



Downtown Canada: Writing Canadian Cities

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The vast majority of Canadians live in cities, yet for the most part, discussions of Canadian literature have failed to actively engage with the country's urban experience. Canada's prevalent myths continue to be about nordicity and the wilderness, and, stereotypically at least, its literature is often perceived as being about small towns, rural areas, and 'roughing it in the bush.'

Downtown Canada is a collection of essays that addresses Canada as an urban place. The contributors focus their attention on the writing of Canada's cities - including Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa, and Halifax - and call attention to the centrality of the city in Canadian literature. They examine how characters are affected by the urban experience in works by a group of authors as diverse as the country itself: Hugh MacLennan, Jovette Marchessault, Michael Ondaatje, Austin Clarke, and Gerald Lynch, to name just a few. Editors Justin D. Edwards and Douglas Ivison have brought together an esteemed group of international Canadian literary scholars, and together they have created a book that is timely and unique, questioning conventional assumptions about Canadian literature, and Canadian culture more generally.

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