Sons of Great Bear* when I was thinking about the transnationality of the Western.

My esteemed colleagues John Geck, Lisa Moore, Chris Lockett, and Andrew Loman read or heard me talk about parts of the book and gave me fresh leads on obscure materials, new and old—and friendly, expert writing advice. Plus all the needed reassurances. Other helpful suggestions came from Danine Farquharson, Helene Staveley, Brad Clissold, Rob Ormsby, Arn Keeling, Mark C. J. Stoddart, Kurt Korneski, and Matt Rise.

Through my father, Lloyd Deshayé, and the playwright Mansel Robinson, I contacted Robert Gagné from the National Arts Centre, who generously arranged for me to see the script of *Gabriel Dumont's Wild West Show* when I could not travel farther west to see the show itself. Through my mother, Mary Deshayé (née Albers) and her brothers and sister-in-law in Alberta, I became better acquainted with ranching culture and points of view in the West.

In the United States, Helen Lewis has been unstintingly welcoming as organizer of the Westerns meetings at the various Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association joint conferences held around the country. Christopher Conway invited me to contribute to a book on globalization and the Western in comics, which led me to the work of the Métis painter and scholar David Garneau, and then to a book on the global literary Western (in my case, a chapter on Canadian Westerns by Alix Hawley and Natalee Caple), all of which resonated with me as I finalized this book.

Helen Hajnoczky from University of Calgary Press expressed interest in this project, and that was also a powerful motivator for me to finish it.

My mentor Robert Lecker provided keen feedback when I needed it most.

And Jordanna and Lucy—thank you for everything.