



**GREENING THE MAPLE:
CANADIAN ECOCRITICISM IN CONTEXT**
edited by Ella Soper and Nicholas Bradley

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Introduction: Ecocriticism North of the Forty-ninth Parallel

Ella Soper and Nicholas Bradley

1. FAMILIAR TERRAIN? A RETROSPECTIVE APPRAISAL

The advent of ecocriticism has been hailed as one of the most timely and provocative developments in literary and cultural studies in recent decades. Ecocriticism has also been greeted with bewilderment or skepticism by critics, theorists, and students for whom its aims and methods are unclear. A sense of uncertainty sometimes attends discussions of ecocriticism even today, when it has become a relatively institutionalized part of academic life; an ever-growing array of publications, conferences, and classes are devoted to the subject. Ecocriticism has sought since its inception to make the study of literature (and other cultural manifestations) relevant to the innumerable environmental crises, local and global, that characterized the end of the twentieth century and that threaten to define the twenty-first. The powerful appeal of ecocriticism derives in

part from its longstanding commitment to interdisciplinarity and pragmatism. It claims for the analysis of literary and other cultural works a prominent role in addressing some of the most pressing matters of the day, and it aims to inflect conventional approaches to humanistic inquiry with scientific knowledge and an activist commitment to the protection or amelioration of the world's environmental health. Ecocriticism seeks as well to address the social issues that are concomitant with environmental issues. But the precise ways in which literary studies bear on the material world remain perpetual subjects of debate, as do the most appropriate methods and most pertinent topics of ecocritical investigation. Ecocriticism aspires to understand and often to celebrate the natural world, yet it does so indirectly, by focussing primarily on written texts. The critic in the library may seem engaged in a project altogether different from those of scientists in the field or the laboratory. Practitioners of ecocriticism seldom agree even on definitions of foundational terms, "nature" and "environment" foremost among them. ("Literature," too, is often a contested category.) Ecocriticism continues to be shaped by perennial disagreements about its scope and purpose; such tensions reflect its mutability and suggest that it is an area of inquiry distinguished by vibrant debate and great potential for expansion.

By all the measures of scholarly consensus, ecocriticism is now an established – and perhaps even familiar – part of the academy. But for readers of this book who are new to the field, questions may persist. What exactly *is* ecocriticism? What do ecocritical scholars do, and what shapes do their efforts take? Readers who are already engaged in ecocriticism as scholars, teachers, and students may have questions of their own. What is particularly Canadian about ecocriticism, its intellectual energy, and its internal quarrels? How can a retrospective, curatorial account of the field shape future approaches to the environmental humanities? To these important questions may be added another: *Where* is ecocriticism? That riddle and the manifold answers to which it may lead are the subjects of this book, which attempts to bring into view the development of ecocriticism in the context of studies of Canadian literature. One response is that ecocriticism is *here* – in Canada, in Canadian studies – and has been

for some time. The slippery, almost intractable meaning of *here*, moreover, has wielded a significant influence on the concerns and conclusions of environmentally oriented scholars of Canadian literature. Despite the global scale of environmental phenomena and the increasingly international character of the environmental humanities, the emergence of ecocriticism has followed different trajectories in various regional, national, cultural, and linguistic settings. The aim of *Greening the Maple: Canadian Ecocriticism in Context* is to track the past and present of Canadian ecocriticism. Revisiting recent critical history may well permit a richer sense of the directions in which environmental approaches to Canadian literature may lead.

Ecocriticism can be described in very general terms as the investigation of the many ways in which culture and the environment – the realm that both includes and exceeds the human – are interrelated and conceptualized. It has tended, especially at its outset, to focus on literary representations of the natural world, concentrating for understandable reasons on the works of writers, such as Wordsworth and Thoreau, for whom nature is a central and beloved subject. But increasingly ecocriticism is diverse in its concerns and techniques, and in the intellectual traditions that it claims. As Lawrence Buell writes, ecocriticism “has a history *both* of strong position-taking by individual spokespersons *and* of reluctance to insist on a single normative, programmatic definition of its rightful scope, method, and stakes.”¹ Representation as such has largely receded into the background as a subject of examination; “nature,” “wilderness,” “environment,” and their cognates have become highly disputed, and in some cases eviscerated, terms and concepts. And it has become a widely accepted view that all texts have an environmental dimension, not only those that are self-evidently about nature. A corollary of this view is the conviction that any text may be illuminated by critical attention to its environmental aspects.

The essays collected in this volume together demonstrate that, although “ecocriticism” is a broad and somewhat vague if now generally accepted term, studies of Canadian literature have long made relations between people and environments a topic of primary importance.

("Eco-" suggests "ecology," which has a range of scientific, political, and philosophical connotations. Is the ecology of ecocriticism a metaphor? A biological concept? A statement of political orientation? These are vital questions.) The chapters create a dialogue among literary studies of nature in Canada that predate, coincide with, participate in, and follow the rise of ecocriticism proper. The sweeping statements about nature and Canadian identity made by critics in the era of Northrop Frye's *The Bush Garden* and Margaret Atwood's *Survival* will probably strike readers today as naïve,² but contemporary ecocritical approaches to Canadian literature and culture are not wholly separate from earlier critical and cultural fascinations with nature. If Frye and Atwood are not strictly ecological thinkers, their works nonetheless helped establish a context for later ecological criticism. The continuities and ruptures alike in Canadian studies show "nature" to be a pivotal yet shifting and unstable concept and site of investigation.

An enduring stereotype holds that Canadian literature revolves around descriptions of nature: in novel after novel, and poem after poem, rugged mountains, whirling snowstorms, and desolate prairies torment hapless characters. There may be some truth to the stereotype, but Canadian writers have long tried to understand the nature of nature – the constitution and character of wilderness and countryside – as well as to represent its effects, harmful or otherwise, on people. In 1903 the poet Bliss Carman asked "who shall prove that nature is not a metaphor?" thus associating the non-human world ("nature") with literary language ("metaphor") and suggesting that what seems real is in fact the product of discourse.³ Carman's reputation as poet and critic is at present fairly low; even if his historical importance is assumed, he has few champions today. But his rhetorical question provides an example to counter the view that Canadian writers have been oblivious to the complexity of nature as both fact and fiction, and it allows a connection, faint perhaps but nevertheless discernible, between his conception of an illusory nature and contemporary understandings of nature's discursive existence. Recent critical propositions that "nature" is an ideological construction rather than a tangible, material reality remain divisive in the world of

ecocriticism. As the provocative cases of Timothy Morton's *Ecology without Nature* (2007) and *The Ecological Thought* (2010) illustrate,⁴ describing "nature" as a socially and linguistically determined category invites a defensive response from some quarters of the ecocritical community, in which sophisticated theory is perceived to be inimical to environmentalist praxis.⁵ Morton's opposition to "nature" – taken as a reified, politically suspect idea – may seem counterintuitive in a field that is committed to understanding and improving human relations with the natural realm, and his ideas have been both acclaimed and reviled. His support of object-oriented ontology as a philosophical alternative to what he describes as "theistic" responses to environmental crisis extends his advocacy of "a ruthless rejection of the concept of Nature."⁶ Morton's polemical (but playful) style and the challenging substance of his ideas have made him a polarizing figure – so, too, have been other writers who have questioned the conceptual validity of "nature" and "wilderness."⁷ The gulf between poets such as Carman and critics such as Morton is undoubtedly wide. But the congruence of such distant views as theirs suggests the extent to which the subject that ecocriticism purports to examine – nature – has always been contentious.

In Canadian literature and literary criticism, theoretical reflection upon the natural world and upon the role of language and literature in describing, imagining, and constituting nature has a lengthy past. Carman's speculation is merely an example; the essays gathered in this volume indicate repeatedly that "nature" has frequently been a troubled term in Canadian letters and that "theory" in some form has rarely, if ever, been far removed from literary encounters with nature. Virtually from the inception of the notion of a Canadian national literature, nature has occupied a central place in critical conversations. As Laurie Ricou suggests, "Canadian literary studies, with their long-standing interest in nature, wilderness, and landscape, might be said to have always been ecocritical."⁸ The essays in this book suggest the accuracy of Ricou's somewhat tentative claim, showing that venerable critical interests contextualize and inform current ecocritical models. For Canadian writers at least since the Confederation period, for regionalist and thematic

critics, and, most recently, for ecocritics, the value, symbolism, integrity, and ontology of nature were and remain fundamental matters. (Which is not to say that such subjects have not also been found trite: Canadian writing about nature has always had detractors.) In his “Conclusion” to the *Literary History of Canada* (1965), a landmark essay, Frye several times suggests that an agonistic relation to the landscape defines Canadian culture; he notes that a characteristic of Canadian poetry is a predominant “tone of deep terror in regard to nature.”⁹ This hypothesis, surely one of Frye’s most notorious observations about Canadian writing, epitomizes the centrality of nature in Canadian cultural discourse, albeit in negative terms. The idea of a “garrison mentality,” probably his most familiar single phrase about Canadian society, likewise captures the sense of hostility to the environment that ostensibly defines the Canadian psyche.¹⁰ Frye’s writing on Canadian literature and culture continues to be a critical touchstone, despite the strenuous efforts of waves of critics who have resisted the emphasis on literary theme and overarching claims about the country, which inevitably seem inadequate when examined closely.

Critical treatments of nature in Canadian literature from Frye’s era, a heyday of literary nationalism in Canada and of thematic criticism (on which more below), may appear thoroughly outmoded. The literature about which Frye wrote so persuasively may also seem outdated. Ideas of Canadian literary history and traditions have been transformed since his day; the explosion of literary activity in Canada since the 1960s, the resultant range of literary subjects and forms, and the diversification of authorship have made comprehensive descriptions of Canadian writing virtually impossible. But aesthetic and conceptual complexities exist even in apparently familiar territory, and connections may be found between past critical models and current intellectual fashions. This anthology attempts to survey the intricacies of Canadian environmental criticism, and to emphasize both continuity and change. It provides a narrative of the emergence of Canadian ecocritical discourse. Taking seriously the challenge implicit in Susie O’Brien’s question of whether there is “a substantial body of what might be called ‘Canadian ecocriticism’ lurking

under names other than ‘Canadian’ or ‘ecocritical,’” it collects significant statements on Canadian literature from 1965 onward (with one earlier exception).¹¹ The anthology is necessarily selective and provisional, but it seeks to exemplify attributes of the large and varied body of environmental approaches to Canadian writing. The chapters that follow demonstrate that “Canadian ecocriticism” is a capacious term. Just as Canadian literature is amorphous – multilingual, multicultural, multi-regional – Canadian criticism has investigated the representation and discursive production of natural environments in a panoply of ways. The maple leaf at the centre of the Canadian flag is, of course, red. The essays herein together suggest that the maple’s green leaves are a fitting symbol of a dimension of Canadian criticism.

2. ECOCRITICISM: THEN, NOW, HERE

Ecocriticism still has a relatively short official history – “official” in contrast to the protracted history of critical interest in nature and related concepts, such as the pastoral mode. In the early 1990s, some literary critics felt it imperative to respond to environmental crises: ecocriticism emerged from this moment, its beginnings reflective of the perceived immediacy and severity of environmental change, and of what was thought to be the need for scholars in humanistic disciplines to make the environment the prime object of study. Thus an activist impulse has informed ecocritical practice from the outset. By the end of the 1990s, ecocriticism had achieved some prominence as a distinct approach to literary studies, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, even as it had clear ties to other forms of green cultural studies. In its early stages, ecocriticism was strongly shaped by accounts of British Romantic poetry – notably Jonathan Bate’s *Romantic Ecology* and Karl Kroeber’s *Ecological Literary Criticism*¹² – and of American literature in a vein that encompasses the Transcendentalist writers of the nineteenth century and the writers of the twentieth century who follow paths established by Emerson and Thoreau. The development and institutionalization of

ecocriticism were closely tied to American literature and the American academy – or at least to its periphery. The Western Literature Association, a respected but specialized scholarly body, gave rise to the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE), which was established in 1992. The nascent ecocritical project, in this manifestation, made central the Transcendentalist legacy, contemporary American essayists, and, for evident reasons, American environments. The nearly overwhelming influence of Thoreau as a literary and philosophical point of reference made Walden Pond one of the sacred locations of the new field, just as Wordsworth's Lake District was fundamentally important to an emergent ecocriticism that took British forms of Romanticism as points of departure. As Lawrence Buell has observed, early ecocriticism claimed "two semi-coordinated and interpenetrating epicenters: British romanticism, with a genre focus especially on poetry in that tradition (including its twentieth-century Anglo-American filiations), and U.S. nature writing (ditto), with a genre focus especially on the Thoreauvian imprint," even if "few ecocritics, if pressed about the matter, would have claimed that these particular generic and historical foci were to be considered the sole rightful provinces for ecocritical work."¹³ Buell's second point is especially significant. The "epicenters" may never have been understood to define ecocriticism – to establish its lexicon, to provide the solitary models of environmentally astute and relevant literature, to create a normative vision of nature, and so on – yet their importance to the developing field can hardly be overstated. Many studies that anticipated and thus shaped ecocriticism in its later forms, especially in the United States, emerged from American literary scholarship, such as Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden*, Joseph W. Meeker's *The Comedy of Survival*, and William Rueckert's "Literature and Ecology." Perhaps the most important of such works is Buell's *The Environmental Imagination*, which tied historical approaches to Thoreau to the burgeoning literary interest in contemporary environmentalism.¹⁴ Its publication in 1995 provided American ecocriticism with an anchoring critical study, one that cast Thoreau as a focal figure in environmental literature and philosophy and that, in turn, placed environmental concerns at the heart of an Ameri-

can literary tradition. While early ecocritics may not have intended their thematic, generic, and authorial emphases to become rigid paradigms – Buell notes that “the initial de facto concentration on selected literary genres within the long Anglo-American nineteenth century was contingent rather than inherent”¹⁵ – they have nonetheless exerted considerable influence on the field at large, even as ecocriticism has become planetary in scope and practice.

The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology, published the year after *The Environmental Imagination*, is commonly understood to mark the culmination of ecocriticism’s first phase. The anthology demonstrated the existence of a coherent body of environmentally oriented criticism and provided templates for further studies.¹⁶ The editors, Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, gave a succinct definition of the field that their book would, at least for a time, represent: ecocriticism is “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment.”¹⁷ This description is broad – each of its chief terms is open to interpretation – yet powerful in its simply phrased suggestion that relations between literature and the environment form the basis of ecocriticism, whatever shapes it may take. *The Ecocriticism Reader* revisited and revised the literary canon, proposing the significance of often-overlooked writers belonging to various traditions understood to have environmental (and environmentalist) resonance. The anthology confirmed (to ecocritics) and asserted (to other readers) that ecocriticism was a viable mode of inquiry with a constituency of practitioners, with clear aims and interpretative strategies, and with institutional authority. Subsequent accounts of ecocriticism’s history have almost uniformly pointed to the publication of *The Ecocriticism Reader* as the moment of the field’s arrival.¹⁸ The book’s importance and continued relevance are undeniable, but from a specifically Canadianist perspective, its lack of attention to Canadian literature is notable: the anthology does not examine Canadian writers and their works.¹⁹ Its essays focus almost exclusively on American writers and representations of American locations; the impression is created, however inadvertently, that ecocriticism is (or was) principally an American enterprise. (Ecocriticism has since the mid-1990s generally

become international in scope.²⁰) A Canadian equivalent of *The Ecocriticism Reader* could serve as a belated corrective, concentrating on the Canadian literature that the anthology appeared to overlook. Perhaps more significant than a remedial or additive approach, however, would be an investigation of the particularities of Canadian approaches to the study of literature and the environment, which intersect with, as well as differ from, environmental criticism as understood and practised elsewhere. The present volume attempts to provide some evidence for such an investigation. *Greening the Maple* seeks to suggest that environmental approaches to Canadian literature represent not merely a branch of the American or the British tree, but instead, to shift metaphors, a different but related species. Canadian ecocriticism has, it may be said, a somewhat ironic relation to its American and British equivalents: it is as Canadian as possible, under the circumstances.²¹

The internationalization of ecocriticism since the 1990s has made it evident that ecocritical practices are not the same the world over, and that not all literatures – national, regional, local – adhere to or accord with theories derived from British, American, or indeed other literary traditions. Environmental approaches to Canadian literature may, in short, be considered independently of other nationally inflected versions of ecocriticism. The purported “topocentrism” of Canadian literature²² and the unmistakable emphasis on wilderness in Canadian iconography²³ – the myriad representations of nature that circulate in Canadian arts, letters, politics, and other envisionings of the nation – have influenced, often strongly, studies of environment in Canadian writing. The persistent conception in political rhetoric and popular culture of Canada as the True North, strong and free, suggests the close relation of nature and nation. Canadian ecocriticism, guided by the many distinctive features of Canadian cultures and places, has tended to be pluralist. It has demonstrated strong connections to British and American ideas, but it has also attended closely to Canadian cultural traditions of imagining the natural world. It has acknowledged, too, the existence of a domestic ecocriticism *avant la lettre*. Among its notable characteristics may be counted a distinct emphasis on poetry as well as on non-fictional nature

writing (the journal *Canadian Poetry* has been an especially important ecocritical forum²⁴); the existence of both ecocriticism and *l'écocritique* (sometimes interconnected, sometimes two solitudes); a longstanding fascination with animals that differs from, yet complements, the critical turn to “the question of the animal” in posthumanist studies²⁵; and a continual interest in the intersections of political theories and environmental politics. Such characteristics neither define Canadian ecocriticism exhaustively nor mark its absolute distinction from ecocriticism elsewhere. They suggest, however, some of the topics to which conversations about literature and environment in Canada have often returned.

It may seem parochial to focus on a national variation of ecocriticism when the field has largely moved beyond the concerns of its first inceptions. The interconnectedness of environments and economies is, after all, an inescapable aspect of life in the twenty-first century – global climate change and global capitalism are ineluctable and interrelated phenomena. Images of the planet at risk make narrowly conceived understandings of nature seem irrelevant or untenable.²⁶ Locally focussed critical models can, however, coexist with forms of “eco-cosmopolitan”²⁷ inquiry: authors, texts, environments, and even readers can be illuminated by a variety of interpretative paradigms. In other words, national (but neither essentialist nor isolationist) approaches to the study of literature and the environment can complement (rather than preclude) other approaches in a constellation of ecocritical modes. The “transnational turn”²⁸ in ecocritical scholarship, as Scott Slovic has suggested,²⁹ shows that a comparative paradigm is a powerful means of conceiving of ecocriticism as the sum of its various national strains.³⁰ The proliferation of various national affiliates of the U.S.-based ASLE suggests further that ecocriticism has become at once global and local, simultaneously cosmopolitan, national, regional, and local in its manifestations.³¹ Ursula K. Heise suggested some years ago that ecocriticism had become sufficiently complex that it required “book-length introductions.”³² This observation becomes ever more apt as time passes. The history of environmental approaches to Canadian literature has, however, scarcely been examined, even as the existence of lively ecocritical debates and

of an established community of scholars has been noted. As a result, valuable contributions have at times been insufficiently recognized. The older essays in this volume will be familiar to some readers and new to others; their presence in the book is based on a belief in their continued relevance.

3. CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING: SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Canadian landscapes and their apparent distinctiveness (whether understood in positive or negative terms) have fascinated writers and critics throughout the history of literature in Canada, before as well as after Confederation. A preoccupation with nature is a widely acknowledged (and, yes, somewhat stereotypical) characteristic of Canadian literature. Celebrations and condemnations of natural settings, and evocations of the spirits of places appear frequently in Canadian letters, as critics have on occasion lamented. The recurring, if not constant, attention to nature has, of course, salient historical and political dimensions. The dread of nature and the reverence for it that are both evident in Canadian literature can be understood in terms of Canada's relations to Britain, France, and the United States, and to a degree to other countries as well. In Canadian literature in English and French, aesthetic conventions "imported" from beyond the national borders have had remarkable staying power.³³ As Susan Glickman demonstrates in *The Picturesque and the Sublime*,³⁴ a fascinating account of the roles that the titular aesthetic categories have played in Canadian writing, traditional European philosophies and styles, and especially notions of nature's beauty and terror, have had far-reaching and multifarious effects on the literature of this country. But such perspectives – neoclassical, Romantic, colonial, and so on – coexist, in Canadian literary history, with both older and more recent attitudes toward the natural world. Don McKay, a highly influential poet and essayist, suggests in a powerful account of Canadian nature poetry, for instance, that environmental contrasts between

the Old World and the New World created an aesthetic challenge for early Canadian writers in particular: “Neither the Enlightenment values of rational order nor the Romantic ideal of a humane and humanizing nature easily applies to the country which greeted – if that’s the word – the pioneers.”³⁵ In the late twentieth century and the early twenty-first, writers have become highly aware of dramatic environmental changes and crises both local and global, and often self-conscious about their apparent belatedness as “nature writers” or “nature poets” in a seemingly post-natural age. Yet conventional ways of seeing the natural world have remained influential. (McKay’s own writing is an apposite example: it engages the legacy of Romantic nature poetry while savvily demonstrating its author’s knowledge of twentieth-century philosophy.)

Canadian literary responses to the natural world have sometimes, but not always, yoked together a sense of novelty with familiar modes of expression, using received forms to describe “new” places, flora and fauna, climates, and, to be sure, peoples. Before and after Confederation, Canadian writers have evoked local conditions in a literary climate in which generic and formal models established elsewhere have held sway. Many writers have found such models suitable for their purposes; others have chafed at the apparent contradictions between aesthetic conventions and the seeming newness or unfamiliarity of Canadian landscapes. Literary respondents to Canadian environments have attempted to discover or invent vocabularies and literary forms appropriate to the scale and the particularities of the country.³⁶ This dynamic of simultaneous literary adaptation and invention, with a discordant variety of results, is perhaps inevitable whenever languages and ideas are highly mobile – that is, whenever historical and political circumstances allow or cause their movement. Historical differences between Canada and other settler-invader countries (including the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa) nonetheless bear upon the distinctions that may be observed between Canadian environmental writing and commentary and other related ecological traditions, including those of the United States, Canada’s neighbour and perpetual point of comparison. As W. H. New suggests, the “verbal trope” of “land” enjoys a paradoxical

quality in Canadian culture, functioning “both as an icon of stability and as a medium of change.”³⁷ Much the same can be said of “nature” in Canada, which has been perceived as both terrifyingly different and reassuringly familiar. (Among other things, as the chapters in this book demonstrate.)

Linda Hutcheon has suggested that “Canada has been – has had to be – sensitive to issues of difference and exploitation: it defined itself as a nation (a bilingual and bicultural one) in 1867, but it continued to be a colony of Britain until, some would say, it graduated to being a colony of the United States.”³⁸ Canadian writers have frequently attended to cultural, linguistic, and idiomatic variations in their efforts to express Canadian sensibilities in light of the country’s colonial and postcolonial history. They have struggled to decide on appropriate subjects and on the appropriate language with which to convey them: literary languages in Canada include English and French, in various registers, as well as many indigenous and “foreign” languages. The names of places illustrate the important difference that language makes in relation to physical space. Think of “the Queen Charlotte Islands” and “Haida Gwaii,” or “the Strait of Georgia” and “the Salish Sea”: these are and are not the same places. The tremendous “transnational and global currency”³⁹ of Canada’s diasporic literature provides another context for the study of Canadian environments. The formal and idiomatic strategies used by Canadian writers of non-European origins to represent Canada, and notably its urban spaces, link the cultural dimensions of diasporic experiences to ecological dimensions, as Canadian locations are imagined in relation to homelands, places of exile, and other sites of memory, identity, presence, and absence.⁴⁰

4. TROPES IN THIS COLLECTION

It has been suggested that thematic criticism, predominant in the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, may have hindered the expression of a Canadian ecological sensibility.⁴¹ Canadian thematic criticism, which identi-

fied overarching and distinguishing motifs and concerns in the national literature, claimed that a fearful response to nature was an essential aspect of Canadian cultural identity. Its contribution to Canadian ecocriticism, however, has perhaps been misunderstood. The national myth that thematic criticism promoted was one of withstanding conflict with nature: the hostile Canadian wilderness was so uninhabitable, as Frye, Atwood, and others posited in their surveys of Canadian writing, that settlement and ultimately nationhood occurred only despite it. Frye's and Atwood's characterizations of Canadian environments as deeply vexed and thoroughly ambivalent are markedly different from American literary traditions of writing that celebrate nature as a foundational element of the nation, including the Thoreauvian and Emersonian traditions that have been so important to (American) ecocriticism. (In the United States, rough equivalents to Canadian thematic criticism have not always been seen as antithetical to ecocriticism. For instance, Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* is recognized as a proto-ecocritical study of the links between pastoral and industrial tropes in American literature and culture.) Despite its totalizing claims, which tend to overlook environmental and literary diversity, thematic criticism marks a contribution to an important tradition of theorizing representations of the Canadian wilderness in literature, one distinguished further by its postcolonial and comparatist orientation. It seems possible that skepticism about the merits of thematic approaches to Canadian literary criticism served to inhibit the emergence of an ecocritical tradition in Canada, whereas thematic criticism itself pointed, it appears in retrospect, in that direction. *Greening the Maple* foregrounds thematic criticism because this historical moment in Canadian criticism represents a contradictory (and notoriously contentious) reckoning of nature's importance to Canadian culture.

Thematic criticism's brief but influential "flowering"⁴² gave rise to a strong backlash instigated by critics including Frank Davey, Barry Cameron, Michael Dixon, W. J. Keith, and Russell Brown,⁴³ who viewed the thematic approach as "extra-literary," "reductive,"⁴⁴ and ultimately "dismissible."⁴⁵ These charges effectively build upon A.J.M. Smith's denigration in 1943 of provincialism in the works of the Confederation Poets

– their representations of “nature humanised, endowed with feeling, and made sentimental”⁴⁶ – and his promotion of cosmopolitan sophistication in those he heralded as the country’s most promising modernist poets:

Whether this new poetry is distinctively national is a question that our writers are not much concerned with. It is not that they have recoiled from the somewhat blatant nationalism of the 1900’s into a disillusioned indifference but that they have grown interested in the world-wide revolutionary movement of modern times.... They are Canadian poets because they are importing something very much needed in their homeland. They are no longer in the exporting business, for maple sugar is a sickly and cloying commodity.⁴⁷

Anti-thematicist critics urged commentators on Canadian literature to move “beyond thematics”; much earlier Smith had, in light of the similarly dim view he took of literary nationalism, urged writers and critics to move “beyond nature.” Like Smith’s critique of the parochialism of “native” literature, the anti-thematic backlash – and the cosmopolitan bias evinced by the Continental critical theory that, T. D. MacLulich argues, came to supplant thematic criticism⁴⁸ – had a measurable impact on the production, publication, and practice of literary criticism with a nationalist focus. The charge mounted by Davey and others informed the official editorial policy at the *University of Toronto Quarterly*,⁴⁹ and the more informal publication decisions of the editorial boards of *Essays on Canadian Writing* and ECW Press, the latter of which, as Brown argues, was “for some time ... the chief publisher of book-length Canadian criticism.”⁵⁰ This bias undoubtedly precluded publications by would-be thematicist critics. If there is a rupture, then, in the articulation of pro-to-ecocritical discourse in Canada, perhaps it is less a product of the pernicious effect of Frye’s theory of Canada’s “garrison mentality,” or of Atwood’s theory of Canadian survivalism, than it is a product of the anti-thematic mood that affected Canadian literary criticism for the better part of two and a half decades.⁵¹

Whether ecocriticism is partly a reinvention of thematic criticism is a provocative question, one that warrants sustained consideration.⁵² Much work remains to be done in terms of theorizing the correspondences and differences between the two discourses; a thematic “retrospective” is overdue. Indeed, as Margery Fee argues, “to turn our backs on thematic criticism ... is to fall into an even more treacherous swamp.... [I]f we can’t clearly distinguish Canadian literature from other literatures, especially American and British, then it vanishes as a subject.”⁵³ Thematic criticism – “the only clearly defined critical school to emerge in Canadian criticism,” it has been claimed⁵⁴ – undoubtedly belongs in a historical continuum of nature-oriented criticism in Canada. This conviction is reflected in the structure of *Greening the Maple*, which follows a roughly (but not exclusively) chronological order.

“Nature and Nation: Before and Beyond Thematic Criticism” suggests a starting point for Canadian ecocriticism, and features excerpts from signal books by Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood, in addition to essays by Rosemary Sullivan, Sherrill E. Grace, and Heather Murray. Many of the chapters in this anthology concern aesthetic and cultural influence as they pertain to “Canadian” ways of seeing and writing nature; the selections from Frye, Atwood, and Sullivan are representative of the manner in which thematic criticism tied representations of the natural world to efforts to discern a national identity. (Atwood in particular tackles her subject with a dry sense of humour.) Like Atwood and Frye, Sullivan invokes a comparatist paradigm, contrasting what she deems the function of “*La forêt*” / “the wilderness” in selected works by John Richardson, Susanna Moodie, and Archibald Belaney (a.k.a. Grey Owl) with forest symbolism in American mythology. Sullivan invokes both thematic criticism and psychoanalytic theory in her exploration of these tropes and of ways in which Canadian literature is engaged in “an ongoing dialogue with the wilderness, an obsessive, repetitive effort to relive (and perhaps reframe) that moment of original encounter.” In her proto-ecofeminist essay, Grace suggests that the works of Canadian writers generally – and those of Gabrielle Roy, Margaret Laurence, and Atwood in particular – evince a pastoral sensibility that codifies

rural virtues (also seen as natural and female) in opposition to the dehumanizing aspects of the urban world (understood as cultural and male). Although her claim that Canada lacks “major urban literature” could today be contested, since an urban literature has flourished, with many important works by women and diasporic writers, the concerns that gave rise to Grace’s study of the gendered representation of “natural” and “man-made” landscapes still resonate with ecofeminist scholars.⁵⁵ In her essay, Murray asks whether a distinct tradition of wilderness writing by Canadian women exists, and, if so, how its predominant forms and tropes can be characterized. She concludes, with reference to thematic and poststructuralist criticism, that Canadian women authors writing “wilderness” have been at once canonized and marginalized, a paradox founded on a deeper cultural ambivalence towards nature and towards those who, by the logic of essentialism, are considered closer to it.

“The Emergence of Ecocriticism in Canada” includes editorials and articles by critics who began in the 1990s to consider, in light of literary criticism’s environmental turn in the United States and the United Kingdom, how Canadian literature could, as D.M.R. Bentley puts it, “confirm or assist the reintegration of humanity and nature.” Adopting an evaluative approach, Bentley proposes an “ecological poetics” based on principles of interdependence and diversity: he devises a method of assessment that addresses such questions as whether a poem’s “formal and typographical configuration is fitting or suited to its subject,” and “whether it shows contempt or respect for the natural and human world.” Bentley’s material and pragmatic preoccupations announce themselves in his concern with poem as artefact (“Where and on what kind of paper was this poem printed?”), in his emphasis on mimesis (“How effectively does it communicate a sense of place?”), and on the production of affect (“How effectively does it communicate an emotion by generating ... a feeling analogous to the one that it purports to express?”). Linda Hutcherson evaluates Frye’s legacy in light of what she posits as a contradiction between his evident dismay at the exploitation of nature and the role that “systematic,” “totalizing” theories such as his own play in the facilitation of such destruction. She concludes that Frye maintained an uneasy “*both/*

and” relation to the discourses of modernism and colonialism, and, thus, to the subjugation and exploitation of nature that they are considered to have enabled. In a pair of “green” editorials, Laurie Ricou reflects (with some skepticism at first) on what the emergence of “ecocriticism” means for Canadian literary studies. He observes that, while “Canadian critics have been loud ... on landscape (whether to emphasize its literary prominence or to lament its obsessiveness as theme),” they “lag behind” their American counterparts in the “closely related matter of environmentalism.” Surveying ecocritical methods in use at the time, Ricou identifies approaches (ecofeminism and environmental justice among them) that appear to him to be full of potential for Canadian critics. In the course of his review of *The Ecocriticism Reader* (in which he notes, with something like Susie O’Brien’s “twinge of patriotic crankiness” [see below], that the anthology is almost exclusively American in focus), Ricou urges would-be environmental critics in Canada to ground themselves in the science of ecology. More particularly, he encourages an “open[ing] [of] the creative irrational un-mind,” so that we may more keenly experience biological interrelatedness.

Successive early Canadian ecocritics build upon the insights of these proponents of environmentally oriented criticism in their efforts to theorize and apply ecocriticism in Canadian literary contexts, frequently with a greater emphasis on discourses of environmental politics and social justice. Claiming a disconnection between the lack of ecocritical interest shown by Canadian literary scholarship and the efforts of contemporary poets “to redefine their relationship with the environment by using a holistic approach that recognizes both human and non-human life forms as equal and interdependent,” Gabriele Helms advocates a “shift from an intellectual anorexia and complacency” to an active engagement with environmental politics. Adapting Bentley’s model of evaluative environmental poetics, Helms analyzes poems by Anne Campbell and Fred Wah – examples, she argues, of “complex ... environmental visions in contemporary Canadian poetry.” She concludes (citing Saroj Chawla) in defence of the efficacy of poetry in times of ecological crisis: “If a change in the approach to nature is to come about in our society, it will have to

be at the level of perception, and at the linguistic level such a perception can be reflected in the language of poetry.” Building upon Carl Berger’s insights into Victorian-Canadian naturalism,⁵⁶ Susie O’Brien provides a wide-ranging inquiry into ways in which the nationalist mythology of the United States as “nature’s nation” contributes to the impression that the American cultural context nurtures ecocritical thinking to a greater extent than does the Canadian, with its ostensibly more conservative and colonial sensibility. O’Brien concludes that, whereas American mythology promised an “unmediated relationship” between nature and nation, the Canadian equivalent has been “plagued by an awareness of mediation, of the presence of language as language, a structure through which nature – and nation – can never be directly experienced but must always be translated.”

“Reading Canadian Landscapes” suggests further intersections of regionalist, bioregional, and ecocritical discourses, but the essays in this section take a wide view of the subject, frequently unsettling assumptions about natural boundaries and the potential limitations of place-based critical approaches. In “Nature Trafficking: Writing and Environment in the Western Canada–U.S. Borderlands,” Jenny Kerber prompts a critical re-examination of the cultural construction of border issues. Borderlands are inherently dynamic, she argues; they belie and resist the oversimplification foisted upon them by political, economic, and historical ideologies. Kerber examines the “mediating function” of borders, “both in terms of cultural difference and conflict, and in terms of how nature itself is altered and experienced on either side of surveyed lines.” Ultimately she calls for “a more thorough consideration of the ‘border effect’ on literary discourses of nation and nature,” and a “richer understanding of borderlands as places of conflict, refuge, and cooperation.” In “Calypso Trails: Botanizing on the Bruce Peninsula,” Catriona Sandilands describes in anecdote her encounters with orchids, and queries the veracity of claims that John Muir, the celebrated American naturalist, travelled the Bruce Peninsula, in order to examine the effects of interpretive programming in parks. Sandilands takes a skeptical view of Parks Canada’s “tripartite mandate of preservation, education, and recreation” in light of the threats

posed to the survival of endangered native flora such as the *Calypso bulbosa*. She concludes wryly that the “neoliberal orchid reality” is that their “conservation is [ultimately] tied to their commodification.” Sandilands has suggested in discussion that her essay is not ecocriticism per se but rather a form of nature writing; readers will doubtless perceive the continuities between her approach and others, as well as the insights that it affords.⁵⁷ Cheryl Lousley’s essay reconsiders “place, rurality, and region” in Canadian literature and repurposes Georg Lukács’s analysis of realist fiction and Raymond Williams’s Marxist critique of urban–rural relations in order to develop an ecocritical method that foregrounds “the politics of knowledge” in relation to discourses of risk and environmental justice. Lousley analyzes novels by Matt Cohen and David Adams Richards that represent the environmental degradation of landscapes of rural Ontario and New Brunswick, respectively; she maintains that “a key task for ecocriticism is to consider how knowledge of environmental ills and risks – or the very lack or limitations of environmental knowledge – is staged in contemporary literature.”

“Environments and Cross-Cultural Encounters” suggests points of entry for a postcolonial ecocritical practice in the Canadian context. Linda Morra’s essay considers, in light of Jonathan Bordo’s theory of the “wilderness sublime” in Canadian landscape art,⁵⁸ the charge that Group of Seven artists and Emily Carr were complicit “in the perpetuation of a homogenous national identity that often elided difference and effectively erased First Nations presence from artistic representations, or appropriated First Nations cultural production.” Morra argues that such cultural criticism “imposes expectations ... that are part of our own ideological inheritance, and, in so doing, dismisses Carr’s remarkable artistic precociousness, her sense of self-agency in relation to the dominant ideology of the period, and the rather innovative ways in which she was interacting with First Nations communities and depicting their cultural artefacts when her own peers would not have considered the subject worthwhile.” Morra shows that Carr urged Canadian artists “to forge an indigenous artistic language and expression that reflected national concerns,” “to search as the Indian did, amid our own surroundings and material, for

something of our own through which to express ourselves, and make for ourselves garments of our own spinning to fit our needs.” Morra concludes that Carr’s treatment of indigeneity is vexed and contradictory: although she resisted “her own imperial ideological inheritance,” her art and writing also reflect “fantasies of colonial fulfillment” in the incorporation of First Nations artefacts (in her early works) and in their elision (in the landscape paintings of her later years). Morra is intent on salvaging Carr’s artistic and literary legacy from a hostile critical practice that would catch her in this “cultural double bind.”

The essay by Stephanie Posthumus and Élise Salaün offers a narrative of ecocritical thought in Quebec. Salaün provides a historical overview of representations of nature in Québécois literature; Posthumus, in a more theoretical vein, “attempts to define [contemporary] ecocritical thought in Quebec based on a larger set of disciplines and more general questions of space and place.” Salaün’s identification of recurrent tropes and motifs in the Québécois tradition perceptively suggests grounds for comparison with the anglophone tradition of thematic criticism; in this regard, she in effect critiques Caroline Bayard’s assertion that “Historical criticism in Quebec knew no such temptations” as those evinced by English-Canadian fiction in its “preoccupation ... with environmental hypotheses ... and the triumph of myth – be it a garrison or wilderness – over history.”⁵⁹ Salaün proposes, in fact, that “centrifugal temptations”⁶⁰ such as those demonstrated by Frye and Atwood have a long history in Québécois literature, one that she traces back to efforts in the mid-nineteenth century to preserve the character, language, and religion of French-Canadian identity through agrarian imagery, and that she traces forward, through discussions of the urban novel and nature poetry in the wake of the Quiet Revolution, into the representation of ecological concerns in works by contemporary Québécois writers. Posthumus considers the implications of O’Brien’s discussion of linguistic mediation in the experience of nature for a comparatist practice based on the differences between francophone and anglophone ecocritical thought. Posthumus observes that, although “Ecocritical thinking is alive and well in Quebec ... [it] exists ... not as a literal ‘translation’ of North American

ecocriticism. At the same time ... Québécois ecocritical thinking is not bound by local or provincial interests." She concludes that, although "language continues to present an undeniable barrier to the exchange of ideas between Quebec and the rest of North America ... this situation also presents a uniquely creative environment": it is "multilingual and multicultural, built on a self-reflexive model, caught up in language and its multiple possibilities (and difficulties)."

In "DecolonizAsian: Reading Asian and First Nations Relations in Literature," Rita Wong analyzes the intersections of community and environmental concerns in a range of literary works. Wong's critical method is distinctly activist and anti-colonial. She concludes her essay by suggesting that "building alliances that respect First Nations values of interdependency and land stewardship is an urgent focus if we are to foster ethical ways of long-term survival on this Earth." In her political focus and in her attention to Asian Canadian writing, Wong's criticism provides a vision of contemporary Canada that is different from (and less sanguine than) those in other chapters; its urgency is a challenge to critical complacency.

In its allusion to Charles G. D. Roberts, "Neighbours Unknown: Animals in Canadian Literature" announces its interest in the tradition of the wild animal story, "the only literary genre for which a specifically Canadian origin has been claimed."⁶¹ The selection reprinted from Atwood's "Animal Victims" (after "Survival," perhaps the most notorious of the theses advanced in her eponymous "guide") develops her comparative study of American, British, and Canadian literary themes through an allegorical reading of the representation of animals in the three traditions. Her contentions that the animals in British literature are little more than "Englishmen in furry zippered suits, often with a layer of human clothing added on top"; that those in American literature are prey that "comment on the general imperialism of the American cast of mind"; and that those in Canadian literature are more commonly victims with which the Canadian subject identifies have something akin to a camp currency in contemporary discussions of Canadian literature. Atwood's more measured analyses of a range of canonical Canadian works

about animals (no less than her critical swipes at Alec Lucas's premature declaration of the demise of the animal story) have been largely overshadowed by the sensationalism of her claims about Canadians' "victim mentality." Misao Dean's essay offers a feminist critique of the biases of a critical tradition that continues to analyze Roberts's animal stories according to their verisimilitude;⁶² she suggests that "The stories demand analysis ... as attempts to create an illusion of reality." She finds that, "Far from 'reflecting' reality, Roberts's stories create as reality a natural world which is inflected with assumptions about ... the masculinist discourse of the early twentieth century in which the 'primal' experiences of hunting, scouting, and woodcraft serve as an antidote for the feminized life of the industrial city dweller." Linking the stories to influential cultural trends of Roberts's era such as the American "Nature Movement" and the attendant "crisis of masculinity" that is seen to have inspired it, Dean concludes that Roberts's "(m)animal 'biographies'" "[do] the work of ideology" "by constructing the reader as subject, 'naturally' predatory, material, and male."

Carrie Dawson's "The 'I' in Beaver: Sympathetic Identification and Self-Representation in Grey Owl's *Pilgrims of the Wild*" "extends and interrogates" Atwood's theory of the Canadian subject's identification with victimized animals. Dawson suggests that we pay "close attention to the imaginative, rhetorical and otherwise *literary* dimensions of animal stories," which in Grey Owl's case, "involves foregoing sensational accounts of assumed identity, and replacing them with more provocative questions about the relationship between sympathetic identification and strategic self-representation in a genre of writing where the former has been consistently over-determined and the latter has been typically under-emphasized." Pamela Banting's essay considers how Karsten Heuer's account of his and Leanne Allison's trek to film the Porcupine caribou migration might "extend epistemology" in the manner of avant-garde performance art and other artistic and philosophical collaborations of an interspecies kind. Banting notes a "distinct paucity of work on ... texts about wild animals in the wild" and of work on herd animals more particularly – an absence that she attributes to, among other factors, the

dearth of criticism about non-fiction in Canada; the general dismissal of animal literature; and the “Western tendency to categorize thought in terms of interiority.” Banting argues that the ambulation that Heuer and Allison adopt has a profound potential to “lead ... to forms of insight that extend beyond the parameters of normative scientific and behaviourist approaches to animals other than ourselves.”

“In Full Bloom: New Directions in Canadian Theory” suggests promising lines of Canadian theoretical inquiry. In “Poetics of the Semiosphere,” Adam Dickinson offers a sophisticated discussion of the potential for pataphysics – “the science of imaginary solutions” – to transform the discourse of postmodern ecocriticism through its emphasis on “the contingencies and interconnections in the overlapping worlds of signification that constitute cultural and biological environments.” Dickinson’s essay focusses on poetic works by Erin Mouré and Lisa Robertson, both of whom “imagine scientific research into the urban environment and its membranes of alternative civic memory and natural history” by way of questioning the impact of realist and scientific epistemologies on the manifestation of urban “nature” in Toronto and Vancouver, respectively. Dickinson frames a specific challenge to ecocriticism’s traditional appeals to science and to “the resources of scientific analysis in interpreting texts,” which a postmodern critique exposes as constrained by mimetic and reductivist approaches. The ecopoetic sensibilities of Mouré and Robertson, by contrast, suggest to Dickinson productive grounds for a biosemiotic inquiry into the *Umwelten* of the poets as they engage the histories and surfaces of their urban environments. Travis V. Mason’s “Literature and Geology: An Experiment in Interdisciplinary, Comparative Ecocriticism” explores the intersections of literature and geology, fields united in a selection of lyric poems by Don McKay, W. H. New, and Dan Wylie. Drawing on McKay’s notion of “geopoetry,” Mason suggests that representations of geology and geologic time in the works of the three poets “provide impetus for thinking about a human (and poetic) relation to the temporal and phenomenal world,” and thus prompt a corrective attitude of wonder inspired by the recognition of humanity’s “incidental” relation to evolutionary processes.

Nelson Gray's "The Dwelling Perspective in English-Canadian Drama" shifts the focus onto another genre and takes a historical view of Canadian theatre, demonstrating that environment and indigeneity have been longstanding and intertwined dramatic concerns. Although the works that he analyzes may not all be well known, his discussion of (sometimes problematic) cultural and environmental representations resonates with other chapters in this volume.

In the appendix Lisa Szabo-Jones surveys the emergence and development of ecocritical scholarship in Canada. She documents the formation of the Association for Literature, Environment, and Culture in Canada / Association pour la littérature, l'environnement et la culture au Canada (ALECC), and theorizes, with reference to New and Ricou, why a seeming myopia in ecocritical scholarship south of the forty-ninth parallel suggested a need to establish a Canadian chapter of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE). As co-founder and editorial board member of *The Goose* (ALECC's newsletter-cum-journal), Szabo-Jones has unique insights into the publication's mandate. ALECC is not synonymous with Canadian ecocriticism, but its activities provide one measure of the state of the field. As an organization, ALECC is relatively multidisciplinary, despite the "Literature" in its name; its members are academics from various fields and writers and artists who work in a range of forms and mediums. As ALECC and other groups develop, and as ecocriticism continues to become an institutionally established field, the central place of literary studies will likely change as a greater diversity of texts and cultural forms come under environmental scrutiny and as environmental scholarship, teaching, and professional organizations fulfil their multidisciplinary potential. It remains to be seen, therefore, how the genealogies discernible within literary studies will bear on a future ecocriticism that encompasses a range of disciplines.

The essays in this volume concentrate to a great extent on lyric poetry and realist fiction, as these genres have been privileged by Canadianist ecocriticism. But other literary modes are receiving increased critical attention, expanding the purview of ecocriticism beyond the

forms most closely linked to Romantic literature. New developments in environmental criticism will certainly emerge in response to the plethora of innovative, experimental, and accomplished literary works that depart from and extend traditions of Canadian writing, and that seem to demand sophisticated environmental analysis: how will ecocriticism engage Christian Bök's Xenotext Experiment, for example, which links poetry and genetic manipulation?⁶³ Relatively understudied literary forms (children's literature, genre fiction, early colonial writing) await examination. Drama has assumed a more visible place in Canadian ecocriticism, as Gray's chapter demonstrates. In 2010, a special issue of *Canadian Theatre Review* was devoted to theatre and ecology. In their introduction, Gray and Sheila Rabillard write that "Ecologically informed discourse about theatre and performance has, with only a few exceptions, been strangely absent in Canada."⁶⁴ Gray and Rabillard draw a contrast between the relative absence of ecocritical attention to drama in Canada and the many environmentally oriented studies of other genres. The issue of *Canadian Theatre Review*, however, seeks to link theatre studies to ecocriticism as practised elsewhere in Canadian literary studies: "Theatre has never shied away from difficult topics; and despite the harrowing conditions of our age ... theatre artists and producers are responding to such conditions in ways that are original, life-affirming and, in some cases, downright celebratory."⁶⁵ An emphasis on "the work of ... Métis and First Nations playwrights in Canada" represents an expansion of the cultural scope of Canadian ecocriticism, in addition to the generic expansion that Gray and Rabillard suggest is overdue.⁶⁶ In her discussion of an American production of the Métis playwright Marie Clements' *Burning Vision*, Theresa J. May proposes the term "ecodramaturgy" to describe "play-making ... that puts ecological reciprocity and community at the centre of its theatrical and thematic intent."⁶⁷ The conjunction of community and performance promises to be a rich site of inquiry for Canadian ecocriticism. Indeed, because performances are site-specific, the connection between text and location is especially significant in theatre; ecocriticism and theatre are a natural fit. Eco-theatrical studies introduce a new vocabulary to Canadian ecocriticism and, perhaps

more significantly, indicate that the conventional literary foundations of ecocriticism will ultimately be displaced by an environmental cultural studies that includes a multitude of literary and non-literary modes and genres. Innovative literary ecocriticism is thriving, but in coming years, it is to be expected, environmental literary studies will increasingly take part in conversations with other branches of the environmental humanities.⁶⁸

5. CONCLUSIONS

The essays in *Greening the Maple* illustrate some of the patterns and tensions in ecocritical studies of Canadian literature. As with any such collection, pragmatic concerns have affected the contents, and so the history that the book traces has been shaped, to a degree, by incidental matters. The aim has been to prepare an anthology that is representative, yet relatively concise (or at least not infinite), affordable, and useful to critics and students alike. The resultant collection is not, of course, definitive, and it is the nature of anthologies that their contents will be debated. Several significant contributions to Canadian ecocriticism could not, because of length and cost, be included. In general, essays that concentrate on several authors were chosen over essays on single authors, in order to provide a broader view of Canadian writing. The selection has also favoured essays that highlight or theorize the distinctiveness of Canadian ecocriticism, and that bring ecocriticism into dialogue with other approaches to Canadian literature and culture. The chapters focus on works of Canadian literature; not included are studies by Canadian critics that address issues of more general ecocritical concern without sustained consideration of Canadian writing. (Examples of such essays include Sylvia Bowerbank's "Towards the Greening of Literary Studies,"⁶⁹ Neil Evernden's "Beyond Ecology: Self, Place, and the Pathetic Fallacy,"⁷⁰ and Simon Estok's "A Report Card on Ecocriticism," among many others.)

The place in this anthology of scholarship about indigenous literatures and by indigenous critics has posed an acute challenge. Because the book represents a historical account of Canadian criticism, and unavoidably a partial survey at that, it focusses primarily on texts that examine works of Canadian literature and that theorize Canadian literary studies as conventionally understood. As a consequence, writing by indigenous authors and critics who engage with questions of environmental politics or indigenous knowledge more generally has, regrettably, fallen outside this purview. (The same is true of important ethnographically oriented studies with an environmental dimension.)⁷¹ Canadian literary studies have traditionally ignored or marginalized indigenous cultures, and Canadian ecocriticism to date has not focussed sufficiently on indigenous texts and contexts, which adds to the difficulty of providing a comprehensive account of ecocritical responses to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit literatures.⁷² In addition, the relations to each other of Canadian literature and indigenous writing from Canada remain problematic at best, and the risks of critical appropriation and assimilation are great. Yet indigenous literary and other cultural traditions contain a vast amount of ecological knowledge, and an inclusive portrayal of the intersections of cultures and places in North America should surely be grounded in indigenous perspectives. This volume consequently proceeds from the recognition that a full consideration of connections between literature and the environment in North America is a multilingual, multicultural endeavour – and one unfortunately far beyond the scope available here. There is no disputing that literary works by indigenous authors; paradigms of indigenous literary criticism, philosophy, and history; and traditional and contemporary relations to land all have enormous bearing on understandings of environment and culture in Canada. This anthology, in some ways preliminary by design, will take its place in a broadening critical field.

Also largely absent from this book are examples of environmental criticism from literary writers themselves. (Atwood is the chief exception.) In the Canadian literary world, the divide between writers and critics has often been narrow, if present at all, with many poets and

novelists among the most prominent commentators on Canadian literature. Canadian writers of environmentally oriented literature are no different. Don McKay is perhaps the most influential contemporary ecological writer in Canada. His essay “Baler Twine: Thoughts on Ravens, Home and Nature Poetry” established particular critical topics (anthropomorphism, poetic attention) and philosophers (Levinas, Heidegger) as recurring concerns in discussions of contemporary nature poetry, including McKay’s own.⁷³ The essay also includes his now-familiar definition of wilderness as “not just a set of endangered spaces, but the capacity of all things to elude the mind’s appropriations.”⁷⁴ Other poets who share McKay’s interests have also written extensively about ecological matters: Robert Bringhurst on ecology, linguistics, and indigenous literatures; Jan Zwicky on ecology and lyric form; Tim Lilburn on prairie landscapes and religious and philosophical traditions. If this anthology were to have a second installment, it could well include essays by Dennis Lee, Robert Kroetsch, Daphne Marlatt, Rudy Wiebe, Sharon Butala, Anne Simpson, and Di Brandt, to cite only a few names among the many that deserve mention. Canadian ecocriticism as practised by academic critics should be recognized, then, as only one element of a wider and ongoing Canadian literary-ecological conversation.

The chapters in *Greening the Maple* do not represent the only important studies of nature in Canadian literature – far from it. Nor do they form a perfectly coherent narrative. They instead suggest the longevity of the conviction that Canadian writing and the natural world warrant consideration together. They offer ways of thinking about the history of Canadian literary criticism and about further directions for the ecocritical study of Canadian literature. Whether national (and sometimes nationalist) concerns will engage critics beyond Canada is an open question. Some readers perhaps will enjoy learning of authors who are new to them, but who are highly regarded by some Canadianist critics. Other readers may find the peculiarities of debates in Canadian literary studies a salutary reminder of the contextual specificity of all critical practices. Above all, the essays in this volume attest to the diversity of environmental criticism. In recent years, ecocriticism has both achieved considerable

institutional stability and reached a transitional state. ASLE's biennial conference is now a major, even mainstream, academic conference, attracting hundreds of participants and enjoying the support of major universities and funding organizations. (The 2009 edition of the conference, hosted by the University of Victoria, was the first held outside the United States.) Handbooks such as Garrard's *Ecocriticism* indicate the legitimacy and currency of environmental approaches. (The book was published in 2004 by Routledge in the New Critical Idiom series, reprinted in 2005 and 2007, and issued in a new edition in 2011; its success is evidence of great interest in the field.) Garrard's overview, moreover, suggests how widely encompassing ecocriticism has become: his topics include animal studies, apocalyptic discourse, traditional and contemporary pastoral, and cyborgs, among many others, such that no Wordsworth or Thoreau (or Archibald Lampman, for that matter) appears as a singular, centripetal figure. A host of critical-theoretical concerns has shaped and revised ecocriticism since its emergence, making the field now more nuanced and variegated than ever before. Such diversification promises to continue. The essays in this volume, old and new, are presented in the spirit of complexity and variety, even as they sometimes assert the importance of the particular and the bounded. They occupy a niche in the broad world of the environmental humanities. They look backwards as well as forwards, inwards as well as out – but the expectation is that they will provoke vigorous responses that add to the already sizeable body of writing on Canadian literature and the environment.

This introduction concludes with an acknowledgment of ecocriticism's activist dimensions and of the political impulse that runs through many ecocritical studies, including chapters in the present volume. The field from its beginnings has attempted to transform critical and pedagogical practices, making scholarship and teaching socially and ecologically responsible and relevant. The liveliness of ecocriticism's debates, its institutional successes, and its popularity with students indicate that, in some measure, such transformation has been achieved. Many ecocritical articles and books are published each year, courses in the environmental humanities are taught the world over, and ecocriticism's professional

organizations are flourishing. Ecocriticism's place in the academy is secure for now, although as with all scholarly fields it continues to change. Environmental concerns are nonetheless at least as pressing today as they were at ecocriticism's inauguration in the 1990s. Consequently, ecocriticism must retain its political edge and desire for social change if it is to have more than narrowly academic significance. The essays in this book are scholarly and highly specialized, to be sure. But they evince a profound concern for the state of the environment, and a belief that critical inquiry matters in view of environmental concerns. We hope that the chapters serve to spark scholarship, teaching, and study that extend understandings of cultures and environments in bracing and compelling ways.

6. EDITORIAL NOTE

Previously published essays have been left largely unchanged. Minor clarifications and omissions are indicated by square brackets and ellipses, respectively. Some changes have been made silently in the interests of clarity and consistency. Lengthy quotations and footnotes have sometimes been trimmed for reasons of space, especially in older essays when, for example, recommendations for further reading are no longer current. Lists of sources or works cited are provided for all chapters save the first, in which Frye's own writing is the primary concern.

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NOTES

- 1 Lawrence Buell, “Ecocriticism: Some Emerging Trends,” *Qui Parle* 19, no. 2 (2011): 88. The italics are Buell’s.
- 2 Northrop Frye, *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (Toronto: Anansi, 1971; Concord, ON: Anansi, 1995); Margaret Atwood, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (Toronto: Anansi, 1972).
- 3 Bliss Carman, “Miracles and Metaphors,” in *The Kinship of Nature*, by Bliss Carman (London: John Murray, 1904), 39.
- 4 Timothy Morton, *Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007) and *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).
- 5 See, for example, S. K. Robisch, “The Woodshed: A Response to ‘Ecocriticism and Ecophobia,’” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 16, no. 4 (2009): 697–708.
- 6 Timothy Morton, “Here Comes Everything: The Promise of Object-Oriented Ontology,” *Qui Parle* 19, no. 2 (2011): 163, 164.
- 7 Notable in this regard are William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature* (New York: Norton, 1995) and Dana Phillips, *The Truth of Ecology: Nature, Culture, and Literature in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). Essays in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, the principal ecocritical forum, are increasingly diverse in subject and method; the journal is characterized by a multiplicity of critical perspectives rather than by a dominant approach. In addition, a special issue of the theoretically oriented journal *Qui Parle* (19, no. 2, 2011) showcases intersections of ecocriticism and critical theory.
- 8 Laurie Ricou, “Ecocriticism,” in *Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada*, ed. William H. New (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 324. Technically, of course, this claim is anachronistic, since critical writing about Canadian literature precedes either William Rueckert’s coining of the term “ecocriticism” in “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism” (*Iowa Review* 9, no. 1

- [1978]: 71–86) or the emergence in the 1990s of ecocriticism.
- 9 Northrop Frye, "Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*," *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (1965, 1971; Concord, ON: Anansi, 1995), 227. When it was first published in 1965, the essay was simply titled "Conclusion"; in *The Bush Garden* it is retitled.
 - 10 Ibid., 227.
 - 11 Susie O'Brien, "Nature's Nation, National Natures? Reading Ecocriticism in a Canadian Context," *Canadian Poetry: Studies, Documents, Reviews* 42 (spring–summer 1998): 18; see chap. 11.
 - 12 Jonathan Bate, *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1991); Karl Kroeber, *Ecological Literary Criticism: Romantic Imagining and the Biology of Mind* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). Morton's *Ecology without Nature* is placed in contrast to these studies but retains an emphasis on Romantic literature. See also Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 3.
 - 13 Buell, "Ecocriticism," 89.
 - 14 Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); Joseph W. Meeker, *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* (New York: Scribner's, 1974; republished as *The Comedy of Survival: Literary Ecology and a Play Ethic* [Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997]); Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). Rueckert: see note 8.
 - 15 Buell, "Ecocriticism," 89.
 - 16 Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, eds., *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996).
 - 17 Cheryll Glotfelty, "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis," in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996), xvii.
 - 18 On the book's continued importance, see Buell, "Ecocriticism," 96.
 - 19 The apparent omission of Canadian content was reproduced in *Coming into Contact: Explorations in Ecocritical Theory and Practice*, ed. Annie Merrill Ingram, et al. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2007), a collection of essays intended to reflect the arrival of ecocriticism as a mature endeavour, "a little surer of itself" and "less marginalized" (14). None of the essays treated Canadian literature and only one contributor, Angela Waldie, was based at a Canadian university. *Coming into Contact* largely minds, however, Ursula K. Heise's insistence that "ecocriticism has nothing specifically to do with American literature" (in Jean Arnold et al., "Forum on Literatures of the Environment," *PMLA* 114, no. 5 [1999]: 1097); it certainly addresses non-American writers, including Wordsworth, Darwin, J. M. Coetzee, Ishimure Michiko, Arundhati Roy, and others. Yet the book's "snapshot" of ecocriticism leaves Canadian contributions somewhere outside the camera's frame.
 - 20 See, for example, Patrick D. Murphy, ed., *Literature of Nature: An International Sourcebook* (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998).
 - 21 See Linda Hutcheon, *As Canadian as ... Possible ... under the Circumstances!* (Toronto: ECW Press, 1990).

- 22 Smaro Kamboureli identifies topocentrism alongside Canadian literature's "uneasy relationships with ... British, ... Commonwealth, and ... American [literatures]; its uneven responses to the (post)colonial and its so-called minority literatures; its desire to accommodate global cultural contexts; its obsessiveness with identity; and its institutionalization and celebration through cultural, social, and trade policies" as characteristic of "the complexities – even nervousness – associated with its own history and location"; see Smaro Kamboureli, Preface to *Trans.Can.Lit.: Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature*, ed. Smaro Kamboureli and Roy Miki (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007), viii.
- 23 John O'Brian characterizes this iconographic tendency as "wildercentric"; see John O'Brian, "Wild Art History," in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art*, ed. John O'Brian and Peter White (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 21.
- 24 See especially the ecocritical issue (55, fall–winter 2004), edited by Deborah Bowen.
- 25 See, e.g., Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Wolfe, *What Is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).
- 26 See Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism* (Abingdon [London]: Routledge, 2004); Ursula K. Heise, *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- 27 Heise, *Sense of Place*, 10.
- 28 Ursula K. Heise, "Ecocriticism and the Transnational Turn in American Studies," *American Literary History* 20, no. 1–2 (spring–summer 2008): 381–404.
- 29 Scott Slovic, "Teaching United States Environmental Literature in a World Comparatist Context," in *Teaching North American Environmental Literature*, ed. Laird Christensen, Mark C. Long, and Fred Waage (New York: Modern Language Association, 2008), 205.
- 30 In turn, a diversity of perspectives makes up each national strain of ecocritical discourse. As this introduction suggests, the multilingual and postcolonial context of Canadian ecocriticism evokes the difficulty of describing nationally inflected discourses as singular phenomena.
- 31 There are at present chapters representing Canada, Australia and New Zealand, India, Japan, Korea, the United Kingdom and Ireland, Europe, and Taiwan.
- 32 Ursula K. Heise, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to Ecocriticism," *PMLA* 121, no. 2 (Mar. 2006): 506.
- 33 Canadian literary studies have traditionally focussed on the impact of such conventions upon the colonial imagination, but studies of Romanticism that draw on transatlantic theory – e.g., Alan Bewell's *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), James C. McKusick's *Green Writing: Romanticism and Ecology* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), and Kevin Hutchings's *Romantic Ecologies and Colonial Cultures in the British Atlantic World, 1770–1850* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009) – examine the decidedly reciprocal intercultural exchanges between New World and Old that characterized colonial encounters and informed early discourses of nature and ecology.

- 34 Susan Glickman, *The Picturesque and the Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).
- 35 Don McKay, "Great Flint Singing," in *Open Wide a Wilderness: Canadian Nature Poems*, ed. Nancy Holmes (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 6.
- 36 Responses to this challenge have been varied, ranging from the adoption of "new" terms (e.g., "muskeg") to the use of forms deemed appropriate to Canadian environments. For example, the long poem, in various incarnations, has been understood as a form well suited to Canadian environmental history; for nineteenth-century examples, see Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village* and Isabella Valancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie*, and for contemporary examples, see Don McKay's *Long Sault* and *Lependu*, Daphne Marlatt's *Steveston*, and Dionne Brand's *Inventory*.
- 37 W. H. New, *Land Sliding: Imagining Space, Presence, and Power in Canadian Writing* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 5, 6.
- 38 Linda Hutcheon, "Eruptions of Postmodernity: The Postcolonial and the Ecological," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 51–52 (winter 1993–spring 1994): 147. See chap. 9.
- 39 Kamboureli, Preface, vii.
- 40 Cheryl Lousley's "Witness to the Body Count: Planetary Ethics in Dionne Brand's *Inventory*" (*Canadian Poetry: Studies, Documents, Reviews* 63 [fall–winter 2008]: 37–58) is a notable example of Canadian ecocriticism that considers both the cultural and the environmental aspects of diasporic Canadian writing.
- 41 This argument is proposed by Ricou in chap. 7; Helms takes it up in chap. 10.
- 42 T. D. MacLulich, "Thematic Criticism, Literary Nationalism, and the Critic's New Clothes," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 35 (winter 1987): 17.
- 43 See Frank Davey, "Surviving the Paraphrase," *Canadian Literature* 70 (autumn 1976): 5–13. Rpt. in *Surviving the Paraphrase: Eleven Essays on Canadian Literature*, by Frank Davey (Winnipeg: Turnstone, 1983): 1–12; Barry Cameron and Michael Dixon, "Mandatory Subversive Manifesto: Canadian Criticism vs. Literary Criticism," *Studies in Canadian Literature* 2, no. 2 (1977): 137–45; W. J. Keith, "The Thematic Approach to Canadian Fiction," in *Taking Stock: The Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel*, ed. Charles R. Steele (Downsview, ON: ECW Press, 1982), 71–91; and Russell Morton Brown, "Critic, Culture, Text: Beyond Thematics," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 11 (summer 1978): 151–83.
- 44 Davey, *Surviving the Paraphrase*, 2, 3.
- 45 Robert Lecker and Jack David, qtd. in Russell M. Brown, "The Practice and Theory of Canadian Thematic Criticism: A Reconsideration," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2001): 664.
- 46 A.J.M. Smith, "A Rejected Preface to *New Provinces*," in *Selected Writings*, by A.J.M. Smith, ed. Michael Gnarowski (Toronto: Dundurn, 2006), 144.
- 47 A.J.M. Smith, "Excerpt from the Introduction to *The Book of Canadian Poetry: A Critical and Historical Anthology*," in *Selected Writings*, by A.J.M. Smith, ed. Michael Gnarowski (Toronto: Dundurn, 2006), 151–52.
- 48 MacLulich, "Thematic Criticism," 18.
- 49 "In my capacity as editor of the *University of Toronto Quarterly*," Keith admits, "I had, in self-defence and with something approaching desperation, penned a statement on editorial policy that insisted: 'The Journal does not normally print thematically oriented criticism.' And only a week or so before, while setting essay

- topics in my undergraduate course on Canadian fiction, I had appended ... the following instructions: 'You are expected in each case to concentrate on the novels as *works of art*; it is not sufficient merely to compare and contrast themes.' See Keith, "Thematic," 71.
- 50 Brown, "Practice and Theory," 664.
 - 51 This bias was corrected to some extent by critics such as Laurie Ricou, W. H. New, and D.M.R. Bentley, all of whom have contributed substantially to environmentally oriented criticism in Canada, and especially by the journals under their editorial stewardship – *Canadian Literature* and *Canadian Poetry*, which continued to publish thematically focussed criticism and which have come to be significant ecocritical venues.
 - 52 In a widely cited essay, Simon C. Estok situates ecocriticism somewhere between theory and thematic criticism; he states that "ecocriticism has had problems ... getting its theoretical footing.... but some kind of terminology and theorization is necessary; otherwise, ecocriticism risks becoming just an empty buzzword" (a fate, he implies, that would attend an over-reliance on the thematic approach); see "A Report Card on Ecocriticism," *AUMLA* 96 (Nov. 2001): 225.
 - 53 Margery Fee, qtd. in Brown, "Practice and Theory," 666. See Margery Fee, "Retrieving the Canadian Critical Tradition as Poetry: Eli Mandel and Northrop Frye," *Essays on Canadian Writing* 45–46 (winter–spring 1991–92): 235–53.
 - 54 Ibid.
 - 55 See, for example, Catriona Sandilands's "Queering Ecocultural Studies," which examines the heteronormative ideologies that inform the codification of natural and urban spaces in Jane Rule's writing. (Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands, "Queering Ecocultural Studies," *Cultural Studies* 22, no. 3–4 [2008]: 455–76.)
 - 56 Carl Berger's *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) considers the theistic tone of natural history in Victorian Canada and examines the influence of Victorian naturalism on Philip Henry Gosse's *The Canadian Naturalist* and Catharine Parr Traill's *Studies of Plant Life in Canada* [Philip Henry Gosse, *The Canadian Naturalist: A Series of Conversations on the Natural History of Lower Canada* (London: Van Voorst, 1840); Catharine Parr Traill, *Studies of Plant Life in Canada: or, Gleanings from Forest, Lake and Plain* (Ottawa: Woodburn, 1885)]. His study offers an implicit challenge to Frye in its suggestion that Victorian-Canadian naturalists directed their attention to adaptation and interrelationships in nature, finding in such phenomena spiritual comfort and evidence of divine contrivance.
 - 57 Sandilands's groundbreaking work on the intersections of queer theory, lesbian feminism, and ecocriticism will be of particular interest to readers of this anthology; see, e.g., Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson, eds., *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
 - 58 Jonathan Bordo, "Picture and Witness at the Site of the Wilderness," *Critical Inquiry* 26, no. 2 (2000): 224–47.
 - 59 Caroline Bayard, "The Languages of Critical Discourse in Canada and Quebec 1880–1980," in *100 Years of Critical Solitudes: Canadian and Québécois Criticism from the 1880s to the 1980s*, ed. Caroline Bayard (Toronto: ECW Press, 1992), 11.
 - 60 Ibid.
 - 61 T. D. MacLulich, "The Animal Story and the 'Nature Faker' Controversy," in *Selected Animal Stories*, by Charles G.

- D. Roberts, ed. Terry Whalen (Ottawa: Tecumseh, 2005), 288.
- 62 For example, W. J. Keith lauds as the most distinctive aspect of Roberts's animal stories the "detached inevitability" of their conclusions: "Absence of emotion is an essential part of Roberts's effect; Nature, he is saying with a brutal simplicity, is like that"; see W. J. Keith, "Stories of the Wild," in *Charles G. D. Roberts*, by W. J. Keith (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969), 2.
- 63 See Stephen Voyce and Christian Bök, "The Xenotext Experiment: An Interview with Christian Bök," *Postmodern Culture* 17, no. 2 (2007). Web.
- 64 Nelson Gray and Sheila Rabillard, "Theatre in an Age of Eco-Crisis," *Canadian Theatre Review* 144 (fall 2010): 3.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Theresa J. May, "Kneading Marie Clements' *Burning Vision*," *Canadian Theatre Review* 144 (fall 2010): 6.
- 68 On the broadening of ecocriticism's generic scope, see Buell, "Ecocriticism," 91–92.
- 69 Sylvia Bowerbank, "Towards the Greening of Literary Studies," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature / Revue canadienne de littérature comparée* 22, no. 3–4 (1995): 443–53.
- 70 Neil Evernden, "Beyond Ecology: Self, Place, and the Pathetic Fallacy," in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 92–104.
- 71 Julie Cruikshank's *Do Glaciers Listen?*, for instance, is an admired anthropological and historical study of the Saint Elias mountains, on the border of British Columbia, the Yukon, and Alaska (*Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination* [Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005]). Cruikshank examines competing (and sometimes complementary) understandings of environment as they consist in explorers' narratives, geological and glaciological science, and elders' traditional stories. *Do Glaciers Listen?* is not literary criticism per se and not explicitly environmentalist in orientation, but it is nonetheless a model for ecocritics. Likewise, Deborah McGregor's provocative explorations of Anishnaabe traditional knowledge and environmental justice could be considered ecocriticism under another name; see "Linking Traditional Knowledge and Environmental Practice in Ontario," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 3 (2009): 69–100.
- 72 At the same time, there is evidence of a *rapprochement* between environmental approaches to Canadian literature and indigenous literature. In part, it has been driven by scholarship that emphasizes connections among traditional storytelling, land claims, and environmental preservation, and between ecological and linguistic diversity. See, for example, Robert Bringhurst, *The Tree of Meaning: Thirteen Talks* (Kentville, NS: Gaspereau, 2006) and *Everywhere Being Is Dancing: Twenty Pieces of Thinking* (Kentville, NS: Gaspereau, 2007) and J. Edward Chamberlin, *Living Language and Dead Reckoning: Navigating Oral and Written Traditions* (Vancouver: Ronsdale, 2006). And in part it has been driven by many contemporary indigenous writers whose works have strong ecological dimensions.
- 73 Don McKay, "Baler Twine: Thoughts on Ravens, Home and Nature Poetry," in *Vis à Vis: Field Notes on Poetry and Wilderness*, by Don McKay (Wolfville, NS: Gaspereau, 2001), 11–33.
- 74 Ibid., 21.