

School Libraries in Canada

An on-line journal of the
Voices for School Libraries Network
of the Canadian Library Association



Celebrating Science and Technology

ISSN 1710-8535

Fall 2013

Volume 31, Number 3

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Cover design from National Science and Technology Week promotional materials and images are from the [Canada Science and Technology Museum | Musée des sciences et de la technologie du Canada](http://www.cstmuseum.ca) website.
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Thank you to retired teacher-librarian Helen Lee for her assistance with this issue.

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SLiC Editorial

"Science is dangerous ..."

Derrick Grose
Editor
School Libraries in Canada

The theme for Canadian Library Month in October 2014 is "Libraries Connect." This issue of *School Libraries in Canada (SLiC)* is focusing on the importance of cultivating cross-curricular connections and recognizing the importance of ensuring that all students have the level of scientific and technological literacy that is essential for all well-rounded citizens.

Mustapha Mond, World Controller, in the Aldous Huxley novel *Brave New World*, observes, "Science is dangerous; we have to keep it most carefully chained and muzzled." A democratic society should not chain and muzzle science; instead it should promote critical discussion that enables citizens to make informed decisions. There was a time when a school library was the place where students would go to find answers. Today, with the Internet at their fingertips, the school library has a more important function. It has become a place to go to learn how to ask questions and to reach beyond the boundaries of particular disciplines. In *Time Reborn*, physicist Dr. Lee Smolin suggests, "If our civilization is to thrive, it would be helpful to base our decision-making on a coherent view of the world, in which, to begin with, there is a consilience between the natural and the social sciences." School libraries have a natural role in promoting this "consilience." For this reason, it seems natural for *SLiC* to be joining Canada's Museum of Science and Technology to celebrate National Science and Technology Week from October 18th to October 27th.

National Science and Technology Week provides an occasion for all of us to think about our relationship with science and technology. In a school, the library provides a natural home for interdisciplinary exchanges and it can play an important role in promoting conscious reflection on science and technology in our lives. In this issue of *SLiC*, Dr. David Suzuki argues for a cross-curricular perspective saying, “environmentalism is not a field or discipline, it's a way of seeing our place in the world. We want everyone to see the world through that lens. We need plumbers and garage mechanics and teachers and farmers and businesspeople and doctors, all being environmentalists.” And if any skeptical readers are looking for additional proof that science should not be an exclusive reserve for specialists, Michelle Mulder, author of *Pedal It!: How Bicycles are Changing the World*, and *Brilliant! Shining a Light on Sustainable Energy*, and CBC Science Correspondent and *Quirks and Quarks* host Bob McDonald will discuss how curiosity rather than an academic curriculum has drawn them into writing and talking about science in ways that make it accessible to a wide audience.

It is important for school libraries to support efforts to expand scientific literacy because it will encourage students to engage in critical thinking. All students must be given opportunities to embrace science in ways that will cultivate their natural curiosity and give them a basic understanding of the world around them. Discrete scientific “facts” are less important than the scientific approach that teaches students to ask questions and test hypotheses against experimental and real-world observations. We hope that National Science and Technology Week will encourage Canadians to become informed participants in debates about science and technology that will have a profound impact on our lives and the lives of generations to come.

And don't think that the celebrations are over on October 27th. Remember that Monday, October 28th is National School Library Day: a perfect excuse to Drop Everything And Read!

Celebrating National Science and Technology Week in Canada: Classroom Ready Resources and Inspiring Activities

**Sandra Corbeil, Director, Educational Strategy
Canada Science and Technology Museum**



Photo Credit: National Museums of Science and Technology

What are you doing this October? How will your school celebrate National Science and Technology Week--October 18 to 27, 2013? Help the students and staff at your school to discover the many locations hosting special programming--you can find these listed and displayed in a map at science.gc.ca/nstw. Hopefully you will find one near you! Many labs and research centres open their doors, and hosts of scientists dig out their most inspiring demonstrations and hands on activities, as science museums and centres across the country eagerly plan to welcome thousands of visitors. These events reflect the integration of science and technology into everyday life, and the emergence of a rich scientific and technological culture in Canada.

An abundance of online resources can be used to help in planning an inspiring and exciting week in your school. Here are some of my favourites:

- **The Perimeter Institute offers a number of resources. For example, the “Process of Science” kit (it’s free for teachers) offers a DVD and activities that explore how scientists think.**

<http://www.perimeterinstitute.ca/outreach/teachers/class-kits/process-science>

- **The Canadian Science and Engineering Hall of Fame can be visited online. There is also a free Virtual Exploration Guide that can be downloaded to use in your classroom. Activities focus student explorations of the Hall of Fame as it introduces its members. Additional modules include fascinating group and individual study projects for the library or classroom. Get to know talented Canadians who helped shape Canada - and the world! Discover the stories of remarkable men and women who rose above challenges and obstacles to make great strides in Science and Engineering. See how Canada's environment, culture and heritage have spurred technological and scientific achievements.**

<http://www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca/english/about/hallfame/underline.cfm>

http://www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca/english/schoolzone/virtual_hall_of_fame.cfm

- **View some of the “Champion” videos on YouTube. Do you already have fans of science and technology in your school? Consider encouraging them to make short champion videos demonstrating what they love most about science and technology. Check out those who have answered the call: they prove that science and technology are important to all of us and can be loads of fun! If your students have a video, share it with us and we can insert the standard introduction to it and add to our playlist:**

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL775F35B3E89F2472>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEy8-xyGiqg&list=PL267C539A6D45965B&index=1>

- During the National Science and Technology Week, thousands of Canadians will explore science and technology in community centres, libraries, classrooms, science centres, museums and research institutions from coast to coast to coast. Consider making your school library one of the venues where Canadians will gather at a "Café Scientifique" to discuss hot topics, such as how communication technology has influenced our lives. If you would like a free copy of the handy resource "How to Host a Café Scientifique" (in English or French) just email a request to scitech@technomuses.ca.

- Youth Science Canada's Smarter Science site has a number of resources available to teachers which provide helpful tools and resources aimed at enriching the classroom with enquiry based learning. They can be downloaded in both languages at <http://smarterscience.youthscience.ca> or at <http://smarterscience.youthscience.ca/fr> under "Resources" / "Ressources".

- The Canada Agriculture and Food Museum has a number of Educational Activity Kits. A favourite is the "Properties of and Changes in Matter: Bread" edition; it's science that is visible, hands on and relevant to everyday life. Best of all, you can eat your results! Kits can be accessed online at:

http://www.agriculture.technomuses.ca/english/schoolprograms/educational_activity_kits.cfm

For over 20 years NSTW has offered both young people and adults an opportunity to learn more about Canada's achievements and potential. No matter what else is happening in your community during the week, I hope that your school library will encourage students and staff to join the celebration and to become champions of science and technology in Canada. With participation growing in the past five years, NSTW 2012 delighted 84,017 participants at 249 events across Canada with 752 activities. Many more Canadians celebrated NSTW in classrooms and homes by taking advantage of exciting and innovative resources on-line. NSTW 2013 promises to extend the excitement. I hope you will be a part of it. In activities ranging from engineering more efficient vehicles to studying stem cells, Canadian ideas, innovations and research are shaping our world. Consider your school library and all of its patrons officially invited to join in the festivities.

For more information visit <http://www.science.gc.ca/nstw> or follow us on Twitter: @SciTechWeek #SciTechWeek.

Célébration de la Semaine nationale des sciences et de la technologie au Canada : Ressources prêtes à utiliser en classe et activités inspirantes

**Sandra Corbeil, Directrice de la Stratégie d'éducation
Musée des sciences et de la technologie du Canada**

Que faites-vous en octobre? Comment comptez-vous célébrer la Semaine nationale des sciences et de la technologie (SNST), du 18 au 27 octobre 2013, à votre école? Aidez les élèves et le personnel à découvrir les nombreux endroits offrant des programmes spéciaux. Ils sont énumérés et indiqués sur une carte à l'adresse science.gc.ca/snst. Avec un peu de chance, vous en trouverez près de chez vous. De nombreux laboratoires et centres de recherche ouvriront leurs portes, un grand nombre de scientifiques présenteront leurs démonstrations et activités pratiques les plus inspirantes, et des musées et centres de sciences de tout le pays se préparent fébrilement à accueillir des milliers de visiteurs. Les événements prévus reflètent l'intégration des sciences et de la technologie dans la vie quotidienne, ainsi que l'émergence d'une riche culture scientifique et technologique au Canada.



Photo : Musée des sciences et de la technologie du Canada

Vous trouverez en ligne une multitude de ressources pouvant faciliter la planification d'une semaine inspirante et fascinante à votre école. Voici quelques-unes préférées :

- **Le Perimeter Institute offre plusieurs ressources. L'une de mes préférées est la trousse « Process of Science » (gratuite pour les enseignants), qui contient un DVD et porte sur des activités ayant trait à la façon de penser des scientifiques. [Disponible en anglais seulement.]**

<http://www.perimeterinstitute.ca/outreach/teachers/class-kits/process-science>

- **Vous pouvez visiter en ligne le Panthéon canadien des sciences et du génie. Vous pouvez aussi télécharger gratuitement le Guide d'exploration virtuelle et l'utiliser en classe. Les activités qu'on y propose incitent les élèves à mieux connaître le Panthéon et ses membres. Des modules supplémentaires portent sur de fascinants projets d'étude collectifs ou individuels pouvant être réalisés à la bibliothèque ou en classe. Découvrez de talentueux Canadiens qui ont contribué à façonner le pays, voire le monde, ainsi que l'histoire d'hommes et de femmes remarquables qui ont relevé des défis et surmonté des obstacles pour accomplir de grands progrès en sciences et en génie. Voyez de quelle façon l'environnement, la culture et le patrimoine du Canada ont donné lieu à des réalisations technologiques et scientifiques.**

http://www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca/francais/about/hallfame/u_main_f.cfm

http://www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca/francais/schoolzone/virtuel_pantheon.cfm

- **Vous pouvez voir sur YouTube des vidéos produites par des « champions ». Comptez-vous des amateurs de sciences et de technologie dans votre école? Encouragez-les à produire une courte vidéo dans laquelle ils démontrent ce qu'ils aiment le plus dans les domaines des sciences et technologies. Visionnez celles des jeunes qui ont répondu à l'appel. Elles prouvent que les sciences et la technologie sont importantes pour nous tous et peuvent être extrêmement amusantes. Si des élèves de votre école ont déjà produit une vidéo, envoyez la nous pour que nous y insérions l'introduction habituelle et l'ajoutions à notre liste.**

<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL775F35B3E89F2472>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEy8-xyGiqg&list=PL267C539A6D45965B&index=1>

- **Au cours de la Semaine nationale des sciences et de la technologie, des milliers de Canadiens exploreront les sciences et la technologie dans des centres communautaires, des bibliothèques, des salles de classe, des centres de sciences, des musées et des établissements de recherche des quatre coins du pays. Songez à faire de la bibliothèque de votre école l'un des endroits où les Canadiens se réuniront dans le cadre d'un « café scientifique » pour discuter de sujets d'actualité, comme l'incidence de la technologie des communications sur notre vie. Pour recevoir un exemplaire gratuit de la ressource « Comment être l'hôte d'un Café**

scientifique» (en français ou en anglais), faites-en la demande par courriel à l'adresse scitech@technomuses.ca.

- Le site Éducasciences de Sciences jeunesse Canada offre aux enseignants des ressources visant à enrichir l'enseignement en classe par un apprentissage par investigation. Elles peuvent être téléchargées en français ou en anglais à partir de l'adresse <http://smarterscience.youthscience.ca/fr> (sous « Ressources »)

- Le Musée de l'agriculture et de l'alimentation du Canada a produit plusieurs troupes d'activités éducatives. L'une des favorites s'intitule « Propriétés et changements de la matière : le pain ». Elle présente des principes scientifiques d'une manière visible et directe qui établit des rapports avec la vie quotidienne. De surcroît, on peut manger le résultat des activités. Il est possible d'accéder aux troupes aux adresses suivantes :

<http://museeaac.techno-science.ca/fr/educatif/educatif-trousse-proprietes-changements-de-la-matiere-pain.php>

http://www.agriculture.technomuses.ca/francais/schoolprograms/troupes_activites_educatives.cfm

Depuis plus de 20 ans, la SNST offre aux jeunes et aux adultes l'occasion de se renseigner sur les réalisations et le potentiel du Canada. J'espère que, peu importe les autres activités qui auront lieu dans votre collectivité pendant cette semaine, les responsables de la bibliothèque de votre école inciteront les élèves et le personnel à célébrer l'événement et à devenir des champions des sciences et de la technologie au Canada.

La participation à la SNST n'a cessé de croître ces cinq dernières années. En 2012, 84 017 personnes ont été ravies d'avoir pris part dans tout le Canada à 249 événements comptant 752 activités. De nombreux autres Canadiens ont célébré la SNST en classe ou à la maison en profitant des ressources stimulantes et innovatrices offertes en ligne. La SNST 2013 promet de susciter un enthousiasme encore plus grand. J'espère que vous y prendrez part. La conception de véhicules plus efficaces, l'étude des cellules souches et de nombreuses autres activités donnent lieu à des idées, des innovations et des travaux de recherche d'origine canadienne qui façonnent le monde. La bibliothèque de votre école et toute sa clientèle peuvent se considérer comme officiellement invitées à célébrer ces réalisations.

Renseignements :

www.science.gc.ca/snst

Suivez nous sur Twitter : @SemSciTech #SemSciTech

We need plumbers and garage mechanics and teachers and farmers and business people and doctors, all being environmentalists.

Dr. David Suzuki

". . . every eminent scientist started out being enchanted with some aspect of the world around, from butterflies to the stars."



David Suzuki
Geneticist, Professor and Environmental Activist

Having written 54 books, 19 of which are for children, and hosted *The Nature of Things* on CBC television for thirty years, David Suzuki has been a leader in educating Canadians about science and the environment. He has received 28 honorary degrees, is a Companion of the Order of Canada and a recipient of UNESCO's Kalinga Prize for Science, the United Nations Environment Program Medal, the 2012 Inamori Ethics Prize, the 2009 Right Livelihood Award, and UNEP's Global 500. He kindly agreed to share some of the influences on his career as a geneticist, professor and environmental activist and some advice for students considering a future in science.

***SLiC* - What was the most important single experience in making you decide to become a scientist?**

***DS* - It was my father's love of the outdoors. My earliest memory from childhood is when I was four and we went to a store to buy a pup-tent. Dad set it up right on the store floor and we crawled in and lay on a sleeping bag. Dad wrapped his arms around me and I could hardly stand my excitement at the prospect of going camping. That's what I remember most from childhood on, going hiking and camping and encountering bears and moose and beavers, and of course, we were always fishing for food. How could I not fall in love with nature? Early on, I wanted to become an ichthyologist but, after my mom made me a butterfly net, I became an avid collector of insects, especially beetles. So then I thought I might become an entomologist. So I knew I wanted to study some aspect of biology and when I took a course in genetics in**

college, I fell madly in love with the subject. And I have found every eminent scientist started out being enchanted with some aspect of the world around, from butterflies to the stars.

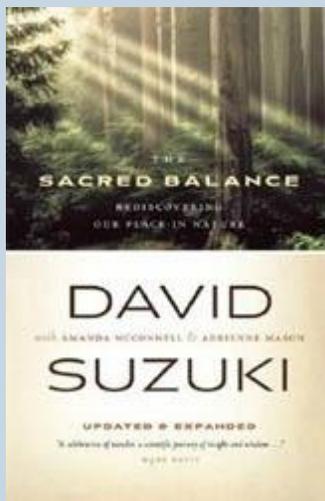
SLiC - What book or film has had the greatest influence on your life? Why?

DS - Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* in 1962 changed my life. I had just started my career as a geneticist in the Department of Genetics at the University of Alberta when I read her book.

It was as if she wrote it for me, and what it said was, "You scientists are clever. You can create compounds like DDT that kills insects. But the lab is not the real world. In the real world, it rains, wind blows and when you spray on a field to kill insects, you end up affecting fish, birds and human beings. Because in the real world, everything is connected to everything else while in a lab, you study a controlled system which is really an artifact."

I could never do science without realizing the limitations of what we learn after reading her book.

We have to shift the paradigm, the way we see the world and that's why I wrote *The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature* and I unhesitatingly urge people to read it.



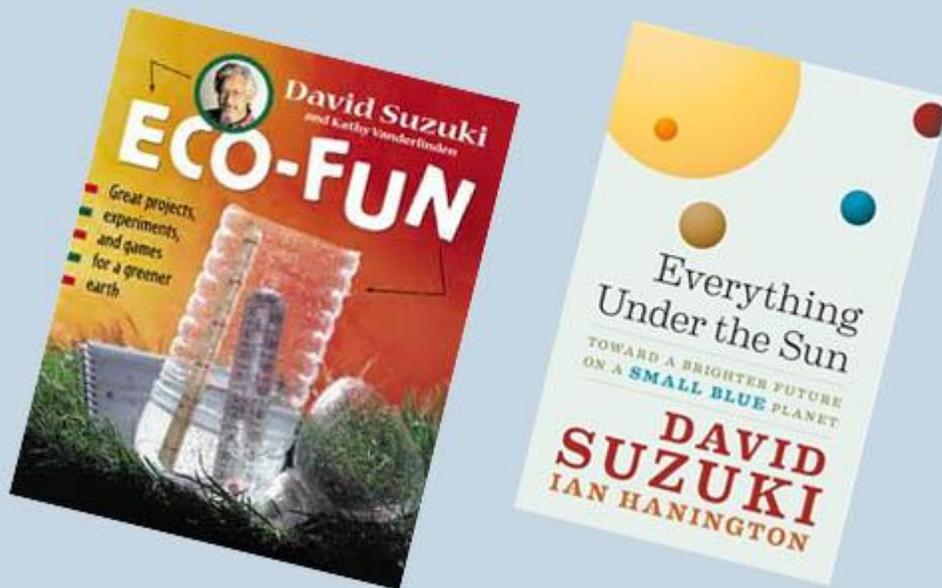
The Sacred Balance
(ISBN 9781553651666)

SLiC - Which field of science would you most strongly recommend to a high school student planning for future studies? Why?

DS - Young people often approach me and tell me they want to work to protect the environment, so what do I recommend they should study. My answer is always the same, follow your heart. You see, environmentalism is not a field or discipline, it's a way of seeing our place in the world. We want everyone to see the world through that lens.

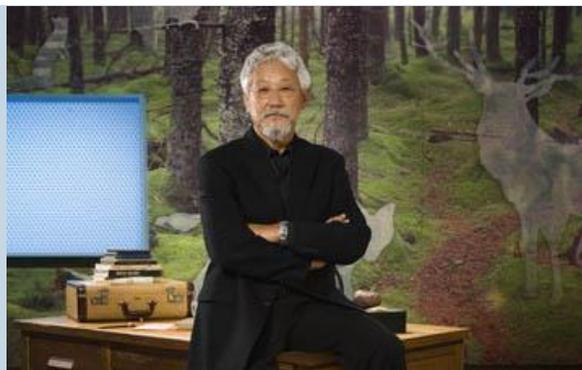
We need plumbers and garage mechanics and teachers and farmers and businesspeople and doctors, all being environmentalists. So follow your heart and practice what you love to do through the lenses of environmentalism.

When a student tells me they want to study science and what area should they go into for a job, I can't provide an answer. For one thing, by the time that student completes their study, fields will be very different and it's hard to predict what will be "hot". I think it's a mistake to choose an area of science on the basis of potential job prospects. Pursue what fascinates you.



In his efforts to promote environmental awareness and popularize science, David Suzuki has collaborated on books for a wide range of audiences. *Eco-Fun* (ISBN 9781550548235) was targeted at children while *Everything Under the Sun* (ISBN 9781553655282) is for older readers.

[Find out more about The David Suzuki Foundation at <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/>.](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/)



(CBC)

[David Suzuki's *The Nature of Things*](#)

School Library Profile

Thank you to Pat Parungao and Hilary Montroy, teacher-librarians at Gladstone Secondary School in Vancouver, British Columbia, for this school library profile. You are invited to submit your own school library for consideration to be featured in a future edition of *School Libraries in Canada*. The form is available at:

English - <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n1/profile.doc>

Français - <http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n1/profil.doc>



Gladstone Secondary School

Opened in 1950 on a piece of farmland that had been set aside for the construction of a school in the 1920's, Gladstone Secondary School is located on the east side of Vancouver, approximately halfway between downtown Vancouver and Burnaby.

The library serves students in grades 8 – 12 as well as English Language Learners. There are 38 computers.

There are many special programs at the school. All students and teachers read for about fifteen minutes at the beginning of second period daily. Gladstone Mini-School is a two-year program for Grades 8 and 9 that provides an accelerated learning opportunity for talented learners at the junior high level. There are also several special school library programs. A flexibly scheduled library learning commons encourages teachers from all departments to collaboratively plan, teach and evaluate assignments with the teacher-librarians. We especially encourage teaching skills cross-grade applying the Points of Inquiry: A Framework for Information Literacy and the 21st Century Learner. Although this might not be unique, we still feel that it is special. We also host Tech Talks for Happy Rock – mini professional development by and for Gladstone teachers during noninstructional time, e.g., Prezi, iPads, blogging. (Happy Rock is a nickname for Gladstone). National School Library Day is celebrated with "Drop Everything and Read" for 20 minutes in response to a challenge from the BC Teacher-Librarians' Association and also with Human Library; National Poetry Month is celebrated with Coffee House and Café Polyglotte (poetry in more than one language) where the school community shares poetry and music for a week during lunchtime; and Student Art Exhibits on display panels at the end of the school year.

The most popular books are works of fiction: Cassandra Clare (Mortal Instruments series), Suzanne Collins (Hunger Games trilogy), James Dashner (Maze Runner trilogy), John Flanagan (Ranger's Apprentice series), John Green, Robert Muchamore, Rick Riordan and Darren Shan. Graphic material such as Bryan Lee O'Malley (Scott Pilgrim) is also very popular.

We are moving toward becoming a Library Learning Commons.

- As well as the traditional Library Club we added the Student Advisory Committee last year to provide the teacher-librarians with greater student suggestions and assistance. We have posted some student surveys online to get an even broader reach of student input.

- The collection is constantly being weeded and we have removed some library stacks and replaced with tables and chairs. Our goal is to have the chairs and tables on wheels to easily accommodate various sized groups to work together.

- We are encouraging more technology integration and inquiry during our collaborative planning with teachers when we design assignments.

We have a lab of 30 desktop computers within the library learning commons.



The Learning Commons

To have a well-organized, attractive online presence, Gladstone teacher-librarian Hilary Montroy is developing our Gladstone Learning Commons website on edublogs, mostly on voluntary time. Developing the website, posting as many assignments online as we can, time to maintain the website and Facebook and Twitter to maintain relevance with our students is a challenge.

Another challenge is to get students to read e-books. The Vancouver School district is currently piloting the Orca ebook collection. There are so many variations of devices to download these books to and we will be learning how to assist students in how to download them.

Having enough bandwidth is sometimes a problem. There are many wonderful online digital presentation tools for students to use to present their learning, however, when we try to give presentations, the time to upload or buffer is too long to hold students' interest.

Decreasing clerical assistance is a problem. There has been none onsite for several years and district support is decreasing. We are trying to develop student tech support availability in the learning commons to provide support for students and teachers each period during the school day and during lunch.

We are encouraged by the support of Gladstone staff, administration and students and by district support to purchase databases and online resources for all students.



The Paperbag Princess visits Gladstone Secondary School

Submit your school library profile for consideration for publication in a future issue of *School Libraries in Canada*.

School Library Profile for School Libraries in Canada

Would you like other school librarians to use your school library? If so, please submit a school library profile for consideration for inclusion in *School Libraries in Canada* (<http://www.cla.ca/pdf/slc/slibprofile.pdf>), the Canadian Association of School Librarians' on-line journal. With the participation of teachers and other workers in school libraries across the country, we hope to draw the diversity of school libraries and the communities they serve across Canada. We also hope to show how much we have in common as we work to promote literacy and develop research skills.

Submissions can be sent by email to slc@cla.ca or mailed to:

Dorick Goss
600 League College Park Institute
29 League Street
Oshawa, Ontario
K2P 0B9

While all submissions will be considered, not all submissions will necessarily be published. It is not necessary to complete all sections of the school profile and, if completed, you can submit the profile in separate form in paragraphs.

Name of School		Address	
Description of Community			
Contact Person		Contact Email	
Grades Taught	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	
Number of Teacher-Librarians	Librarians	Library Technicians	
Type of Collection	Number of Computers		
Special Programs			
Most Popular Book(s) or Resource(s)			

[School Library Profile \(.pdf\)](#)

[Profile.doc](#)

Profil d'une bibliothèque scolaire pour School Libraries in Canada

Vous aimeriez faire connaître votre bibliothèque scolaire auprès d'autres bibliothécaires? Si c'est le cas, veuillez remplir le formulaire qui suit et le faire parvenir à *School Libraries in Canada* (<http://www.cla.ca/pdf/slc/slibprofile.pdf>), la revue en ligne de la Canadian Association of School Librarians'. Avec la participation des enseignants et d'autres employés travaillant dans les bibliothèques scolaires de partout au pays, nous espérons illustrer la diversité des bibliothèques scolaires et des collectivités qu'elles desservent. Nous souhaitons aussi mettre en lumière combien nous avons en commun des nos démarches quotidiennes pour favoriser la littératie et l'acquisition de techniques de recherche.

Veuillez faire parvenir le profil de votre bibliothèque par courriel à slc@cla.ca ou par courrier à :

Dorick Goss
Ligue Collégiale Institut
29 rue League
Oshawa (Ontario)
K2P 0B9

Tous les profils seront examinés, mais ils ne seront pas nécessairement tous publiés. Il n'est pas obligatoire de remplir toutes les cases du formulaire. À noter que vous pouvez aussi nous envoyer votre profil sous forme séparée.

Nom de l'école		Adresse	
Description de la collectivité desservie :			
Nom de la personne ressource :		Adresse électronique de la personne ressource :	
Niveaux enseignés	Nombre d'élèves	Nombre d'enseignants	
Nombre d'enseignants-bibliothécaires	Nombre de bibliothécaires	Nombre de techniciens en documentation	
Taille de la collection		Nombre d'ordinateurs	
Programme spécial :			
Livres ou ressources les plus populaires :			

[Profil d'une bibliothèque scolaire \(.pdf\)](#)

[Profil.doc](#)

Transforming Library Spaces

**by Anita Brooks Kirkland,
Consultant, K-12 Libraries
Waterloo Region District School Board**

Just for a moment, close your eyes and take a mental walk through a typical school. Any school. What kinds of spaces do you encounter? What spaces are unique?

For most schools, the library will stand out as being significantly different from every other space. At best it is positioned at the centre of the school, is large, open and inviting. At the very least it is likely the biggest space outside of the gym, and a gathering place for the school community.

The Library Space Advantage

Space in schools is at a premium. Just ask the French or music teachers relegated to pushing their cart of goods from classroom to classroom, denied the opportunity to create the optimum space to facilitate learning for their area of expertise. And here we are in libraries, with arguably the best space in the school. It's time to leverage that advantage and rethink our library spaces.

Understanding of the learning space as a core influence on learning has matured in recent years. Ontario's guideline document, Together for Learning: School Libraries and the Emergence of the Learning Commons suggests that the design of learning spaces, physical and virtual, needs to consider collaboration, comfort and community. "Learning is fluid and participatory... as a result, space should not place limits on learning. Instead, space should encourage collegiality and intellectual development." (OSLA, 2010).

The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat of the Ontario Ministry of Education recognizes the power of the learning environment in developing "independent and rigorous thought". Their monograph The Third Teacher (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012) focuses on specific recommendations for classroom design for mathematics and literacy development. Key recommendations include a focus on collaboration, giving weight to student voice, focusing on student solutions and interpretations, encouraging real-world problem solving and building self-efficacy. Imagine these design principles, intentionally and thoughtfully applied to the library as a hub in a school learning commons.

Expanding Our Horizons

Indeed transforming the physical space of the school library has been a tangible goal for teacher-librarians as we consider learning commons thinking. My sense is that much of that thinking is under-developed, and we have yet to realize the true power of design factors that complement

and enhance instructional design.

If classrooms can be transformed to build self-efficacy, just imagine the possibilities in the school library. When I speak to classroom teachers I often ask them to think about what makes their students' experience in the library unique. Invariably they land on the idea that in the library their students have more control of their own learning. And isn't that at the very core of what we are trying to achieve in the library program? When it comes to design, then, are we leveraging the advantages we already have? We have size, location and core philosophy, but have we used these advantages to put the library at the centre of learning?

The Library as a Third Space

Students move through classes governed by subjects under study, and the curriculum defines the spaces of the classroom. In addition, schools impose rules of conduct. No running in the halls. Use your inside voice. Stay in your seat unless you have permission to get up. Raise your hand before speaking. These kinds of rules discipline students to behave in space according to teacher and school expectations. Like libraries, concepts designed to be intellectually useful exist alongside rules that discipline bodies. Together, the useful and the disciplinary combine to create dominated space, which intentionally produces school culture.

We've already explored the importance of space design as the "third teacher", but let's explore the notion of the "third space", neither home nor work, but an equally necessary community place. Libraries are already used as gathering places, most frequently outside of formal instruction, for staff meetings, school events and guest speakers.

We who work in libraries understand the library as a gathering space for more than staff meetings. Students gravitate to the relative freedom of the library outside of scheduled class visits. We also understand the importance of the library as a safe haven, physically and intellectually, for those in the school community who may feel disenfranchised for one reason or another.

The concept of the library as the school's third space could be the catalyst for shifting the entire school culture from rules-driven to community-driven. The notions of the library as a community space and as a learning space are sympathetic, and design considerations for one can complement the other. So let's look at the library through the lens of new opportunities and imagine what it could be.



Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School, Waterloo

Technology Liberates Space

Wireless Networks and Mobile Devices: Heavy reliance on wired computer labs creates false constructs for learning – the 40 minutes once a week syndrome, and teacher-centred instructional design. Wireless networks and mobile devices mean anytime, anywhere access to information, collaboration, and creativity.

Online Resources: The move to online resources liberates us from the unnecessary dominance of the stacks. As the container for information moves from books to bytes, we have the freedom to select print resources when that format is most powerful and facilitate access to rich virtual collections where they are most appropriate. Bloated print collections promote understanding of the library as a book repository rather than as an active learning space.

New Understandings for Learning

Reading Engagement: Reading engagement is once again being recognized as a key component for literacy. We can and should leverage this to transform understanding of the library visit from quick and dirty book exchange to an opportunity to empower readers through freedom of choice.

Inquiry and Project-Based Learning: Educators are embracing inquiry and project-based learning as never before. Teacher-librarians can make an intentional connection for other teachers between the power of the resource and technology-rich environment of the library and inquiry-driven learning.

Collaborative Learning: Learning for the 21st century is collaborative. Is the library space open and flexible enough to encourage grouping and regrouping according to learning needs? What shape are the tables, and are they easily moved to group and regroup?

Multiple Literacies: Being literate today means being able to read and write in multiple formats, including images and video. Students trying to manage under the constraints of restricted access to school computer labs arguably need more flexible individual and group access to media production facilities, another great match for the natural provider of resources, the school library.

Creativity: Perhaps the most exciting new reality in education is deeper understanding of the role of creativity in learning, and the natural connection between creativity and technology. Michael Fullan makes that connection in his report, *Great to Excellent: Launching the Next Stage of Ontario's Education Agenda* (2013). A huge opportunity exists for school library practitioners to thoughtfully interpret current thinking in other library sectors about maker spaces to the K-12 education sector, and position the library as a facilitator of creative learning.

Creating Synergy with the Virtual Library

All of the possibilities for learning in the physical library should exist as powerfully in the virtual library. Making intentional connections between these two spaces can be as simple as providing signage and guides for access to online collections. It can be as simple as flipping standard instruction to the library website and providing access in the physical space. It can be as sophisticated as blending learning opportunities seamlessly and naturally between the two environments.

From Teacher-Centred to Learner-Centred

Learner-centred does not mean only student-centred. The new reality is that we are all learners, teachers and students alike. The library can provide a natural environment for teachers to model not only seeking information but also seeking understanding.

From Control to Empowerment

The foundational ideas of this thinking about the library space likely seem very familiar to the vast majority of library practitioners. Familiarity sometimes means complacency. Take a look around your library dispassionately and through a new lens. Is the design truly driven by the potential for collaborative and inquiry-driven learning, or by the need for clear sightlines and supervision? Does your library signage intentionally engage students and empower them to independently navigate resources and services, or does it show inherent disrespect by focusing on restrictions and rules? Are the tables and chairs set up to focus on the front only? Does access to technology exist only in a computer lab setting, or have you untethered inquiry from the constraints of a teacher-centred approach?

There has never been a time with such opportunity for school libraries. Likewise, there has never been a time when teacher-librarians need to make relevant connections for the rest of the educational community and demonstrate value through innovation. And transforming your library's learning environment does not need to be costly. Vision and making intentional connections are far more powerful than budget, and taking risks is surely more rewarding than missing opportunities.

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Further Exploration

Anita Brooks Kirkland, independent education consultant Carol Koechlin and Sofia Di Sabatino, Architectural Coordinator for the Toronto District School Board recently presented at the Ontario Library Association's Annual Institute of the Library as Place. Please visit our presentation website, Teen Territories: Creating their special places in libraries, where we explore ideas to transform spaces and connect to extensive resources for you to explore.

<https://sites.google.com/site/teenterritories/>



Anita Brooks Kirkland is the Consultant for K-12 Libraries for the Waterloo Region District School Board in Ontario. She is the Vice-President / President-Elect of the Ontario Library Association. Find out more about Anita at: <http://www.bythebrooks.ca>.

**I'm not scared of science anymore.
In fact, I'm even excited about writing it.**

Michelle Mulder

"I'm curious about
how something happens,
why, and how it
affects people's lives."



Michelle Mulder - Adventure-seeking
author of books for young people

Michelle Mulder describes herself as "a Canadian author who writes both fiction and non-fiction for young readers." That's the short version. In addition to having written eleven books and being a mother of a preschooler as well as an avid cyclist, this Victoria-based adventure-seeker has also been a travel writer, a teacher of creative writing and even a practice subject for medical students! She agreed to answer some questions for this edition of *School Libraries in Canada* celebrating Science and Technology.

***SLiC* - Your last book *Pedal It!: How Bicycles are Changing the World*, explores the development of the bicycle as a piece of technology as well as its role in preserving the environment. Your next book (scheduled for release in October 2013), *Brilliant! Shining a Light on Sustainable Energy*, examines a variety of innovative methods of generating power. How did the writing of these books with their technological and scientific dimensions compare with the writing of works with more historical, social or political orientations such as *Maggie and the Chocolate War*, *Yeny and the Children for Peace*, *After Peaches*, *Out of the Box* and *Not a Chance*?**



MM - In a way, I've written all my books for the same reason—because I'm curious about how something happens, why, and how it affects people's lives. In my fiction, I've written about social issues like human rights or mental illness, often exploring them by hanging a fictional storyline on an historic framework.

When I came up with the idea for *Pedal It!*, I wanted to write about how people use bicycles, and how this simple technology changes lives. When I wrote up the proposal for the book, though, I realized that a celebration of the bicycle wouldn't be complete without a discussion of how bikes work. Yet the thought of having to explain anything technological and scientific freaked me out. (I still believed the high school teacher who told me that I didn't have a scientific mind.) To calm my nerves, I decided to approach the technological descriptions the same way I approached the historical or socio-political research for my novels: with curiosity, determination, and a library card.

I soon realized that I could understand what I was reading about the physics of bicycles, and not only that—it was actually interesting! Now that I'd lost my fear of physics, I was excited to share what I'd learned, which turned the writing into an enjoyable experience.

One huge and lovely difference between writing fiction and non-fiction has been collaboration. In researching *Brilliant!* in particular, I wrote to many experts in various fields, asking questions. I suppose part of me expected them to write back complaining that I didn't have a scientific mind, but I was blown away by how generous people were with their time and explanations. I'm pleased to say that I'm not scared of science anymore. In fact, I'm even excited about writing it.

SLiC - You live on the West Coast. How did you come to write the Theodore Tug series which is set in Halifax?

MM - Through an incredible amount of good luck.

Shortly after my husband and I got married, we moved to Halifax. We lived there for only a year, but during that year, I did some freelance proof-reading for Nimbus Publishing. At the same time, I was taking an excellent course at the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia about how to write for kids. My boss at Nimbus got wind of this, and asked if I'd be willing to write a picture book about a popular local character in Halifax. I knew nothing about writing picture books, and less about tugboats, but I did know what an unlikely opportunity this was. So I faked confidence, checked out a stack of books from the library about how to write up a proposal and got to work. I happened to be in the right place at the right time, and that first book became a series of four.

Breaking into writing for older kids was a lot harder to achieve. During the Writers' Federation course, I developed an early draft of the manuscript that would become *Maggie and the Chocolate War*. I sent it around to eleven publishers and got eleven rejection letters. But I also got a phone call; in a very gentle, and encouraging way, Margie Wolfe of Second Story Press essentially said, "If you make the manuscript twice as long, and way more interesting, we might consider it." So I rewrote. Eventually, the story was accepted. My foot was in the door.

SLiC - You write both fiction and non-fiction. What are the particular attractions of each genre for you as a writer?

MM - For me, reading good fiction has always been magical: simply by opening a book, I could make my own world disappear and be transported into another time and place. At some point, I realized that writing stories also allowed me to leave my own life behind. But I never wanted to leave my world behind completely. I always had things I'd heard about that I wanted to include in my fiction, like the Children's Peace Movement in Colombia, or the disappeared children of the Argentine dictatorship. Writing fiction has allowed me to explore topics I care about in a creative (and hopefully entertaining) way.

It was only when I hit on the topic of "bicycles" that I considered writing non-fiction. I couldn't write a story that included the whole history of the bicycle as well as its present sociological importance. Writing non-fiction allowed me both to time travel and to peek into the cultures of dozens of countries around the world, without having to stick to one character's point of view.

SLiC - You have identified the library in Port Moody, B.C. as your "favourite hang-out spot" when you were growing up. What were your favourite books as a child and as a teenager, and what made those books your favourites?

MM - As a kid, I remember loving Richard Scarry's books, as well as Don Freeman's *Corduroy and Dandelion*. (A few months ago, I came across copies of the latter in a second-hand book store and now I have the huge pleasure of reading them to my little girl.)

Once I learned to read, I devoured Beverly Cleary's books and then Judy Blume's. In particular, I remember reading and rereading Judy Blume's *Deenie*. It was the first book I'd read about a kid who felt like she didn't belong, and for me it was a revelation. Although I'd never worn a brace for scoliosis like Deenie did, I'd always felt socially awkward, and this book showed me that I wasn't the only one in the world who felt this way. Even though I had very little in common with the main character, reading her story somehow made it okay to be me.

As a teenager, I stopped hanging out in the children's section of the library and headed for the adult books. I read everything from pot-boilers to Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, and I loved them all for different reasons. I also remember that at some point, a school librarian also handed me a copy of Paul Zindel's *The Pigman*, a book that I recently delighted in rereading and recognizing ideas that I'd carried with me for years. (In particular, I grinned when I read, "I think hospitals are exactly what graveyards are supposed to be like. They ought to bury people in hospitals and let sick people get well in the cemeteries." I've believed that for so long that I'd forgotten where I'd gotten that idea from!)

The books that I read as a young person have stayed with me all my life. I may not always remember the titles or the names of the authors, but each story is like a separate life experience. For me, libraries are like a huge place where you can pick up a book and become anyone you want—live for a while in any other time or place—and come home a richer person for the experience.

SLiC - Now that you have a child of your own, what was the first book you read to her? What was the reason for your choice?

MM - To be perfectly honest, I can't remember! I've been reading to her several times a day since she was old enough to focus her eyes on a page. I recall reading her *The Paperbag Princess*, by Robert Munsch, very early on. Of course, back then it was more for me than for her—sort of a "These are my wishes for you" ritual. I wish her the confidence to do what she feels is right, no matter what other people think.

Recently, I noticed that my daughter was allowing others to tell her what to do, take toys away, push, pull, and even drag her around at preschool. Alarmed, I consulted with a dear friend who is an Early Childhood Educator. She recommended a rigorous program of bibliotherapy featuring strong female characters. I'm pleased to report that after months of reading *Chester's Way*, *Lily and the Purple Plastic Purse*, *Lily's Big Day*, and *Sheila Rae the Brave* (all by Kevin Henkes), *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon* (by Patty Lovell), *Rumpelstiltskin's Daughter* (by Diane Stanley), *Sally Jean the Bicycle Queen* (by Cari Best), and *Brave Irene* (by

William Steig), my daughter is now quite the strong female character herself!

SLiC - What novel would you most like your child to read as a teenager? Why would you recommend that book?

MM - I hope she reads a novel that makes her re-evaluate her views of the world, how she fits into it, and what's possible. At the moment, I have no idea what that novel might be. So much of what we read depends on who we are when we read it, and my highest hope for my daughter is that the books she needs land in her hands at just the right moment. I'll do my best to provide her with as many as I can, and I hope that school librarians, friends, family, and the universe will be as good to her as they've been to me!

SLiC - What do you, as an adult, enjoy reading? What have you read most recently? What is the appeal of the texts that you enjoy the most?

MM - These days, I read mostly young adult fiction, with the occasional non-fiction title thrown in for variety. Every few months, I receive a copy of the Canadian Children's Book Centre's magazine *Book News*, covering the latest releases for children and young adults, and I mark all the ones I want to read.

I love both the economy of style and the rich, varied subject matter of books for young people. Recently I read *Potatoes on Rooftops*, by Hadley Dyer, a non-fiction title about growing food, sometimes in surprising places. I loved the author's excitement about the topic and her conversational tone. Passion is contagious, and it's one of the things I most enjoy when I read.

My favourite books tend to be novels where I can lose myself completely and learn to see life from a different perspective. Deborah Ellis's novels are set in countries around the globe and include characters with whom I have very little in common. Ellis's genius as a writer, I think, is to bravely tell a story from the point of view of a character in another culture. She doesn't try to translate her characters' experiences for the audience, but simply trusts in the power of story and the ability of human beings to relate to each other. The result is bold, transformative novels that stay with a reader long after the story ends.

SLiC - What do you prefer, printed books or electronic texts? Why?

MM - I'm a very low-tech kind of person. Generally, if I can choose something that I don't have to plug in, or fuel in any way, that's what I'll go for. I like the feel of books in my hands, and I like looking at paper, rather than a glowing screen. I find my brain goes faster when I'm watching any kind of screen, and these days, I'm trying to keep life as slow and simple as possible.

When I travel, I don't take a lot of books with me. I might take one or two for plane trips, and the rest of the time, I watch the stories that unfold around me wherever I am.

SLiC - You worked as a travel writer. What country would you most like to re-visit? Why?

MM - I'd love to go to Bolivia again. In fact, I'd love to live there for about a year. I've found fewer guidebooks for Bolivia than for most other countries I've visited, and even what's written isn't necessarily applicable when the traveler arrives. To travel happily in such a dynamic place, I needed to give up all expectations. This is challenging for me, but also very freeing.

I've never laughed as much on any trip as I did in Bolivia. What else can you do when bank machines give you counterfeit money, or hostels vanish without a trace, or you get lost on an island where the main language is Aymara (which you don't speak), but someone spots you, and by the time you stumble to the door of a house that apparently takes in travelers, the family has a four-course meal ready?

I loved the element of surprise in my Bolivian travels. I often take myself too seriously. My time there was the perfect antidote for that.

SLiC - What country that you have not yet been to would you most like to visit? What is its attraction?

MM - In our living room, we have a large world map on the wall. We often spend an entire evening gazing at it, inventing travel itineraries. Right now, I would love to travel to Guatemala and volunteer with Maya Pedal. The organization uses donated bicycles to create machines allowing local people to rely on pedal power, rather than expensive electricity.

When I was writing about the organization for *Pedal It!*, a volunteer sent me a picture of one of a child trying out a bicimaquina (bicycle machine). In thanks, I sent the girl a copy of the published book, and her family was thrilled to own their first book ever. The director of Maya Pedal is now working to open a local library in his community, and I would love to help bring books to kids who've never had access to any.

SLiC - What is your next project? What is the most exciting aspect of it?

MM - At the moment, I'm writing a novel for ages 10 to 13 about dyslexia, guerilla gardening, and dumpster diving. I can see in my mind how it all fits together and reflects a central theme, but I've had trouble translating that into manuscript. I'm on my fifth draft or so, each much different than the one before. At one point, I even ditched my main character and gave a minor the lead instead. Tossing everything out and starting from scratch makes for a pretty exciting writing process. I somehow thought that at this stage, I'd approach each manuscript with confidence, marching valiantly through from beginning to end. I'm still working on the 'valiant'

part.

SLiC - What have been your most memorable experiences (as either a child or an adult) in a school library?

MM - One of the most exciting days of my young life was when Sarah Ellis came to my elementary school. I watched her presentation in awe and had a million questions about writing, characters and plots but was too shy to ask a single one. Even so, just being in the presence of a real, live author made becoming one seem a little bit more possible.

A few years ago, I was lucky enough to travel to Ontario with TD Canadian Children's Book Week. The school librarians that I met during my tour did an amazing job of distributing my books to teachers, encouraging discussion and generating questions before my visit. One school in particular even had a big sign out front welcoming me, and when I stepped inside, the hallways were lined with posters that the children had made about my novels. Not surprisingly, by the time I arrived, the students were excited, and I've never spoken to more enthusiastic and engaged classes. After my last presentation of the day, the teacher-librarian told me she was flabbergasted. "I've seen that grade seven class eat substitute teachers alive, but they were hanging on your every word. Even Cody asked a question!"

I was flattered, but I pointed out that none of this would have been possible without her passion for books, writing, and the kids in her school. She was the one who had spent years finding books kids would love and placing them in the right hands. She was the one who worked up such an enthusiasm for a visiting author that I spent the whole day feeling like a rock star. Sure, we authors can do our best to write interesting books, but where would we be without school librarians?

SLiC - Thank you taking the time to let us get to know more about you and your work and for your enthusiastic words of support for school libraries!



Visit Michelle Mulder's [web site at http://www.michellemulder.com/](http://www.michellemulder.com/).

A Long List of Scientific Classics and a few free e-books from Project Gutenberg

In December of 2006, *Discover* magazine published a list of the greatest scientific books (<http://discovermagazine.com/2006/dec/25-greatest-science-books/>). The list is included below as an exemplar for a *School Libraries in Canada* project: developing a list of the greatest Canadian scientific books. Post your suggestions with a brief rationale to <http://canadiansciencebooks.pbworks.com/> and they will be compiled for possible future publication in *SLiC*. While you are waiting for the results, you can peruse the books from *Discover's* original list that are available from gutenberg.org.

1. *The Voyage of the Beagle* (1845)

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3435390

and 2. *The Origin of Species* (1859) by Charles Darwin [tie]

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3435390

3. *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy) by Isaac Newton (1687)

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3277767 (in Latin)

4. *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* by Galileo Galilei (1632)

5. *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* (On the Revolutions of Heavenly Spheres) by Nicolaus Copernicus (1543)

6. *Physica* (Physics) by Aristotle (circa 330 B.C.)

7. *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (On the Fabric of the Human Body) by Andreas Vesalius (1543)

8. *Relativity: The Special and General Theory* by Albert Einstein (1916)

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3275539

9. *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins (1976)

10. *One Two Three . . . Infinity* by George Gamow (1947)

11. *The Double Helix* by James D. Watson (1968)

12. *What Is Life?* by Erwin Schrödinger (1944)

13. *The Cosmic Connection* by Carl Sagan (1973)

14. *The Insect Societies* by Edward O. Wilson (1971)

15. *The First Three Minutes* by Steven Weinberg (1977)

16. ***Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson (1962)**
17. ***The Mismeasure of Man* by Stephen Jay Gould (1981)**
18. ***The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales* by Oliver Sacks (1985)**
19. ***The Journals of Lewis and Clark* by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark (1814)**
http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3185286
20. ***The Feynman Lectures on Physics* by Richard P. Feynman, Robert B. Leighton, and Matthew Sands (1963)**
21. ***Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* by Alfred C. Kinsey et al. (1948)**
22. ***Gorillas in the Mist* by Dian Fossey (1983)**
23. ***Under a Lucky Star* by Roy Chapman Andrews (1943)**
24. ***Micrographia* by Robert Hooke (1665)**
http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3276692
25. ***Gaia* by James Lovelock (1979)**

Honorable Mentions

1. ***The Interpretation of Dreams* by Sigmund Freud (1900)**
2. ***The Lives of a Cell* by Lewis Thomas (1974)**
3. ***The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James (1902)**
http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=3043757
4. ***The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* by Thomas S. Kuhn (1962)**
5. ***A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking (1988)**
6. ***Guns, Germs, and Steel* by Jared Diamond (1997)**
7. ***The Elegant Universe* by Brian Greene (1999)**
8. ***The Making of the Atomic Bomb* by Richard Rhodes (1986)**

Social Media Migration



The Voices for School Libraries Network is pleased to announce that we can now be found on Facebook (Voices for School Libraries) and Twitter (@CdnSchoolLibrar). These two sites have replaced the Voices for School Libraries Network Ning that many members of the Canadian school library community joined after the demise of the Canadian Association of School Libraries (CASL) in the spring of 2011.

The Ning served its purpose at the time by keeping the school library community together after the collapse of CASL. Recently, however, the Ning has seen very little traffic other than spambots and so a decision was made to transition the Canadian school library community conversation to the popular social networking sites, Facebook and Twitter. We hope that you will consider following us on these formats and spreading the word with your colleagues. Our goal is to keep the Canadian school library community together by talking about our successes, concerns and best practices. Feel free to post comments, pictures and links on these sites as you move through your daily practice. We'd love to hear from you!

Co-Chairs:

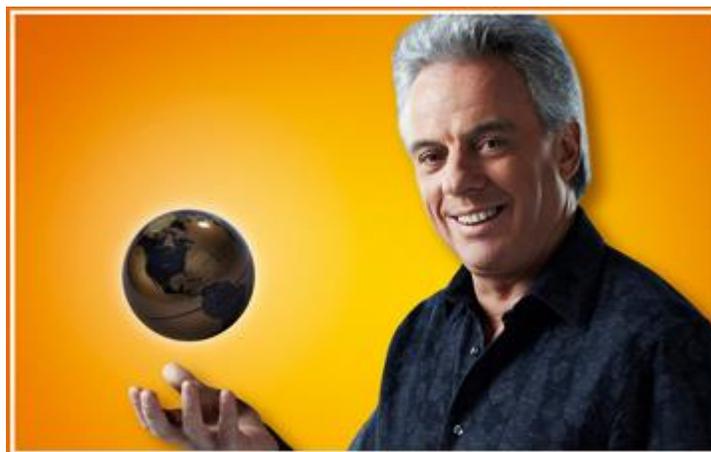
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It's important to get kids interested in science ...

Bob McDonald

"... they are the future business people, politicians and scientists who will have to make intelligent decisions about how our growing population manages to survive on this small planet."



Bob McDonald - Journalist and Author

Bob McDonald, has been widely recognized for his work in promoting public awareness of science. On CBC television, he was host of *Greatest Canadian Invention* as well as host and writer of *Magical Mystery Cure*. On radio he hosts *Quirks and Quarks* and his work on popularizing science has been widely recognized. He has been awarded the Michael Smith Award for Science Promotion from NSERC, the Sandford Fleming Medal from The Royal Canadian Institute, and the McNeil Medal for the Public Awareness of Science from the Royal Society of Canada. In addition to being the recipient of eight honorary doctorates and two honorary college degrees, he has been named as an honorary life member of the Sigma Xi Society, the first Canadian to be so honoured by America's oldest scientific body and, in 2011, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. He agreed to take some time from preparing for the next season of *Quirks and Quarks* to answer *SLiC*'s questions about his own career and about journalism, science and technology.

SLiC - What would you, as CBC's national science commentator, regard as the "biggest" science story in the last year? What is its importance?

BMc - It's hard to pick the biggest science story of the year because there are so many good stories developing all the time. Chris Hadfield's flight on the International Space Station was a big one for Canada.

The one that got the most attention was the proof of the existence of the Higgs Boson. This was the biggest goal of the world's biggest science experiment, the Large Hadron Collider. The Higgs Boson was a theoretical particle that was needed to fill what scientists call the standard model of the universe. This is an effort to understand how the universe began, when it was unimaginably hot and dense. Since we can't go back in time to study it back then, scientists come up with mathematical models of what they think it was like, including all the particles and forces at work. Then experimenters try to create those particles to prove the theories correct. Now that the Higgs has been seen, they know they are on the right track to figuring out the rest of the story of how we got here.

SLiC - What has been the most memorable science story you have covered in your career? Why is it so memorable?

The most memorable science story that affected my career was the flight of Voyager across the solar system. I rode my motorcycle to Florida in 1977 to watch Voyager Launch towards Jupiter. Then, over the next twelve years, I made regular pilgrimages to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena California, mission control for robotic missions where the images from space come in. I watched Voyager fly by Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. While the planets themselves were remarkable to see close up, Voyager discovered moons that had never been seen before. Moons with volcanoes, moons made of ice, moons that come in different colours, truly alien worlds. It was exciting to be on a mission of discovery seeing new worlds for the first time.



SLiC - How did your experiences in school affect your attitudes towards journalism and science?

BMc - I was not a very good student. But I did have a teacher in grade 8 who had a sense of humour and made science fun. I've always had an interest in science but wasn't very good at doing it. I dropped out after second year university. My education has come from mentors and co-workers who opened doors of opportunity.

SLiC - What other experiences in childhood and adolescence have had the greatest influence on your success as a science journalist?

BMc - I grew up in the space age. I remember seeing headlines in the newspaper talking about a new satellite put up by the Russians called Sputnik. Then I watched all the early missions to space including the moon landings. That was an exciting time and I believed that if things kept going the way they were I would be having holidays in space by the time I was an adult. It didn't quite work out that way but my interest in space has always remained high.

SLiC - What books (or magazines) were most important to you as a child and as a teenager? Why were they memorable for you?

BMc - The book that influenced me most when I was young was called "The Planets." It was a Golden Book of Knowledge filled with drawings of what the planets would look like if you could go there. I still have it. This book was written before the space age even began. It taught me that the Earth is only one of many planets and that they are all very different. It was an exquisite pleasure to actually witness the exploration of those other worlds as a science journalist.

SLiC - Do you have any memories of elementary or secondary school libraries when you were growing up?

BMc - Libraries were a place to find out new things and a place to be quiet. I didn't own a lot of books so the library was a place to catch up.

SLiC - What do you think would be the most important resource for students studying science in an elementary or secondary school library in 2013?

BMc - There are many resources available to students. On the internet, the most important thing to learn is the difference between real science sites and pseudo-science. There are a lot of sites out there claiming to be scientific but they are actually religious or industrially based. Otherwise, students should get out of the classroom and take hikes, visit science centres, attend summer science camps, visit laboratories during open houses, just get out there and look at the world.

SLiC - What attracted you to journalism and to science as a specialty within that profession?

BMc - I always liked figuring out how things work then explaining that to people, even when I was a kid. The Ontario Science Centre gave me the opportunity to do that for a living. Appearing in the media came out of that. Producers liked the way I explained things on radio and television and encouraged me to come back. One thing led to another and here I am, still doing it for a living.

SLiC - Who has had the most influence on your career as a journalist? Why has that person had such an important influence?

BMc - Many people have influenced me over my career. Famous astronomer, the late Carl Sagan inspired me with his ability to make space fascinating. He had a way of describing other worlds as though you were standing on them, a perspective I've always related to. I was fortunate to meet him in person more than once. Other people have been those who liked my work and offered me opportunities to write documentaries or become involved in programs because they believed I could do it. I owe them a great deal.

SLiC - How has the evolution of technology affected your work as a science journalist over the course of your career?

BMc - The internet and digital technology has revolutionized everything in journalism. We used to use typewriters and tape recorders. Our information came from teletypes. Now we do everything at our desk.

SLiC - You worked as a demonstrator at the Ontario Science Centre and went on to work on children's programming with shows like Wonderstruck and Heads Up! What do you enjoy most about sharing science with kids?

BMc - Kids are wonderful to work with, especially 6-12 year olds. They are smart, interested in everything and like to laugh. It's important to get kids interested in science early because they are the future business people, politicians and scientists who will have to make intelligent decisions about how our growing population manages to survive on this small planet.

SLiC - What has been your most interesting or memorable experience while working with children as a science journalist?

BMc - I've had fun doing workshops where kids have to design a message for aliens who don't speak any language we have on Earth. The message has to tell them something about our planet and who we are. It's very challenging and the kids have great ideas.

SLiC - What have you been reading recently? What inspired your interest in it?

BMc - I have to read all the time for my work. I just came from an aviation museum that has the world's largest flying boat, larger than a 747 jumbo jet, nicknamed the "Spruce Goose." It flew only once in 1947. I'm currently reading the story of how it was built.

SLiC - If you could recommend just one science film (feature film or documentary) for children (or teenagers) in Canadian schools, what would it be and why would you recommend it?

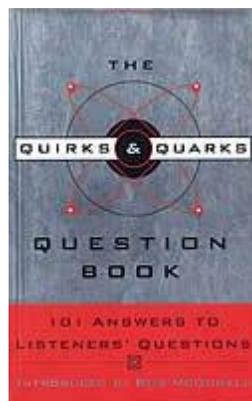
BMc - My favourite movie of all time is still *2001: a Space Odyssey*. There's a lot of good science in it.

SLiC - What would you as an observer of science predict to be the most exciting single development in the next decade?

BMc - I'm waiting for the discovery of how gravity works. We can measure it, but we can't change it or turn it off like we can electricity. If we could do that, or even make it push instead of pull, it would revolutionize transportation.

SLiC - Thanks again for taking the time to respond to our questions and for your support of School Libraries in Canada`s celebration of National Science and Technology Week.

Read more from [Bob McDonald](#) on the *CBC's Quirks and Quarks* page.



Bob McDonald wrote the introduction for the CBC's *Quirks and Quarks Question Book: 101 Answers to Listeners' Questions* (ISBN: 9780771054488)

Publishers recommend . . .

Publishers are invited to submit the title of one work of fiction and/or one work of non-fiction by a Canadian author or illustrator, published in the last year, that they would consider a "best book" or a "neglected gem." Let *School Libraries in Canada* know about recent works to satisfy the needs and interests of school library patrons from kindergarten to senior high school. Send a .jpg image of the cover art, a 50-100 word factual blurb and the publication information to sliceditor@gmail.com by January 15th for the Winter 2014 issue.

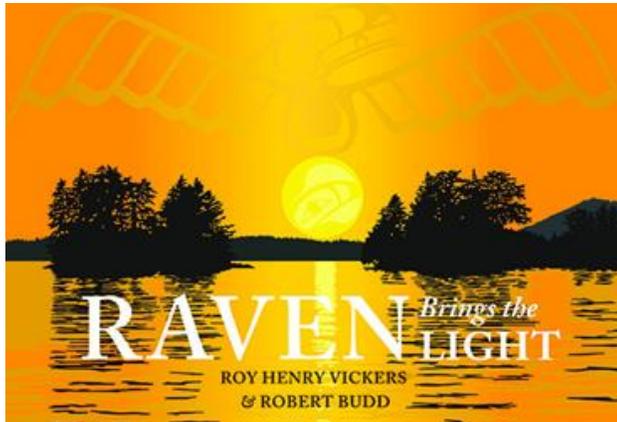
Story Books and Fiction

Raven Brings the Light

by Roy Henry Vickers and Robert Budd, illustrated by Roy Henry Vickers

Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 2013.

40 pp.; Ages Children to Adults; ISBN 9781550175936



In a time when darkness covered the land, a boy named Weget is born who is destined to bring the light. With the gift of a raven's skin that allows him to fly as well as transform, Weget turns into a bird and journeys from Haida Gwaii into the sky. There he finds the Chief of the Heavens who keeps the light in a box. By transforming himself into a pine needle, clever Weget tricks the Chief and escapes with the daylight back down to Earth. Vividly portrayed through the art of Roy Henry Vickers, Weget's story has been passed down for generations. The tale has been traced back at least 3,000 years by archeologists who have found images of Weget's journey in petroglyphs on the Nass and Skeena rivers. This version of the story originates from one told to the author by Chester Bolton, Chief of the Ravens, from the village of Kitkatla around 1975.

Nat the Cat Can Sleep Like That

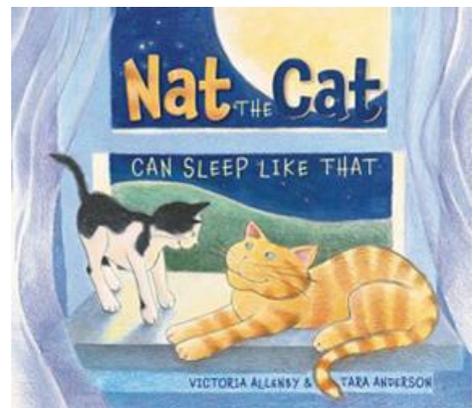
by Victoria Allenby

illustrated by Tara Anderson

Toronto: Pajama Press, 2013.

32 p.; Ages 2-5; ISBN 9781927485521

Young readers who are full of beans at bedtime will find compatriots in mischief and slumber in *Nat the Cat Can Sleep Like That*. In her mixed-media illustrations, Tara Anderson combines a large dose of imagination and whimsy with a pair of very cat-like cats. Victoria Allenby's rhythmic verse rises and falls with the cats' playful antics. Cat lovers young and old will delight in this not-quite-ready-for-bedtime treat.

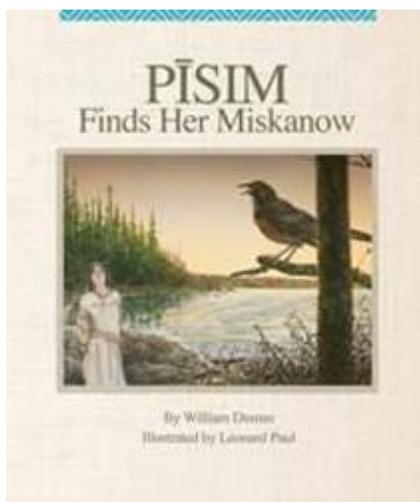


Pisim

by William Dumas, illustrated by Leonard Paul

Winnipeg: Portage & Main Press, 2013.

40 pp.; Grades 4-12; ISBN 9781553793946



In 1993, the remains of a young woman were discovered at Nagami Bay, Southern Indian Lake, Manitoba. Out of that important archaeological discovery came this unique story about a week in the life of Pisim, a young Cree woman, who lived in the mid 1600s. In the story, created by renowned storyteller William Dumas, Pisim begins to recognize her *miskanow* – her life's journey – and to develop her gifts for fulfilling that path. The story is brought to life by the rich imagery of Leonard Paul, and is accompanied by sidebars on Cree language and culture, archaeology and history, maps, songs, and more.

Non-Fiction

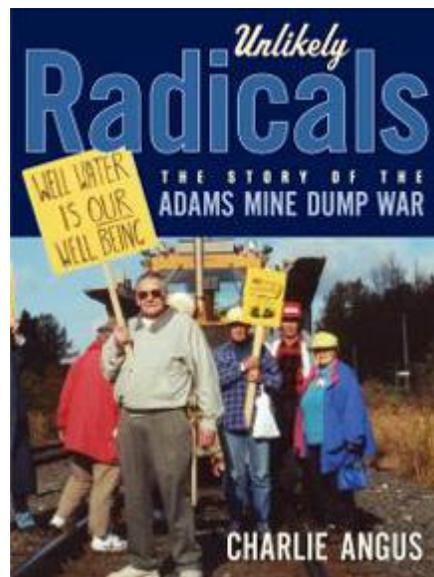
Unlikely Radicals

by Charlie Angus

Toronto: Between the Lines Books, 2013.

240 p.; ISBN 9781771130400 .

For twenty-two years politicians and businessmen pushed for the Adams Mine landfill as a solution to Ontario's garbage disposal crisis. This plan to dump millions of tonnes of waste into the fractured pits of the Adams Mine prompted five separate civil resistance campaigns by a rural region of 35,000 in Northern Ontario. *Unlikely Radicals* traces the compelling history of the First Nations people and farmers, environmentalists and miners, retirees and volunteers, Anglophones and Francophones who stood side by side to defend their community with mass demonstrations, blockades, and non-violent resistance.

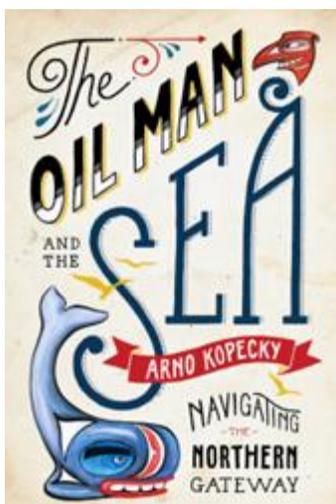


The Oil Man and the Sea Navigating the Northern Gateway

by Arno Kopecky

Madeira Park, B.C.: Douglas & McIntyre, 2013 (Oct. 19)

256 p.; ISBN 9781771001076



If the controversial Northern Gateway Pipeline is approved, supertankers loaded with two million barrels of bitumen would join the complex ecosystem of British Columbia's Central Coast, amongst the herring, humpbacks and salmon. The proposed pipeline pits local First Nations, British Columbians, and environmental groups against the national consortium determined to make Canada an "energy superpower." At the heart of the debate is the Great bear Rainforest — a hugely rich ecosystem with a knife to its throat. Journalist Arno Kopecky navigates 41-foot sailboat through stunning fjords, inlets, and hidden reefs, unveiling the complex social and environmental considerations in this heated debate.

Roll On: Rick Hansen Wheels around the World

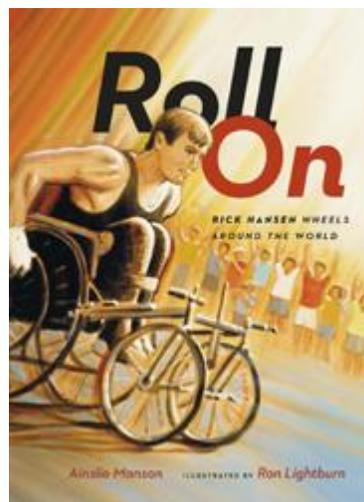
by Ainslie Manson

illustrated by Ron Lightburn

Greystone Books, 2013 (October 5)

40 p.; ISBN 9781926812496 .

As Rick Hansen wheels around the globe on his incredible Man in Motion World Tour, the children he meets are encouraged to dream and work to make their dreams come true. In China, Lin, who longs to be a ballerina, pictures herself leaping gracefully over a wall as high as the Great Wall of China. In Canada, Jack learns to do a wheelie in his wheelchair. Readers travel with Rick, glimpsing all the ups and downs endured on the 43,000-kilometre journey. The text and illustrations bring to life Rick's amazing feat and the impact it has had on children everywhere.



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For Canadian School Libraries

A community of school library specialists working in Canadian schools. Pour ceux ou celles qui travaillent dans les bibliothèques scolaires.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Canadian Library Association (CLA) website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: HOME, MY CLA, SHOP CLA, JOIN CLA, DONATE, CONTACT. On the right, there is a search box, a SITEMAP link, and icons for print, Text-Only Page, and email. The main header features the CLA logo and the text "Canadian Library Association" and "Association canadienne des bibliothèques". Below the header is a menu with links: ABOUT CLA, CLA AT WORK, MEMBERSHIP, LIBRARY CAREERS, EVENTS, RESOURCES, and CORPORATE OPPORTUNITIES. The main content area shows a close-up of a blue keyboard key labeled "JOIN" and a blue banner with the word "Membership" in white text.

For information on the benefits and pricing of CLA Memberships go to:

<http://www.cla.ca>

and click on membership.