

The Publishing of a Poet:  
An Empirical Examination of the Social Characteristics of Canadian Poets  
as Revealed in Small Press Literary Magazines

by

Diane Monique Barlee  
B.A., University of Victoria, 2008

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Sociology

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University of Victoria

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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**Supervisor**

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Dr. Iain Macleod Higgins (Department of English)  
**Outside Member**

## **Abstract**

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This thesis is an exploratory examination of the social characteristics of 139 poets featured in a selection of five small press Canadian literary journals. The investigation charts and analyzes the demographics of 64 poets who were published in 1967, and 75 poets who were published in four small press literary magazines in 2010. The 2010 magazines were purposely sampled as representatives of specific geographical areas in Canada (i.e., the West Coast, the Prairies, Central Canada, and the East Coast).

The results indicate that in 1967 female poets were less likely to be published; however, 43 years later, this bias has been rectified. Another notable difference between the two groups of poets is that in 1967 ethnic minorities were more likely to be published. Educational achievement was an important factor for both the 1967 and 2010 poets, as was location, occupation and editorial duties.

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

*Being a poet is to know that you do not exist by poetry.*

-David Ignatow (1973)

John Donne was a dean of the church; Robert Herrick, a vicar; Robert Burns, a farmer; and, Charles Baudelaire a wastrel. More recently, Philip Larkin and Jorge Borges were librarians; Robert Frost, a poultry farmer; William Carlos Williams, a paediatrician; and, Charles Bukowski, a letter carrier. In Canada, Robert Service was a bank clerk and Gwendolyn MacEwan operated a coffee house. Historically, poets came from various strata of society; however, casual observation suggests significant changes in North American poetry communities.

Recently, some critics charge that contemporary poetry is suffering as a result of exclusionary practices (e.g. sexism, academization and cronyism); the end result being a homogenous voice that appeals to a limited audience. The aim of this thesis is to explore these allegations by examining the demographic characteristics of poets featured in a selection of small press Canadian literary journals. Which poets are published? How often do poets act as editors? Are the published poets worthy of recognition, or, as has been accused, are there inner cores of academic poets who engage in nepotism in order to sustain both their reputations and careers (Bartlett, 2005; Gioia, 1991; Shivani, 2010)? While examining these questions this study will bring empirical evidence to bear on the question of discrimination in Canadian poetry communities. Granted, while it is difficult to show deliberate inequity, data can be revealed that is consistent with accusations of discrimination.

### **1.1 Rationale for this Thesis**

As the literature review will show, the collection and examination of quantitative data is not in keeping with the majority of scholarly information pertaining to the sociology of literature—this thesis aims to address that deficit.

Eagleton (1990) observes that, “for a certain kind of contemporary critic, any historical or ideological contextualization of art whatsoever is *ipso facto* reductionist” (p. 4). However, if practitioners of sociology shun the field of literature then we are overlooking one of humanity’s most significant and illuminating contributions to society. Not only does literature reflect the society we live in, but also many argue that authors assist in shaping society—illustrious writers are often considered “the voice of the people” (Epstein, 1988). Conversely, some contend that current writers, specifically poets, are anything but the voice of the people (Gioia, 1991; Shivani, 2010).

### **1.2 Research Questions**

The primary question explored in this study is: what are the social characteristics of poets featured in small press Canadian literary journals? Besides examining the central question of which poets are being published the following sub-questions are also examined: 1) what is the gender of the published poets; 2) what is their race; 3) where do they reside; 4) what are their education levels; 5) what is their occupation; 6) have the poets been previously published; 7) how often do poets act as editors; and, finally, 8) what are the benefits of publication in small press literary journals.

### **1.3 Research Approach**

Although critics have accused Marxist scholars of neglecting cultural studies (Grayson & Grayson, 1980), the sociology of literature has principally been associated with Marxist analysis. While this thesis is a critical examination (in keeping with a Marxist or neo-

Marxist investigation) of literary communities, it differs from the majority of related research as this study relies upon an empirical methodology as opposed to a philosophical approach.

#### **1.4 Research Methods**

The initial step of the research was to collect, chart and analyze the demographic data of 75 poets featured in four prominent small press Canadian literary magazines published in 2010. The literary magazines examined were *The Malahat Review* (BC), *Prairie Fire* (MB), *Arc Poetry Magazine [Arc]* (ON), and *The Fiddlehead* (NB). These magazines were purposely sampled as representatives of specific geographical areas in Canada (i.e., the West Coast, the Prairies, Central Canada, and the East Coast). A further motivation for selecting these journals is that *The Fiddlehead* and *The Malahat Review* are considered among Canada's most prestigious literary journals; *Arc* and *Prairie Fire* are also longstanding and respected Canadian journals. Although the examination of 75 conveniently selected poets is statistically significant, further research needs to be conducted in order to establish an enduring pattern.

The demographic profiles of the 2010 poets highlight the following independent variables:

- gender,
- race,
- location,
- education,
- occupation,
- previous publications, and,

- editorial duties.

These variables were examined to determine to what extent they relate to the dependent variable—publication. (For more detailed information refer to Appendices B-E, which chart the abovementioned variables.)

In order to determine whether or not the demographic characteristics of published Canadian poets have changed over the last forty-three years, the second step of the research was to gather, chart and analyze the data of 64 poets recognized in the spring 1967 volume of *Canadian Literature*. The primary purpose of choosing *Canadian Literature* is that it is a longstanding literary journal, established in 1959.<sup>1</sup> A further motive for selecting *Canadian Literature* as a comparison (as opposed to investigating earlier issues of the 2010 literary journals) is that *Prairie Fire* was founded in 1983; and, *Arc* in 1978 (*The Malahat Review* was only established in 1967). As a result, a long-term time comparison of these journals was not possible.

In order to obtain demographic information a multi-source data collection method was used. Many of the demographic details were gathered from three biographical indexes: *Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada* (2002), *The League of Canadian Poets*<sup>2</sup> (2010), and *The Writer's Union of Canada* (2010). Google Books also proved to be a valuable and immediate resource. However, as these resources did not always provide sufficient information, hundreds of online sources, such as poets' blogs, web sites, and

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to analyze 1960s poets, as it was not until the 1980s when creative writing programs gained momentum in university environs. Some have argued that the recent popularity of Master of Fine Arts [MFA] programs is responsible for an increased cronyism among academic poets (Gioia, 1991; Shivani, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> The League of Canadian Poets has recently changed their website to Poets.ca.

poetry forums were also accessed. Due to time constraints these Internet resources were not referenced.

Demographic information pertaining to the poets featured in the spring 1967 *Canadian Literature* issue was not as easy to collect as it was for the 2010 poets. As a result the *Canadian Literature* data was less reliable. The difficulty in gathering the data of the 1967 poets could be a reflection of the obscurity of some of the authors, but it could also be an indication of technological advances, meaning that current poets, renowned or not, can establish their identities online. A second issue, pertaining to the 1967 poets, is that some of the female poets might have changed their names after marrying, but published under their maiden names. As a result, it is possible that some of the biographical details of the 1967 female poets may be less reliable.

Race was established through the use of biographical information and photographic material. When these sources were not available, surname analysis was used to determine race.<sup>3</sup> Unquestionably, there are limitations with surname analysis. For instance, it is difficult to identify Black Canadian and First Nations poets by last name alone. Moreover, it is difficult to identify individuals with mixed ethnicities whose fathers are Caucasian. It is also problematic to identify visible minority women who are/were married to Caucasian men. That said, out of 139 poets, there were only 21 whose photographs or biographical details were unavailable. The majority of the 21 poets stem from the 1967 sample group.

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<sup>3</sup> Instances in which surname analysis is relied upon are marked with a single asterisk (\*) in Appendices A - F.

Determining the location of the 2010 poets was relatively uncomplicated, as most of the contemporary poets listed their whereabouts in biographical blurbs, found primarily in contributor's notes. Determining the location of the 1967 poets proved to be more challenging due to a lack of available information; however, the location of 56/64 of the 1967 poets was eventually found.<sup>4</sup>

Educational data for the contemporary poets was relatively simple to collect. However, there were three instances in which it was not possible to find the degrees of poets who worked as high school teachers. On these occasions it was assumed that the individuals had obtained, at the least, a BEd and they were categorized as such. Unearthing the educational details of the 1967 poets was more complex. Poets, in both groups, whose educational details were unavailable, were categorized as "unknown" (refer to Figures 1-7, Appendices A-E).

Gathering occupational data was fairly straightforward, yet, once again, less so for the 1967 group. Those poets whose occupational information was unavailable were listed as "unknown".

In regard to the category "Previously Published", obtaining information about the 2010 poets proved fruitful. This was not the case with the 1967 poets; as a result the category was omitted from the 1967 data. Nonetheless, as *Canadian Literature's* list consists of poets who had recently published books or chapbooks, it could be safely assumed that the majority of the poets had been previously published. Information pertaining to editorial duties was relatively simple to gather for both groups of poets.

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<sup>4</sup> When determining the location of the 1967 poets I charted where the poets resided at the time of publication. In the case of poets who were travelling I referred to their last established place of residence.

Ethical issues were also considered. It is possible that the research findings could expose and possibly taint the reputations of some small press poetry editors and poets. However, as this thesis serves an exploratory, and possibly a transformative, purpose it can be argued that purported issues of sexism, credentialism, and editorial favouritism (Gioia, 1991; King, 2010; Kotin & Baird, 2007; Shivani, 2010; Solway, 2003, Spahr & Young, 2007; Wells, 2004) need to be examined empirically. I am also mindful that personal ethical dilemmas may occur, as I am a graduate student of sociology and a published poet.

A final consideration is that of “insider status”. My, albeit peripheral, socialization in the Canadian poetry and literary scene means that I might have internalized the expectations, standards and norms of the literary community (Smart, 2006). This internalization could possibly cause a bias in my research; however, I believe that I have acknowledged and rectified any bias. In fact, I think my insights are valuable, as I possess the dual identity of poet and academic researcher.

### **1.5 Structure of this Thesis**

This chapter has discussed the justification of the research topic, arguing that accusations of discrimination in contemporary literary communities need to be examined empirically. Also presented in this chapter are the research questions, approach, methods, limitations, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 2 highlights relevant information pertaining to the sociology of literature. Attention is drawn to gains that have occurred in the field as well as some perceived shortcomings. The literature review also discusses the reluctance of some academics to

use empirical methods when studying the sociology of literature. The final section of Chapter 2 examines voices from outside of the field.

Chapter 3 examines and discusses the demographics of poets noted in 1967 summer issue of *Canadian Literature*. The data refers exclusively to gender, race, location, education, occupation and editorial duties of the poets. As abovementioned, the category of “Previous Publications” is not included.

Chapter 4 examines and discusses demographic information pertaining to the Canadian Griffin Poetry Prize winners, dating from 2001 - 2010. The data refers exclusively to gender, race, education, and occupation of the prizewinners. Chapter 4 serves as a launching point to the following, more detailed chapters.

Chapter 5 presents an in-depth examination of poets whose work is featured in the spring 2010 poetry issue of *The Malahat Review*. Variables such as gender, race, location, education, occupation, previous publications, and editorial duties within the literary community are considered. Chapter 5’s data collection and analysis serves as a template for Chapters 6 to 8.<sup>5</sup>

Chapter 6 examines and discusses the demographics of the spring 2010 *Prairie Fire* poetry contributors. Chapter 7 examines and discusses the demographics of the summer 2010 *Arc* poetry contributors. Chapter 8 examines and discusses the demographic characteristics of the spring 2010 *Fiddlehead* poetry contributors. Chapter 9 presents an overview of the 2010 contributors.

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<sup>5</sup> However, Chapter 5 differs from Chapters 6 to 8, as in Chapter 5 two journal issues are examined, as opposed to one. The reason for this difference in analysis will be explained in Chapter 5.

Chapter 10 discusses all of the collected data—comparing and contrasting the demographic details of the 1967 poets with the 2010 poets. Following this section it is briefly explored whether or not, due to purported issues of academic discrimination, poetry is a “dying” art form. Inspected are both the arguments of those who support this claim, and those who refute it. Also illustrated are the benefits of being published in small press literary journals. Chapter 11 also notes the shortcomings of the research, and issues some recommendations for future investigations. Finally, Chapter 11 ends with a postscript.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter initially reviews contributions that prominent scholars, from various disciplines, have made to the sociology of literature. The literature review is chronological, commencing in the late 1800s through to the present. Chapter 2 also examines why the sociology of literature has been criticized as a means of credible investigation—specifically, the denunciation of scholars who study the subject using quantitative methods. Following these examinations we turn to individuals from outside of the field. The final section of Chapter 2 concentrates on allegations of discrimination and cronyism in Canadian and American literary communities.

### 2.2 Early Contributors

According to Abrams (1999) the term “sociology of literature” is usually applied to investigators whose chief objective is to examine how an author’s class, education, economics, gender, and other variables impact his or her work. One of the first individuals to examine the topic of literature using a sociological lens was French literary critic Hippolyte Taine.<sup>6</sup> In his seminal book, *The History of English Literature*, published in 1863, Taine argued that works of literature were cultural products based upon three principles: race, milieu (environment), and moment (historical epoch) (Abrams, 1999; Albrecht, 1954). Taine’s empirical, and, as some have accused “polemical”, method of

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<sup>6</sup> Taine is considered “one of the principle theoreticians of French nationalism, a major proponent of sociological positivism, and one of the first practitioners of historical criticism” (Suárez & Vidal, 2006, p. 232).

examining literature was met with both admiration and skepticism—sometimes by the same critic. For instance, although American author and literary critic Henry James was an avid admirer of Taine, James lamented that he did not “care for [Taine’s] rigid application of...formulas” (Sullivan, 1973, p. 29).

Despite some critics’ misgivings, Taine’s empirical method was to influence other distinguished intellectuals, specifically Friedrich Engels (Demetz, 1967) and French author and intellectual Emile Zola (Baguley, 1992). Italian political theorist Gaetano Mosca, who has been recognized as the founder of elite sociology, was also inspired by Taine (Van Ginneken, 1992). Regardless of Taine’s influence, the following generation of sociology of literature scholars, many of whom were graduates of the Frankfurt school, was less inclined to utilize an empirical approach as modeled by Taine.

### **2.3 The Frankfurt School**

The Frankfurt school, founded in 1923, promoted a neo-Marxist philosophical interdisciplinary method that tended to steer away from the “‘scientific’ interpretations of [classical] Marxism” (Hamilton, 1974, p. 38). Many of the literary scholars who attended the Frankfurt school were influenced by Georg Lukács’ *The Theory of the Novel* (1916), one of the first books to rely on a sociological approach while examining the topic of literature.

The Frankfurt school boasted academic luminaries such as Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse and Leo Löwenthal. Both Marcuse and Löwenthal contributed significantly to the sociology of literature. Löwenthal, who dedicated his career to the subject, closely examined the concepts of popular culture, mass culture, and high culture, concentrating on the way in which “social consciousness is expressed in literature”

(Bernstein, 1994, p. 280). Walter Benjamin was also associated with the Frankfurt school.<sup>7</sup> Benjamin proposed the theory that, “[i]n the absence of any traditional value, art in the age of mechanical reproduction would inherently be based on the practice of politics” (Desmond, 2011, p. 165).

Despite some advances in the following decades, the sociology of literature was not to hit its stride again until the 1960s. In the 1950s, Albrecht (1954), echoing Mueller, suggested that American sociologists had abandoned the sociology of literature due to the fact that other “practical” causes had demanded more attention (p. 425).

#### **2.4 Developments in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s**

In 1964 Lucien Goldmann published *Towards a Sociology of the Novel* positing that the novel is a reflection of the era in which the work is written. Goldmann’s work was greatly influenced by Lukács. However, whereas Lukács was resistant to modern literature, Goldmann’s analysis primarily addressed twentieth-century texts (Jay, 1984). According to Goldmann the most important aspect of study was not necessarily the texts themselves, but rather “the study of internal literary structures in relation to the social” (Bernstein, 1994, p. 277). Some of Goldmann’s critics considered his insights reductionist and reminiscent of Taine (Jay, 1984).

The 1970s and 1980s were distinguished decades for the sociology of literature. According to English (2010) it was during this time that the “sociology of literature” was a term frequently used by critical theorists and literary critics alike. This was particularly evident in Britain where a cross-discipline between literary and sociological studies was promoted. Australian academics were also making progress with the subject. Again, these

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<sup>7</sup> Although Benjamin is often associated with the Frankfurt scholars he did not attend the institution.

advancements are alleged to be a result of relaxed disciplinary boundaries that existed between fields such as media studies, sociology and communications.<sup>8</sup> General advances in the field, both in North America and overseas, included:

The opening of Marxian theory into a more dialectical understanding of the relations between base and superstructure (Williams 1980); a reconceptualization of popular culture that dropped the discredited mass-culture model in favor of one allowing for greater agency on the part of the users and manipulators of symbols (Hall et al 1980, Hebdige 1979); a sophisticated account of the uses of cultural capital to create or shore up economic capital (Bourdieu 1984, DiMaggio 1982); and a firm establishment of the point that cultural products are produced as the results of collective action (Becker 1982) and by organizational systems operating within markets and under various types of state controls (Hirsch 1972, Peterson 1973) (Griswold, 1993, p. 456).

Some of the highlighted developments relate directly to this thesis. In the 1970s Peterson (1976) proposed that social scientists should reorient themselves and enquire how culture is “produced”, focusing, in part, on cooperative social interactions and, amongst a list of other criteria, the impact of “gatekeepers”. According to Peterson, most academic studies focused on the creation process, as opposed to the production process.

Becker’s *Art Worlds* (1982) was a particularity enlightening contribution to the sociology of literature. As with Peterson, Becker stressed patterns of cooperation amongst artists (a topic we will return to later in this thesis). In the same decade, Bourdieu published *Distinction* (1984). Bourdieu examined subjects such as “general and restricted literary fields”, concentrating, in part, on social hierarchies and the role of the educational system in promoting these hierarchies (English, 2010, p. ix).

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<sup>8</sup> English (2010) maintains that an interdisciplinary approach was not as common in North America (2010, vi-vii).

In Canada, Grayson and Grayson (1978) investigated the backgrounds of French and English Canadian authors, exploring to what extent a presumed “classlessness” existed amongst Canadian authors.<sup>9 10</sup> Two years later, the scholars followed up their investigation with a comparison between the educational achievements of Canadian literary elites and “other elites” (Grayson & Grayson, 1980). Unlike the majority of previous research pertaining to the sociology of literature, Grayson and Grayson examined their topics utilizing quantitative methods—their use of statistical data was uncommon.

As Verdaasdonk (1985) remarks, “[s]tatistical tests are widely used in empirical disciplines. In the study of literature, however, the application of statistics and the use of quantitative data are seldom practised” (p. 179). This approach may be the result of the fact that most of the previous research, pertaining to the sociology of literature, has related to the “content of texts”, and not the backgrounds of those whom have penned the texts (Verdaasdonk, 1985).

## **2.5 Current Status**

In the 1990s the sociology of literature seemingly had lost its lustre. Griswold (1993) observed that the sociology of literature was like an amoeba, in that the discipline lacked a firm structure. English (2010) maintains that one of the issues is that scholars who

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<sup>9</sup> According to Grayson and Grayson’s (1978) findings it appeared that there was a better representation of working class English Canadian authors than working class French Canadian authors. The authors posited that the topic of class, in relation to the literary elite, needed more systematic investigation.

<sup>10</sup> Another interesting detail, which relates directly to this thesis, is that of gender. According to Grayson and Grayson (1978) there were more women in the literary elite than any other elite group studied. However, at the time of the study, women were still underrepresented in the literary elite, composing just 22 percent of the population of Canadian authors.

tackle the sociology of literature have diverse methods and theories—as a result the subject matter is scattered and lacks cohesiveness. Another setback is that sociologists who examine the literary arts receive scant appreciation from their peers in literary studies (English, 2010). A final reason for disinterest in the topic is that recently the field of sociology has, at long last, established itself as a solid social science (English, 2010). As a result, practitioners of sociology are more oriented towards quantitative data collection and interpretation, and, as has been emphasized, it is assumed that the topic of literature does not lend itself to empirical methods (English, 2010).<sup>11</sup> According to English (2010):

Academic disciplines (and even interdisciplines or hybrids) are relational entities; they must define themselves by what they are not. And what literary studies is not is a “counting” discipline. This negative relation to numbers is traditional—foundational, even—and it has not been seriously challenged by the rise of interdisciplinarity. In fact, while disciplinary binarisms may have softened within the humanities (as also within the sciences), those between humanistic and nonhumanistic disciplines have tended to harden (p. xii).

That said, recently, Franco Moretti (2003), author of *Graphs, Maps and Trees*, promotes a more empirical approach to the topic of literary studies, charting such subjects as the rise and fall of the novel due to various historical influences. Instead of encouraging “close reading”, Moretti veers in the opposite direction and summons his readers to practice “distant reading” (English, 2010, p. xiv). While observing Moretti’s methods it appears that the study of literature *can* be a “counting” discipline. His use of data, graphs, and mathematical models has been met with curiosity, interest, but, as with Taine, also skepticism.

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<sup>11</sup> Further, advances in technology (e.g. the Internet and social networking) encouraged sociologists to examine other cultural phenomena (English, 2010).

Some critics consider Moretti's assessments too positivistic and polemical (Bennett, 2009). In fact, English (2010) suggests that Moretti's empirical inclinations have assisted in deepening the gulf between sociology and literary studies.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps if Moretti were a sociologist, as opposed to a literary critic using tools more associated with the social sciences, his findings would be more widely accepted? But then again, perhaps not.

As with Taine, Goldmann, and more recently Moretti, it appears that critics' accusations of scholars tarnishing the literary canon might, in some instances, relate to the use of quantitative methods. With the exception of Moretti and a handful of others,<sup>13</sup> currently, the sociology of literature appears to be languishing.

Conversely, while some claim that the sociology of literature is dwindling, some insist otherwise, claiming that sociology has broadened the scope of literary studies. As English (2010) suggests, perhaps the sociology of literature has not actually receded; rather, the subject matters and methods have expanded. However, purported gains may not hang beneath "the banner of 'sociology of literature'" (p. xii, vii). Steen and Schram (2001) also note that the discipline of sociology has provided new means of analysis when studying literary works. As evidence of gains in the field Steen and Schram (2001) point to the creation of "IGEL", the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature (p.1).

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<sup>12</sup> Bennett (2009) even goes so far to say that Moretti has "pin[ned] his colours to the social sciences" (p. 280).

<sup>13</sup> French critic Pascale Casanova has also been making progress in the field.

All said, during my research period, with the exception of Grayson and Grayson's articles, I was unable to uncover any sociological material, quantitative, qualitative or otherwise, relating specifically to Canadian literary communities.

## **2.6 Contributions from Outside of the Field**

Although studies of literary communities appear to be a somewhat overlooked topic by sociologists, it is not an ignored subject in general. For example, according to historian Burton Feldman (2000), Nobel Prize jurists have been accused of infractions pertaining to cronyism and political appointments when awarding the Nobel Prize for Literature. Critics of the prize have complained that illustrious poets such as Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, W.H. Auden, William Carlos Williams, and Anna Akhmatova have been deliberately overlooked (Burton, 2000).

When one reviews the list of Nobel laureates, many of whom are unrecognizable to the average poetry reader, it is clear that the Nobel Prize in literature is not as "global" as it purports to be (Feldman, 2000). According to Feldman (2000), the Nobel literature prizes have "repeatedly gone to writing in a few major European languages, primarily English, French, German, Spanish" (p. 59). India, despite a preponderance of esteemed writers, has only been recognized once (Feldman, 2000). Interesting as this may be, as previously emphasized there has been scarce empirical research pertaining to discrimination in literary communities. As a result, it is helpful to look at other sources that refer to discrimination, specifically issues of credentialism and academization.

In his book, *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe*, Russell Jacoby observes that, within the last fifty years, intellectuals have been "professionalized", and while this professionalism has created a safe haven for the

academic, there is no refuge for the intellectual who works outside of academia (as cited in McLemee, 2007). In keeping with Jacoby, American sociologist Lewis Coser perceives how intelligentsias are increasingly wed to academic environs. While compiling a list of contributors to small magazines, Coser observes that in the 1920s only nine percent of the authors were academics; however, by the 1950s “that share had grown to 50 percent” (as cited in McLemee, 2007, para. 13).

In Coser’s opinion, due to issues of credentialism and modernization, the freelance scholar is a vanishing figure—freethinkers are a thing of the past. As a result, the “attached” academic (i.e. one who is employed by a university or college) is promoting uninspired conventionality. Advanced education not only serves as a means of exclusion (e.g. racial, sexual, ideological, aesthetic), but is also producing an “age of conformity”<sup>14</sup> (McLemee, 2007, paras. 7-9).

This argument—that of conformity, credentialism and academization—may be extended to the poetry community. Many recognized North American poets currently work within scholastic environments. Some literary critics have griped that the academization of poetry has created a prosaic voice—one that no longer entices a wide-ranging audience. While the specialist audience may have expanded, general readership has withered on the metaphorical vine (Gioia, 1991).

Another concern in literary communities is that of gender bias. As recently as 2010, *VIDA*, an American online journal dedicated to promoting women in the literary arts, examined the publishing disparities between male and female authors featured in

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<sup>14</sup> In 1954, Irving Howe published an article in *The Partisan Review* titled “The Age of Conformity”. In his article Howe noted how the “critical edge was disappearing from American intellectual life” (McLemee, 2007, para. 9).

fourteen popular periodicals published in 2010 (King, 2010). *VIDA* found significant gender imbalances in all of the sampled publications.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, in 2007, Spahr and Young published an article titled “Numbers Trouble” in *The Chicago Review*. The authors surveyed various anthologies and book series from the 1980s to present (Ashton, 2007). According to Spahr and Young’s findings, female poets only receive a paltry slice of the poetry pie. In the same issue of *The Chicago Review*, Kotin and Baird (2007) conducted a count of female poets featured in thirteen periodicals. While the authors noted an increase in female poets between the years 1970 and 2005, in 1990 the percentages appeared to “level off” at 37 percent (p. 226). As a result of their findings, Kotin and Baird concluded that gender inequality in literary publications persists.

Within the last decade several non-academic “watchdog” groups have taken note of perceived “gatekeeping” in North American poetry communities. In 2004, Alan Cordle, a college librarian living in Oregon, created an anonymous website named *Poetry: American Poetry Watchdog*. One of the website’s mandates was to “expose the corrupt world of poetry contests” (Tizon, 2005, para. 1). *Poetry*, at the height of its popularity, purportedly received more than 5000 hits a day (Huck, 2005).

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<sup>15</sup> According to Christian Wiman (2011), editor of *Poetry* (one of the publications featured in the *VIDA* count), although *VIDA*’s numbers are “troublesome”, in Wiman’s experience the perceived gender bias may be attributed to submission rates. *Poetry* receives “many more submissions from men: the last count, done last year, was 65% men and 35% women” (Wiman, 2011, para. 4). Similarly, in 2007, within a span of four months, *The Chicago Review* received 136 submissions from men and 74 from women (Kotin & Baird, 2007).

Cordle and his allies revealed that some major American poets (e.g. Pulitzer Prize winner Jorie Graham<sup>16</sup>) and lauded poetry institutions, such as the revered Iowa Writers' Workshop, were engaging in cronyism. Cordle contended that there has been a huge increase in annual poetry contests in the United States and that the entry fees of these contests have resulted in bilking aspiring poets of their money. According to Cordle, judges often award prizes to their students, friends and lovers (Tizon, 2005).

Such a kerfuffle arose from Cordle's allegations of unmerited favouritism that some American poetry institutions are currently holding "blind contests" (i.e. usually requiring that judges receive no identifying information about the authors; instead the judges only read the poem entries). Further, two organizations "influential in the poetry world—the Council of Literary Magazines & Presses and Associated Writing Programs—started discussions regarding developing standardized guidelines for poetry contests" (Tizon, 2005, para. 3).

In Canada, David Solway (2003), poet, literary critic and former teacher of English at John Abbott College, published the book *Director's Cuts*. Solway's self-admitted polemic concentrates, in part, on the biases he perceives are displayed by Canadian poetry editors and publishers. Solway insists that Canadian poetry is suffering from cronyism of the utmost degree and that Canadian literature is flagging as a result of log-rolling (McLennan, 2005).

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<sup>16</sup> In 1999, Pulitzer Prize winner, Jorie Graham "selected a manuscript by the poet and critic Peter Sacks for [the University of Georgia Contemporary Poetry] prize. On its face, that was a shocking revelation. Ms. Graham and Mr. Sacks are colleagues at Harvard University. They are also married.... Graham says it is not that simple. The two were not married in 1999, and Ms. Graham had not yet arrived at Harvard. They knew each other, she says, but not well. They married in 2000, the same year she moved to Harvard" (Bartlett, 2005, paras. 14-15).

For further evidence of discrimination in the Canadian poetry world, some argued an anthology of “new” Canadian writers represented a curious partiality that appeared to favour former or current students of the Canadian judges (McLennan, 2005). According to McLennan (2005), the anthology “reeks of the same kind of writing throughout” (para. 21).

Nevertheless, as interesting as these arguments are, these critics might be viewed by some as pugnacious and wielding poisonous pens. While allegations of bias in Canadian poetry communities are potentially illuminating—arguing that there *does* exist a poetry elite, whose decision-making is based not upon merit, but rather credentialism and, perhaps, personal relationships—the accusations are not substantiated by quantitative evidence.

To summarize, while it is clear that some sociologists have studied the sociology of literature, few have studied literature from a quantitative standpoint. Further, although the popular media and various literary critics appear to have concentrated on discrimination in North American poetry communities and abroad (Sutherland, 2005), their inspection could be viewed as prejudiced and inflammatory and therefore without merit. As a result, these accusations of prejudice need to be examined empirically. The following chapter examines the demographics of poets who were published in 1967.

## **Chapter 3. *Canadian Literature***

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter inspects and discusses the demographic details of poets listed in the spring 1967 issue of *Canadian Literature*, titled “New Wave in Canadian Poetry”. The purpose of this chapter is to help determine variability over the last forty-three years. The *Canadian Literature* data differs from the 2010 data in that it proved difficult to ascertain whether or not a *Canadian Literature* poet had been previously published; as a result, the category of “Previously Published” was omitted. A further difference is that this is a “list” of noteworthy poets, as opposed to poets whose work is featured in a small press literary journal.

Towards the end of the spring 1967 *Canadian Literature* issue is a checklist compiled by Rita Butterfield (p. 83-95). The directory highlights various English-Canadian and French-Canadian literary works published in 1966. Included in the checklist is a record of 64 English-Canadian poets who had books or chapbooks published in 1966. (Refer to Appendix A for more information.)

### **3.2 An Examination of the Data**

#### **Gender**

Butterfield’s English-Canadian poetry checklist consists of 48 (75%) male poets and 16 (25%) female poets. These results are in keeping with Grayson and Grayson’s (1978) observations relating to a gender bias existing within the Canadian literary community (refer to footnote 10).

## **Race**

Out of the 64 poets, four of the poets (6.25 %) may be recognized as visible minorities.

While this statistic might seem insignificant it is important to note that 43 years ago visible minorities accounted for only two percent of Canada's population (Cardoza & Pendakur, 2008). Keeping these percentages in mind, the inclusion of four visible minority poets is more than three times the population average in that time period.

## **Location**

**Table 1. Location of *Canadian Literature's* Spring 1967 Poetry Contributors**

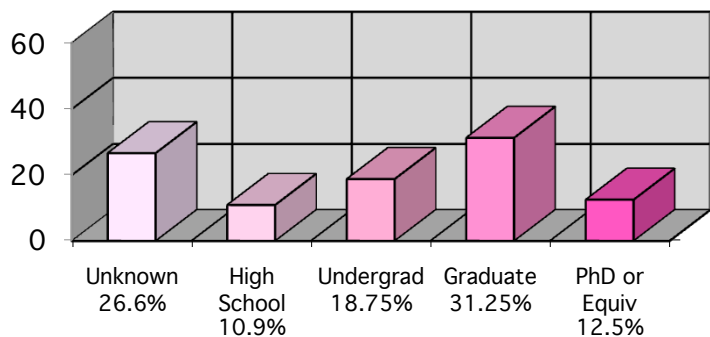
<b>Provinces</b>	<b>Location</b>	
Unknown		9
Alberta	Strathsmore	1
Manitoba	Regina	1
Nova Scotia	Antigonish	1
	Dartmouth	1
	Truro	1
Ontario	Unknown location	2
	Kitchener	1
	Ottawa	4
	Toronto	9
	Waterloo	1
	Windsor	3
<b>International</b>		
Burma/Spain	Unknown	1
England	Leeds	1
South and Central America	Unknown	1
United States	Buffalo	1
	New York	1
	Unknown	1

A total of 20 (31.25%) of the poets lived in Ontario. The second most popular province is Quebec, where a total of 19 (29.7%) of the poets resided. The third most popular province is British Columbia, where a total of 10 (15.6%) of the poets were located.

The city that boasted the most poets is Montreal. A total of 13 poets (20.3%) were located in Montreal. This information is not entirely surprising as in the 1960s Montreal was the hub of the Canadian poetry community. The Montreal group, dating from 1920 onwards boasted such poetic luminaries as A.M. Klein, P.K. Page, Louis Dudek and Irving Layton (Irvine, 2010). Younger poets such as Margaret Atwood and Leonard Cohen also resided in Montreal. The second most popular city is Toronto, where a total of 9 (14.1%) of the poets resided.

### **Education**

**Figure 1. Education Levels of *Canadian Literature's* Spring 1967 Poets**



As depicted in Figure 1, 26.6 percent of the poets fall into the category of “unknown” and 10.9 percent of the poets obtained a high school degree or less. It is possible that some, if not all, of the poets with unknown education levels may fall into the high school category. If this is the case then a total of 37.5 percent of the 1967 poets were not university educated.<sup>17</sup> Undergraduates, and those who attended university, but whose degrees are unknown, account for a total of 18.75 percent of the contributors. Graduate

<sup>17</sup> An example of a *Canadian Literature* poet who was not university educated is Gwendolyn MacEwan, one of Canada’s most celebrated poets. Not only did MacEwan fail to earn a university degree, but also she never completed high school. Even so, her lack of formal education failed to impact her popularity.

students were the higher group published (31.25%), and those who had, or were in the process of obtaining their PhDs accounted for 12.5 percent of the featured poets.<sup>18</sup>

### **Occupation**

Out of the 64 poets a total of 19 (29.7%)<sup>19</sup> worked in academic positions related to postsecondary education.

### **Editorial Duties**

A total of 24 (37.5%) of the poets worked or had worked as literary editors. (Founders of literary presses have been included in this category.)

## **3.3 A Summary of the Findings**

The above findings reveal a number of things: First, the overall *Canadian Literature* data suggests a bias against female poets, as only 25 percent of the listed poets were female. Second, there appears to be no bias against poets who were visible minorities, as four (6.2%) of the poets can be categorized as such. Third, it appears that high levels of education had an impact upon publication, as 62.5 percent of the poets had attended university, and 43.75 percent of the poets held a post graduate degree. Fourth, over a quarter of the poets worked, or had worked, in academic environments. Finally, a remarkable number (37.5%) of the poets held, or had held, editorial duties relating to the literary arts.

The next chapter scrutinizes the winners of the Griffin Poetry Prize, one of the world's most esteemed and lucrative poetry awards. The purpose of Chapter 4 is to determine the demographics of Canada's most respected contemporary poets.

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<sup>18</sup> When we look at Appendix A, another interesting detail is the number of poets, five in total, who failed to complete their PhDs. They were not included in the PhD category.

<sup>19</sup> Writers-in-residence are also included in this category.

## Chapter 4. The Griffin Poetry Prize

### 4.1 The Griffin Poetry Prize

Scott Griffin, Canadian businessman, philanthropist and owner of Anansi Press, founded the Griffin Poetry Prize in April 2000.<sup>20</sup> As recently as 2007, Griffin claimed to be bewildered by the fact that poetry had “slipped from the mainstream of our cultural lives...what a shame, what a travesty!” he bemoaned (para. 2). Indeed, it is a shame and a travesty, but one wonders if the reason poetry, Canadian or otherwise, has slipped from the mainstream of our cultural lives is because poetry no longer appeals to a broad audience.

One might be inclined to inquire, while Griffin is lamenting the lack of interest in poetry, exactly to whom is The Griffin Poetry Prize being awarded? Is The Griffin Poetry Prize awarded to those poets who are most deserving, to those who, through their talents and word-smithing might re-engage the dwindling non-academic poetry audience? Some have argued otherwise. According to Canadian poet and literary critic, Zachariah Wells (2004), while the Griffin Poetry Prize *should* “embody actual excellence” the jury’s

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<sup>20</sup> “The Griffin Trust was founded in April 2000 by Chairman Scott Griffin, along with Trustees Margaret Atwood, Robert Hass, Michael Ondaatje, Robin Robertson and David Young. In 2004 Carolyn Forché was named a Trustee and joined the list of internationally-acclaimed writers who sit on the board of the Griffin Trust. The Griffin Trust’s support for poetry focuses on the annual Griffin Poetry Prize, which awards two literary prizes of \$65,000 each and an additional \$10,000 to each shortlisted poet who reads at the annual Griffin Poetry Prize Shortlist Readings in Toronto. A Canadian prize is given to a living poet resident in Canada; an international prize is given to a living poet from any country in the world. Both prizes may include works in translation. Judges are selected annually by the trustees and the prizes are awarded in the spring of each year” (Griffin Trust, 2011, paras. 2-3).

shortlist is often woefully uninspired (para. 1). The following table displays the demographic characteristics of the Canadian Griffin Poetry Prize winners from 2001-2010.

**Table 2. The Griffin Poetry Prize Winners 2001 - 2010**

Griffin Poetry Prize winners (2001-2010)	Name	Gender	Race	Education	Occupation
2001	Anne Carson	Female	Caucasian	PhD, University of Toronto	Professor of classics and comparative literature at the University of Michigan
2002	Christian Bök	Male	Caucasian	PhD, York University	English professor at the University of Calgary
2003	Margaret Avison (deceased)	Female	Caucasian	MA, University of Toronto, incomplete PhD, three honorary doctorates	Former instructor at the University of Toronto, poet, secretary for the Mustard Seed Mission
2004	Anne Simpson	Female	Caucasian	MA, Queen's University	Creative writing instructor at St. Francis Xavier University
2005	Roo Borson	Female	Caucasian	MFA, University of British Columbia	Writer-in-residence at several major Canadian universities
2006	Sylvia Legris	Female	Caucasian	Unknown	Taught poetry workshops at Sage Hill
2007	Don McKay	Male	Caucasian	PhD, University of Wales	English and creative writing professor at various Canadian universities
2008	Robin Blaser	Male	Caucasian	MA, MLS, University of California	English professor emeritus at Simon Fraser University
2009	A.F. Mortiz	Male	Caucasian	PhD, Marquette University	Professor at the University of Toronto
2010	Karen Solie	Female	Caucasian	BA, incomplete MFA, university unknown	Former English instructor at the University of Victoria, former creative writing optional residency instructor at UBC, freelance editor

#### 4.2 An Examination of the Data

A review of Table 2 reveals a number of issues. First, it is interesting to note that female winners (60%) prevail over the male winners. Second, race appears to play a significant role, as all of the poets are Caucasian. Third, the majority (90%) of the prizewinners are university educated (curiously, I was unable to obtain Legris' educational information). Five of the winners (50%) have attended graduate school, and four of the winners (40%) have achieved PhDs. Finally, the majority (90%) of the poets work, or have been employed, in academic environs.

While Table 2 may indicate issues of credentialism and perhaps, as some have claimed, a homogenous voice, there is one promising detail that differs from the 1967 data—gender bias against women does not appear to exist amongst the judges. As noted, six out of the 10 Griffin Poetry Prize winners are female. The data demonstrates that gender has little impact on the jurors' decisions, or that the jurors may marginally favour female poets. Regardless, there appear to be racial and educational biases. These oversights are not a trivial matter, as the award is not without benefits. Excluding the lucrative prize money, the prize has other profits. According to 2002 Griffin Poetry Prize recipient, Christian Bök (2007):

Winning [the Canadian Griffin Poetry Prize] meant that a far more mainstream audience could find reason to take my practice seriously. In the literary community I gained an extraordinary amount of credibility that I didn't otherwise have. I also attracted far more international attention. As a side effect of my exposure to the public through the prize, I have received many invitations to lecture and to perform around the world. I get taken more seriously for travel grants, and I get more serious acclaim from academics outside the country (p. 119).

Simply put, aside from the \$50,000 award money (which in 2010 was increased to \$65,000) there are other perks. According to Bök, he received lecturing invitations, travel grants, and a larger readership—the latter resulting in greater book sales.

Bartlett (2005) claims that poetry prizes can make a poet's career. Published poets and award winners are often the “first in line” to land university teaching jobs, “which is one reason they spend a lot of time and money (contests often charge ‘reading fees’) trying to win big-name competitions” (Bartlett, 2005, para. 5). In a 1983 interview celebrated Canadian poet Bill Bissett, remarked that living as a writer in Canada was not an arduous task as “Canada Council grants and other sources financed him just fine”<sup>21</sup> (Precosky, 1986, para. 4). According to Precosky (1986) there is plenty of money to be had through such trusts as the Molson Award, Governor General's Awards, writer-in-residence appointments, and Canada Council grants.

As the winners of the Griffin Poetry Prize are a relatively small and select sample, it is useful to consider print publications with a larger representation of writers, to ascertain if, amongst other things, issues of gender bias, racial exclusion, and credentialism pertain to lesser-known poets.

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<sup>21</sup> Precosky (1996) allows that Bissett may be an exception to the rule, as Bissett “doesn't own a car, house, real estate, or Winnebago, nor does he wish to” (1986, para. 4).

## Chapter 5. *The Malahat Review*

### 5.1 *The Malahat Review*

Established in 1967 *The Malahat Review*, located in Victoria, British Columbia, focuses primarily on Canadian writers. *The Malahat Review* is affiliated with the University of Victoria. According to the journal's website one of *The Malahat Review's* chief aims "is to discover the most promising of the new writers and publish their work alongside the best established writers" (2011, para. 5).

Following are the demographic details of 18 poets published in *The Malahat Review's* spring 2010 issue. For an in-depth overview refer to Appendix B.

### 5.2 An Examination of the Data

#### Gender

*The Malahat Review's* female poets marginally prevail over the male poets. Ten (55.6%) out of 18 of the poetry contributors are women. Thus, it can be concluded that gender is an irrelevant variable in regards to publication.

#### Race

All of the poets featured in *The Malahat Review's* spring 2010 issue are Caucasian. According to a recent Statistics Canada (2008) study census figures show that 16.2 percent of Canadians are visible minorities. As with the Griffin Poetry Prize, *The Malahat Review* does not display this diversity.

## Location<sup>22</sup>

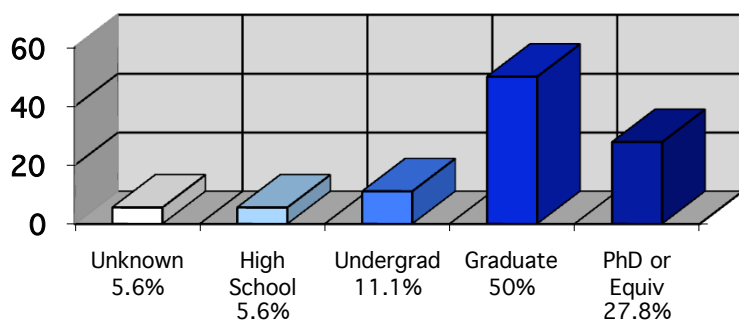
**Table 3. Location of *The Malahat Review's* Spring 2010 Poetry Contributors**

Provinces		Location	
British Columbia	Kelowna		1
	Salt Spring Island		1
	Sidney		1
	Sooke		1
	Quadra Island		2
	Vancouver		1
	Victoria		6
	Nova Scotia	Halifax	
International			
Australia	Torquay		1
France	Unknown		1
USA	Seattle, WA		1

Geographically, 13 (72.2%) of the poets currently live in British Columbia. The two Canadian poets featured in *The Malahat Review* who do not live in British Columbia reside in Nova Scotia.

## Education

**Figure 2. Education Levels of *The Malahat Review's* Spring 2010 Poetry Contributors**



<sup>22</sup> When charting location in Tables 1-5, poets who split their time between provinces were excluded. Also excluded were poets who divided their time between countries.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the majority of *The Malahat Review*'s poets are highly educated. Out of 18 poets 16 (88.9%) have a university education; of these poets a high percentage (77.8%) have earned a postgraduate degree. Moreover, four (27.8%) of the poets have PhDs.<sup>23</sup>

Demographic data shows that the poets published in the spring 2010 issue of *The Malahat Review* are not representative of Canadian citizens. In 2006, 24 percent of Canadians held a university degree and, according to a recent Statistics Canada report, PhD graduates account for only 0.4 percent of the population in Canada (Conference Board of Canada, 2009; Nguyen, 2008).

### **Occupation**

While reviewing the data in Appendix B, another significant finding is the percentage of contributors who are associated with academic environments. Out of the 18 contributors a total of 15 (83.3%) work, or have worked, as professors or writing instructors at various universities and/or colleges. Another germane detail is the percentage of contributors who have held jobs as professors or writing instructors at the University of Victoria, the home of *The Malahat Review*. A total of six (33%) poets have taught, or currently teach, at the University of Victoria.

### **Previous Publications**

All of the poets have been previously published.

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<sup>23</sup> In Figures 1-7 the category "PhD or Equiv" pertains to individuals who have obtained, or are in the process of obtaining PhDs or equivalent degrees, such as a MD.

### **Editorial Duties**

As displayed in Appendix B, nine (50%) out of 18 of *The Malahat Review* poets work, or have worked, as literary editors.

### **5.3 A Summary of the Findings**

Collating the data from Appendix B, one may arrive at several conclusions: First, the poetry editors of the spring 2010 issue of *The Malahat Review* do not display a bias against female contributors. Second, the journal appears to publish Caucasian poets. Third, the journal favours local poets. Fourth, the editors appear to publish poets who hold university degrees—primarily post-graduate degrees. Fifth, all of the journal’s poets have been previously published. Finally, exactly half of the poets have acted, currently or previously, as literary editors.

To sum up, what does this data tell us? Simply put, *The Malahat Review* seems to publish white, highly educated, local, previously published poets. The publication also recognizes poets who have acted as literary editors. If this is indeed the case then *The Malahat Review*’s editorial vision of “discover[ing] the most promising of the new writers and publish[ing] their work alongside the best established writers” may need some reviewing (*The Malahat Review*, 2011, para. 5).

That said, *The Malahat Review*’s spring 2010 issue is a little different from other issues as in this particular publication editor John Barton pays homage to writers Lorna Crozier and Patrick Lane, both of whom have worked as writing instructors at the University of Victoria. According to the editor’s foreword, both Crozier and Lane served as mentors to Barton. In fact, Barton titled the introduction to the issue “Lorna, Patrick,

and Aesthetic Kinship” (2010, p. 7). Barton explains his editorial duties, and the use of the term “aesthetic kinship”, as follows:

How I chose to edit this issue of *The Malahat Review* is an expression of my belief that as writers we partake in a shared experience, that what we offer one another is indeed time, stimulation, mentorship, and validation through our face-to-face encounters and on the page. Whether we know it or not, we coalesce into spheres of aesthetic kinship (2010, p. 6).

Be that as it may, one may argue that this “aesthetic kinship” is sometimes exclusionary to the aspiring poets that the journal claims to be discovering. To determine if the spring 2010 issue was an editorial exception, the 2009 spring issue of *The Malahat Review* was also examined.

#### **5.4 Subsequent Analysis**

As with the spring 2010 issue, *The Malahat Review*'s 2009 spring issue does not display a bias against female contributors, in fact, 57.9 percent of the poets are female. Again, all of the poetry contributors are Caucasian; however, in the 2009 issue there is a better representation of other locations in Canada. Of the 19 contributors six (31.6%) of the contributors are from British Columbia, four of the poets are from Ontario, and five of the poets are from Alberta, Newfoundland, Saskatchewan, Quebec, and the Yukon. The remaining four poets live outside of Canada.

In keeping with the 2010 data, the 2009 contributors are highly educated. A high number (57.9%) of the poets have, or in the process of obtaining a graduate degree and three of the poets (15.8 %) have, or in the process of obtaining, a PhD. Of the five remaining poets three have, or are in the process of achieving, an undergraduate degree (the educational details of two poets was unavailable).

In the occupation category eight (42.1%) of the poets work in environments associated with a university or college setting. Although this number is substantial, it is not nearly as high as the 2010 results. Further, in the 2009 issue there is one instance in which this was a contributor's first published poem. Finally, eight (42.1%) of the poets have acted, currently or previously, as literary editors. To conclude, while the 2009 data has more variance (i.e. a lesser number of the poets are from British Columbia, fewer of the poets work in university environments, and there is one instance in which this is a contributor's first poetry publication) demographics pertaining to gender, race, education, and editorial duties are similar to the 2010 data.

## Chapter 6. *Prairie Fire*

### 6.1 *Prairie Fire*

*Prairie Fire*, established in 1983, is a small press quarterly magazine that publishes fiction, literary non-fiction, essays and interviews. The magazine's headquarters are in Winnipeg, Manitoba. According to *Prairie Fire*'s editors, the magazine's contributors are "renowned authors" and, on occasion, "talented newcomers" who are being published for the first time (*Prairie Fire*, 2011, para. 2). The publication examined is the spring 2010 issue, which features a total of 13 poets. Following are the demographic details of the contributing poets. For an in-depth overview refer to Appendix C.

### 6.2 An Examination of the Data

#### Gender

Unlike *The Malahat Review*, *Prairie Fire* features far fewer female poets. Only four (30.8%) out of 13 of the contributors are female.

#### Race

The spring 2010 issue of *Prairie Fire* features two poets who are visible minorities, and another poet who is First Nations. Sam Cheuck is Chinese-Canadian, David Groulx is Ojibwe-French Canadian, and American poet Anis Shivani is of Pakistani descent. Thus, three (23.1%) out of 13 of the poets can be recognized as non-Caucasian.

## Location

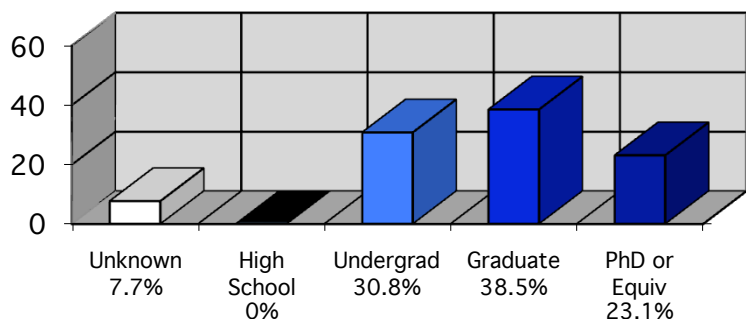
**Table 4. Location of *Prairie Fire's* Spring 2010 Poetry Contributors**

Province	Location	
British Columbia	Victoria	1
New Brunswick	Fredericton	1
Nova Scotia	Halifax	1
Ontario	Ottawa	2
	Thunderbay	1
	Toronto	1
	Woodstock	1
International		
Australia	Melbourne	1
Ireland	Killaspuglonane, County Clare	1
USA	Ridgefield, CT	1
	Houston, TX	1

Despite the journal's title and location, not one of the contributing poets lives in a Prairie province. While not a single Prairie poet is featured, four (30.8%) of 13 poets live in other countries, and over a third of the poets (38.5%) are from Ontario.

## Education

**Figure 3. Education Levels of *Prairie Fire's* Spring 2010 Poetry Contributors**



As illustrated in Figure 3, the majority of *Prairie Fire's* poets are highly educated.

Almost a quarter of the journal's contributing poets (23.1%) have PhDs, or are in the process of achieving a PhD. Further, two out of the 13 poets, who have "only" achieved undergraduate degrees, attended prestigious American Ivy League schools—Harvard and

Yale. A total of 92.4 percent of the poets are university educated, and over half (61.6%) of the poets have achieved high levels of university education.

### **Occupation**

Unlike *The Malahat Review*, only 23 percent of *Prairie Fire*'s contributing poets work, or have worked, as professors or writing instructors. This difference in percentage may be because, unlike *The Malahat Review*, *Prairie Fire* is not affiliated with a university.

### **Previous Publications**

All of *Prairie Fire*'s poets have been previously published. This is an interesting outcome as, in a recent interview, Andris Taskans, editor-in-chief of *Prairie Fire*, stated that one of the functions of the magazine was discovering new writers. "Prairie Fire caters to small market [sic]," said Taskans, "but its role is more important than circulation numbers. It's how promising writers get their start" (as cited in Laird, 2009, para. 6).

### **Editorial Duties**

As displayed in Appendix C, five out of 13 (38.5 %) of the 2010 *Prairie Fire* poets work, or have worked, as literary editors.

## **6.3 A Summary of the Findings**

While reviewing the overall data one may arrive at several conclusions. First, the editors of the spring 2010 issue of *Prairie Fire* may evidence a gender bias against female poets. However, as this is such a small sample size, further investigation needs to be conducted in order to determine an enduring trend. Second, unlike *The Malahat Review*, *Prairie Fire* represents visible minority and First Nations poets. This representation is in keeping with Canadian population statistics, a detail that will be reviewed later in this thesis. Third, 92.3 percent of the magazine's poetry contributors are university educated. Fourth, as with *The*

*Malahat Review* 2010 data, almost a quarter of *Prairie Fire*'s poets have, or are in the process of achieving, their PhDs. Fifth, in the spring 2010 issue *Prairie Fire* did not select local poets—in fact, the opposite appears to hold true, as none of the journal's poets herald from a Prairie province. Sixth, all of the poets have been previously published, and finally, over a third of the poets have acted, currently or previously, as literary editors.

## Chapter 7. *Arc Poetry Magazine*

### 7.1 *Arc*

Founded in 1978, *Arc*'s mission is not only to publish established poets, but also to discover "brave new voices" (2011, para. 1). The magazine's headquarters are located in Ottawa, Ontario. As with *Prairie Fire*, *Arc* is not affiliated with a university. As *Arc* did not publish a spring issue, *Arc*'s summer 2010 issue was reviewed instead. Following are the demographic details of 18 poets published in *Arc*'s summer 2010 issue. For an in-depth overview, refer to Appendix D.

### 7.2 An Examination of the Data

#### Gender

Out of a total of 18 poets 12 (66.7%) were female. Thus far, this is the largest representation of female poets.

#### Race

As with *The Malahat Review*, all of *Arc*'s poets are Caucasian.

## Location

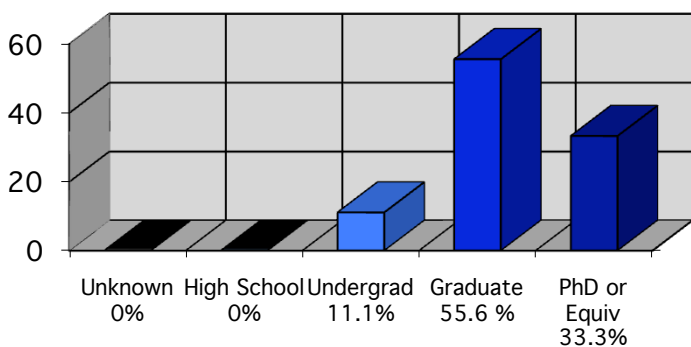
**Table 5. Location of *Arc's* Summer 2010 Poetry Contributors**

Province	Location	
British Columbia	Burnaby	1
	Gibsons	1
	Sidney	1
	Vancouver	1
	Victoria	3
New Brunswick	Fredricton	1
Ontario	Erin	1
	Ottawa	2
	Toronto	2
Quebec	Montreal	2
<b>International</b>		
USA	Cambridge, New York	1
	Salt Lake City, Utah	1

For a second time, the majority of the poets (38.9%) live in British Columbia. The second most popular location is Ontario, where 27.8 percent of the poets live.

## Education

**Figure 4. Education Levels of *Arc's* 2010 Summer Poetry Contributors**



Out of the literary journals reviewed so far, it appears that *Arc* publishes the most highly educated poets. As indicated in Figure 4 and Appendix D, a significant number of the

poets (55.6%) have, or in the process of obtaining their graduate degrees. Further, 33.3 percent of the poets have, or are in the process of obtaining their PhD or equivalent degrees. Thus, a total of 88.9 percent of the published poets are highly educated, and all of the poets have attended university.

### **Occupation**

Eight (44.4%) of *Arc*'s poets work, or have worked as professors or creative writing instructors.

### **Previously Published**

All of *Arc*'s poets have been previously published.

In *Arc*'s 2009 winter issue, editor Anita Lahey addresses the topic of reading familiar poets. Lahey admits that while she is well acquainted with the practice of blind reading (a duty that she had to perform while sitting on a literary grant jury), and respects the process, she finds the task a tad dissatisfying. Lahey's rationale for her discontent is that there is a certain pleasure in being able to attach a poet's name to a poem, as, with that recognition, a reader is offered a host of other information, which can improve enjoyment of a poem. Lahey (2009) writes:

Being part of the Arc crew means spending part of each summer reading nameless entries to our Poem of the Year contest...Here at Arc, we pride ourselves on what we hope is our openness to work written by anyone, previously heard of or not, published or not, lauded or not. We strive to disregard a poet's "name" while assessing his or her poems. In this light, my reaction to the grant applications gave me pause, for I realized how much, by nature or instinct or learning—or all of the above—I rely on what I know of an author to ground my reading. I realized, too, that one of the things I love about reading is the relationship one builds privately, amid lamps and shadows and bookshelves with one's favourite authors.

...Maybe reading work by known versus unknown writers is simply the difference between that intense conversation over coffee with an old friend—complete with the undercurrent of shared histories, ancient

shorthand and inside jokes—and that unexpected, riveting, enlightening discussion at the party with a stranger. Both etch into the self. Both claim their space (paras. 2-3, para. 7).

Indeed, both do claim their space, but some would argue that the trouble seems to be that the “old friend” is, perhaps, demanding a little too much room. In her editor’s note Lahey also queries, “is there any such thing as pure objective judgment of a literary work anyway?” (para. 3).<sup>24</sup>

This is an interesting observation; however, every poetry reader has a “first time” when they are introduced to a poem, and there are many more first times to come. When a reader is introduced to a new poem, often it is the case that the reader does not have any biographical details to attach to the poet or to his or her poem. Rather, it is the enjoyment of the poem that encourages an admirer to seek out more work and, eventually, in some cases, the history of the poet. So, while Lahey’s rationale for appreciating a poet’s biography is refreshingly honest, it does not mean that every enjoyable poem has to possess the poet’s biography to make it of merit.

### **Editorial Duties**

Eight (44.4%) out of 18 of *Arc*’s poets have, or have held, editorial positions associated with literary publications.

### **7.3 A Summary of the Findings**

From the gathered data one may arrive at several conclusions. First, *Arc*’s spring 2010 poetry editors do not appear to have a gender bias against female poets. In fact, 66.7

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<sup>24</sup> To tackle this issue, in 2008 *Arc* posted 50 Poem of the Year entries in which the editors enlisted readers to practice blind reading and judging. Interestingly enough, the Reader’s Choice poem was not the editors’ pick (Lahey, 2009, para. 10). However, the outcome might indicate that the poet solicited friends to cast their online votes.

percent of the poets are female. Second, as with *The Malahat Review*, all of *Arc*'s poets are Caucasian. Third, as with *The Malahat Review*, British Columbian poets dominate the publication. Fourth, *Arc* appears to publish poets who hold university degrees, especially those who have, or are achieving, higher-level degrees. Fifth, all of the poets have been previously published. Finally, almost half of *Arc*'s poets act as literary editors.

## Chapter 8. *The Fiddlehead*

### 8.1 *The Fiddlehead*

First established in 1945, *The Fiddlehead* is Canada's longest living literary journal.

According to the journal's homepage, *The Fiddlehead* has launched writers who have "found their first home" in the magazine (2009, para. 5). The magazine's headquarters are in Fredericton, New Brunswick. As with *The Malahat Review*, *The Fiddlehead* is affiliated with a university. Following are the demographic details of 26 poets published in *The Fiddlehead*'s spring 2010 issue. For an in-depth overview, refer to Appendix E.

### 8.2 An Examination of the Data

#### Gender

Eleven (42.3%) out of 26 of the contributors are female. Thus, it might be assumed that a marginal gender bias might exist. However, in previous research, when *The Fiddlehead*'s spring 2008 poetry issue was examined, 17 (51.5%) out of 33 of the contributors were female (Barlee, 2009). This variance in results is good reminder that, as previously suggested, further, longitudinal analysis needs to be conducted in order to properly identify an enduring pattern.

#### Race

Three of the poets' photographs or biographical details relating to race were unavailable; however, if one is to use surname analysis as a means of assessment then all of the poets featured in *The Fiddlehead*'s spring 2010 issue are Caucasian.

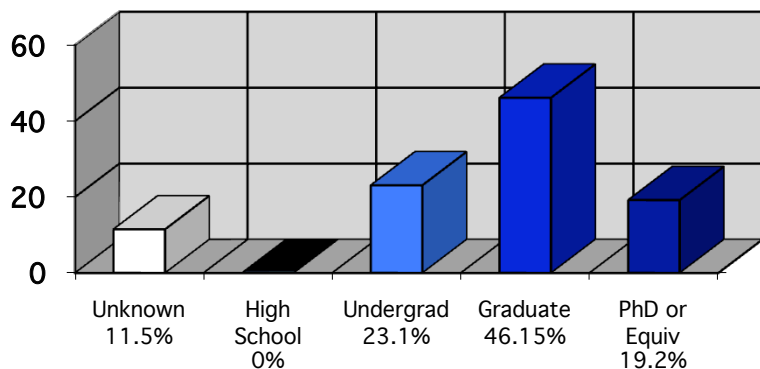
**Location****Table 6. Location of *The Fiddlehead's* Spring 2010 Poetry Contributors**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Location</b>	
Alberta	Edmonton	2
British Columbia	Campbell River	1
	Bowan Island	1
	Gibsons	1
	Kelowna	2
	Victoria	1
	Vancouver	4
	Winnipeg	1
Manitoba	Winnipeg	1
Nova Scotia	Big Tancook Island/Halifax	1
	Main-a-Dieu	1
Ontario	Erin	1
	Toronto	3
Quebec	Montreal	1
<b>International</b>		
New Zealand	Christchurch	1
USA	Hartford, CT	1
	Hackettstown, NJ	1
	New York, NY	1
	Seattle, WA	1

Geographically, as with *The Malahat Review* and *Arc*, British Columbian poets (38.5%) figure prominently. Interestingly, not one poet is from New Brunswick—the home base of *The Fiddlehead*.

## Education

Figure 5. Education Levels of *The Fiddlehead's* Spring 2010 Poetry Contributors



As illustrated in Figure 5, the majority of *The Fiddlehead* poets are highly educated. Most of the poets (46.15%) have earned, or are in the process of earning, a graduate degree. Further, almost a fifth (19.2%) of the poets have obtained a PhD or equivalent degree. Educational information relating to three (11.5%) of *The Fiddlehead* contributors was unavailable. As in other instances, this inability to obtain educational information may indicate that the three poets have not attended university.

## Occupation

Unlike the poets featured in *The Malahat Review* and, to a lesser extent *Arc*, fewer of *The Fiddlehead's* poets work, or have worked, as professors or writing instructors. Out of 26 poets, six (23.1%) have worked in these disciplines.

## Previous Publications

Although all of the poets had been previously published, there was one instance in which this was a writer's, Kim Trainor's, first poetry publication. Nevertheless, Trainor had short fiction published in other respected literary journals such as *Grain* and *PRISM international*.

### **Editorial Duties**

As illustrated in Appendix E, 11 out of 26 (42.3 %) of *The Fiddlehead* poets work, or have worked, as literary editors. This figure is in keeping with the previous findings.

### **8.3 A Summary of the Findings**

When reviewing the data one may arrive at a number of conclusions: First, the spring 2010 issue of *The Fiddlehead* displays a marginal bias against female contributors (however, as noted, previous research does not support these findings). Second, if we are to use surname analysis as a means of identification, *The Fiddlehead* publishes Caucasian poets. Third, British Columbian poets figure prominently. Fourth, *The Fiddlehead* publishes highly educated poets. Fifth, all of the poets have been previously published, although this is the first poetry publication for one of the contributors. Sixth, while the occupations of the contributors are varied, the majority of the poets work in occupations related to education. And, finally, a high proportion of the poets act, or have acted, as literary editors.

## Chapter 9: An Overview of the 2010 Contributors Published in *The Malahat Review*, *Prairie Fire*, *Arc*, and *The Fiddlehead*

### 9.1 An Examination of the Aggregate Data

#### Gender

Out of 75 poets, 37 (49.3%) contributors are female. These overall results do not indicate a gender bias.

#### Race

Only three (4%) of the 75 poets are non-Caucasian.

#### Location<sup>25</sup>

**Table 7. Location of the 2010 Canadian Poetry Contributors**

Provinces and Territories	Contributors
Alberta	2
British Columbia	31
Manitoba	1
New Brunswick	2
Newfoundland and Labrador	0
Nova Scotia	5
Ontario	14
Prince Edward Island	0
Quebec	3
Saskatchewan	0
Northwest Territories	0
Nunavut	0
Yukon	0

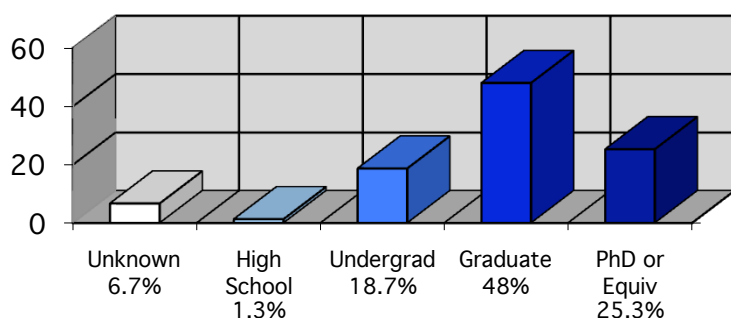
Out of the 75 poets published in the selected 2010 publications, a predominant number of the poets (41.3%) live in British Columbia. Second to British Columbia is the province of Ontario where 14 (18.7%) of the poets reside. Nova Scotia boasts five poets (6.7%);

<sup>25</sup> Not included in Table 7 are poets who reside in more than one province.

Quebec, three (4%); Alberta, two (2.7%); New Brunswick, two (2.7%); and Manitoba, one (1.3%). Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon are not represented in the 2010 data. The remaining 17 (22.7%) poets live outside of Canada, and/or live in dual provinces.

### **Education**

**Figure 6. Education Levels of the 2010 Poetry Contributors**



A total of 6.7 percent of the poets fall into the “unknown” category. One poet has a partial high school education. Only 18.7 percent of the poets have, or are achieving, undergraduate degrees. The majority of the poets (48%) have earned, or are in the process of earning, graduate degrees. Moreover, over a quarter of the poets have achieved, or are in the process of achieving, a PhD or equivalent degree. A total of 73.3 percent of the poets have higher-level university educations, and 92 percent have attended university and/or college.

### **Occupation**

Almost half (44%) of the poets work, or have worked, as professors or creative writing instructors in a university or college setting.

### **Previously Published**

All of the 2010 poets have been previously published in literary journals, but, as noted, this is the first poetry publication for one of the contributors.

### **Editorial Duties**

Out of the 75 poets 33 (44%) act, or have acted, as editors for literary publications.

## **9.2 A Summary of the Aggregate Findings**

The overall data of the 2010 poets suggests that: First, small press Canadian literary journals do not demonstrate a bias against female contributors. Second, race is a subject of concern, as only three out of the 75 poets can be identified as visible minorities or First Nations. Third, it appears that poets who possess a high level of education are more likely to be published. Fourth, a considerable number of the poets work, or have worked in academic (i.e. college or university) environments. Fifth, a high percentage of the poets live in British Columbia. Sixth, the vast majority of the poets (98.7%) have had previous poetry publications. Finally, an outstanding percentage (almost half) of the poets hold, or have held, editorial duties relating to the literary arts.

## Chapter 10. A Discussion of the Overall Findings

This chapter discusses the overall findings of this thesis. While examining the variables, Chapter 10 also refers to literature, both academic and non-academic, which supports and refutes allegations of editorial bias.

### 10.1 An Examination of the 1967 and 2010 Data

#### 10.1.1 Gender

This study suggests that although a gender bias was apparent in the Canadian literary community in 1967, this bias no longer exists among editors of some small press Canadian literary journals. This is encouraging news, as despite the damning evidence elsewhere, more specifically in the United States, it seems that female poets are well represented in Canada.

#### 10.1.2 Race

In the *Canadian Literature* data, four (6.25%) of the poets were recognized as visible minorities. According to visible minority statistics gathered in 1967, this is a high representation of non-Caucasian contributors. On the other hand, the 2010 data reveals only two visible minority poets, and one First Nations poet, the total inclusion of non-Caucasian poets resting at four percent. However, in 2006 visible minorities accounted for 16.2 percent of the nation's population (Statistics Canada, 2008).

As a result of these differences it may be suggested that over the course of 43 years, there is an increased bias against non-Caucasian poets. While issues of racial bias appear to be a concern, further investigation needs to be conducted to examine why Caucasian poets are so highly represented in small press literary magazines. Is the

perceived prejudice against non-Caucasian writers evidence of racism, or are there other considerations?

When social scientists inspect “inequality of opportunity” and racial exclusion there are many variables to be examined (Sowell, 1984). For instance, one such variable directly related to race is age,<sup>26</sup> which can have an enormous impact upon career choices and earnings. According to Sowell (1984), in the United States “income differences between age brackets are even greater than black-white income differences” (p. 43).<sup>27</sup> Moreover, various institutions (i.e. universities, the military, and sports) tend to represent people from specific age groups (Sowell, 1984, p. 43). As a result of Sowell’s findings, further investigators examining racial bias in literary communities might concentrate on the age of writers and which cohort they belong to.

Another important variable that relates directly to race is culture. For example, cultural differences such as age of marriage and childbirth are also important considerations, as individuals who marry early and have children early are more inclined to have less education and career opportunities (Sowell, 1984). Therefore, subsequent researchers might investigate the cultural backgrounds of published poets to reveal whether or not they married later and had children at a later age. To sum up, when investigating racial exclusion in literary communities the above considerations demonstrate the importance of reviewing overlooked variables and their association with race.

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<sup>26</sup> For example, in the United States “Polish Americans are twice as old as American Indians” (Sowell, 1984, p 43).

<sup>27</sup> In the initial stages of this study, age was an included category. However, while it was relatively uncomplicated to unearth the birth dates of the 1967 poets, curiously, it was difficult to uncover the age of the 2010 poets. As a result, the age category was eliminated from the data.

A final consideration regarding race is to question the number of non-Caucasian poets who submit to journals such as *The Malahat Review*, *Prairie Fire*, *Arc* and *The Fiddlehead*. A review of submissions would reveal whether or not editors are biased against non-Caucasian poets, or perhaps non-Caucasian poets are submitting and being recognized in other journals.

### **10.1.3 Location**

A notable difference between the two groups of poets is the number of 2010 poets who live in British Columbia—an impressive total of 41.3 percent. According to the 1967 data only 15.6 percent of the poets lived in British Columbia and the majority of the poets resided in Ontario (31.25%) and Quebec (21.9%). Thus, it appears that a significant part of Canada’s poetry community has shifted location from Central Canada to the West Coast.

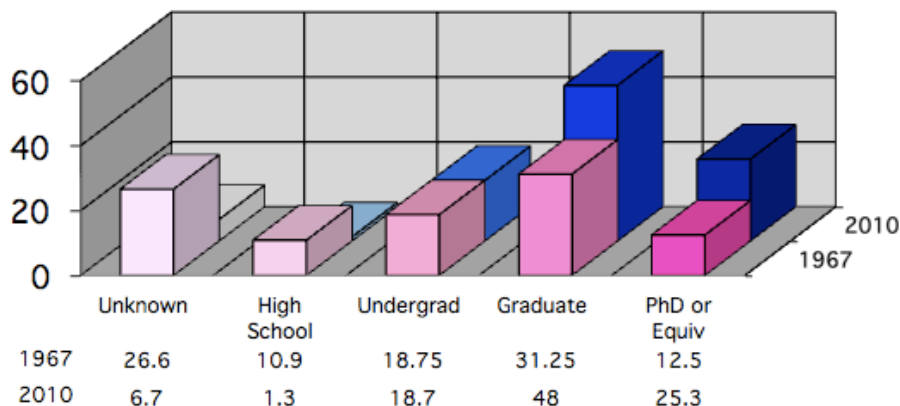
Looking at the 2010 findings, the first thing one may ask is, “why do the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario figure so predominantly?” It might be argued that the reason British Columbia and Ontario dominate the data is because the provinces are the largest English speaking provinces. Another possibility is that British Columbia and Ontario are the only provinces in Canada that have MFA programs (i.e. the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia; and, the University of Guelph/Toronto). However, a review of the 2010 poets shows that out of the 75 poets only 10 (13.3%) have earned, or are in the process of earning MFAs from these universities.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> A total of 18 (24%) of the 2010 poets have earned, or are in the process of earning, MFAs.

### 10.1.4 Education

Figure 7. Education Levels of the 1967 and 2010 Poet



One of the largest disparities between the two groups of poets is the educational level. Nevertheless, both the 1967 and 2010 poets have obtained high levels of education in comparison to the average Canadian in the relative time periods.

Looking at the data in Figure 7, 62.5 percent of 1967 poets attended university and/or college, and 43.75 percent of those poets earned a graduate degree or higher. This is an impressive figure, as in the years 1965/1966 individuals who were university educated amounted to 10.5 percent of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2009a, para.7).

In comparison, 92 percent of the 2010 poets attended university and/or college, and 73.3 percent earned, or are earning, a graduate degree or higher. Again, this is a notable figure, as in 2007 the number of Canadians enrolled in college or university accounted for approximately 33.7 percent of the population (Statistics Canada, 2009b, 2010). To sum up, while the 1967 poets' educational levels are lower than the 2010 poets' educational levels, both groups of poets have obtained high levels of education.

According to Grayson and Grayson (1980), 79 percent of the English-Canadian literary elite born after 1934 attended university, and 41 percent of the Canadian literary elite born in the twentieth century attended graduate school. While not all of the 1967 and 2010 poets would be considered members of the literary elite,<sup>29</sup> they have achieved high levels of education. Grayson and Grayson (1980) state that:

In capitalist societies the role of education in promoting hegemony of certain class or social categories is crucial. Determination of the degree to which the literary elite—who hold positions in the ideological state apparatus—have education backgrounds comparable to those of other elites is therefore necessary.... [I]t seems likely that those with similar education background are more likely to view the world in a like manner than those with dissimilar education (p. 340).

The similarities between highly educated poets, and their shared worldview, may or may not assist in creating a uniform writing style.

### **10.1.5 Occupation**

As established, a high number of the poets in both groups are associated with a university or college setting. This is also the case elsewhere. In the United States, the 2009 anthology of *The Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses* featured 30 poets, 28 of whom were “college teachers or retirees, in most cases from writing departments” (Alpaugh, 2010, para. 21).

For some, writing—or what some refer to as “pure writing” (Precosky, 1986, para. 6), or author-affiliated occupations—offers fulltime employment, often within academic environments. Unlike fifty years ago, writers can now make a living “in work closely connected to their craft” (Epstein 1988, p. 14). As a result,

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<sup>29</sup> Grayson and Grayson (1980), citing Sylvestre et al. define the literary elite as “those who have produced a notable first or second book and have thereafter embarked on a literary career with repeated publications of generally acknowledge merit” (p. 339).

some may contend that academic poets, consciously or unconsciously, may wish to protect their occupation from interloping outsiders.

Alpaugh (2010) forwards that the “sinister” thing about academics’ involvement in poetry is that not only does academia marginalize new poets but also:

It allows the academic oligarchy that controls poetry to impose a nonaesthetic, self-serving scoring system without attracting notice or raising indignation. Since no one can possibly read the vast number of poems being published, professionals can ignore independent poets and reserve the goodies—premiere readings, publications, honors, financial support—for those fortunate enough to be housed inside the professional poetry bubble (para. 28).

In short, according to Alpaugh, poetry has become an industry in which there is money to be made.

For example, in Canada, the Banff Centre (2011) offers, among other programs, a five-week “Writing Studio” for aspiring poets and fiction writers. The Writing Studio offers “the time, space, and support” one needs to “pursue a writing project”, all for a mere \$4,943—a considerable sum of money for a starting writer. Enrolment is “limited” to 24 writers (para. 2). A quick tally shows that the enrolment of 24 writers earns the Banff Centre \$118, 632.<sup>30</sup>

The admission fees and guidelines presuppose two things. First, that a new writer can afford to take a month off to pursue their craft, and second, that “aspiring” writers can afford this fee. It may be reasoned that writing studios such as the Banff Centre assist in creating an elite group of middle to upper class poets who have enough money to

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<sup>30</sup> However, it should be noted that the Banff Centre does offer financial aid of up to 57 percent for writers that cannot afford the fee. Still, some may argue that \$2125.67 seems like an excessive amount of money for a beginning writer.

pursue their craft. Writing programs such as this may aid in creating a subculture of poets that has developed into a “specialized occupation of a relatively small and isolated group” (Gioia: 1991, para. 1). That is, a relatively small, isolated, *and* well-heeled group.

#### **10.1.6 Previous Publications**

As seen, all of the writers in the 2010 group have been previously published in literary journals. As small press poetry journals generally pay paupers rates (if any at all), what is the incentive to submit to small literary presses? Is it purely for the pleasure of having one’s work published and read? Perhaps this is the case for some; however, according to writer Laura van den Berg (2011), there are “countless reasons why literary journals remain such a vital venue” (para 2). Looking at the practicalities of publishing in literary journals Van den Berg states:

Publishing credits build professional legitimacy. A publishing record can prove helpful in applications for teaching jobs, residencies, and grants; for some applications, a solid list of publications are in fact required. When a writer begins querying agents, good publications can help their submission stand out from the pack (2011, para. 2).

As a result, it appears that small press publications are an important stepping-stone in a writer’s career. Further, in Canada, small press literary publications benefit writers. For example, if an emerging writer has had a total of four or more publications featured in recognized literary journals or periodicals, they can apply for Canada Council grants, which range from 3,000 to 12,000 dollars (Canada Council for the Arts, 2011). Mid-career and established writers can be granted up to 25,000 dollars.

#### **10.1.7 Editorial Duties**

A sizeable percentage of the 1967 and 2010 poets work, or have worked, as literary editors. Consequently, it could be assumed that cronyism exists among editors.

According to Becker (1982) if a poem is to see the light of day, poets are dependent upon printers, publishers and readers. While true, it may be argued poets are more dependent on their friends and colleagues (some of whom are editors) than on printers, publishers, and readers. Regardless, there are some who claim that poetry communities have always been a private and tight affair. *Guardian* reporter, John Sutherland (2005) insists that, “poetry has always operated by clique. Were it not for Ezra Pound pulling strings, TS Eliot's career would never have got airborne. That's how ‘schools’ of poetry get started – cronyism” (para. 11).

### **10.2 Is Academia to Blame for the Decline in Poetry Readership?**

In 2009, the American organization, The National Endowments for the Arts [NEA] (2009) released a report titled “Reading on the Rise”. While there was an increase in fiction readership, poetry readership was dwindling and was the lowest it had been in 16 years.<sup>31</sup> As has been previously discussed, many have blamed this decline on the academization of poetry.<sup>32</sup>

In 1960 American poet Robert Bly, wrote to Earle Birney, “There is something revolting . . . about the whole idea of courses in ‘creative writing’ . . . which you as a serious poet, must well understand” (Harris, 2008, para. 21). Apparently, Birney did understand as he complained bitterly about university creative writing programs,<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> According to the NEA (2009) “The proportion of women who read poetry fell at a 39 percent rate—from 16.0 percent in 2002 to 9.8 percent in 2008. Americans 45 to 54 years of age, as well as white Americans in general, also showed particularly sharp declines in poetry reading rates between 2002 and 2008” (p. 9).

<sup>32</sup> The 2010 issues of *The Malahat Review*, *Prairie Fire*, *Arc*, *The Fiddlehead*, and the 1967 *Canadian Literature* checklist represent what Beach (1999) might term “a glut of academically trained poets” (p. 22).

<sup>33</sup> Harris (2008) posits that Birney wrote his best poetry when he was enrolled in the army.

despite the fact that he was the first to establish such a program in Canada, and financially the program served him very well (Harris, 2008). In spite of Birney's strident objections he served as an example for his academic colleagues and students. Frank Davey, a former student of Birney's, observed:

When I enrolled at the University of British Columbia in 1957, Birney seemed to me to be the only 'writer' on faculty, and despite campus rumors that he saw his writing as crippled by university demands — he became for me a sign of the compatibility in Canada of a writing career and university teaching (as cited in Harris, 2008, para. 28).

The rise and popularity of MFA programs is a frequent target of those who allege academic log-rolling in literary communities (Epstein, 1988; Gioia, 1991; Shivani, 2010). However, there are defenders of creative writing programs. McFarland, poet and professor of Creative Writing at the University of Idaho (1993), takes to task critics such as Gioia and Epstein, insisting that MFA programs encourage students to be "better" writers, not professional writers—simply put, an MFA program does not guarantee success (p. 36).<sup>34</sup> What, one could ask, is wrong with improving one's writing skills? Further, in McFarland's paper "An Apologia for Creative Writing" (1993), he reminds his readers that poetry is not vanishing. Instead, poets have *always* struggled to find an audience. For instance, in John Donne's time (1600s), poems usually were published following the death of a poet (McFarland, 1993).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> In the United States 3500 MFA students graduate a year (Brown, 2005), so clearly not *everyone* is getting published.

<sup>35</sup> However, what McFarland fails to note is that the literacy rates in the 1600s were much lower, as was the population. Perhaps, these are the reasons that poets were met with indifference?

On the other hand, some contend that the academization of poetry has ensured a broad audience (Shetley, 1993). Universities, rather than annihilating poetry, have provided a ready-made audience of readers (Beach, 1999). Perhaps, without universities, poetry would not be a “dying” art form, but rather stiff in its dusty casket. Therefore, it may be reasoned, it is the intellectuals’ job, nay *duty*, to carry on the torch.

A further argument, explaining academization in literary circles is that “littérateurs and artists are considered intellectuals, and intellectuals may frequently be found pursuing literary or artistic careers; at the very least, artists and litterateurs tend to move in intellectual circles” (Kadushin, 2009, p. 6). Undoubtedly, one of these intellectual circles is located in academe. Nevertheless, in the past, there have been other literary circles, some existing within academia and some outside of academia. For instance, there were the Imagists, the Movement, the Objectivists, and the Beats, to name but a few poetry assemblies. However, in many cases these groups were formed as a resistance to established poetry (Schmidt, 2006).

So, is academia really to blame for the decline in poetry readership? As noted, some protest otherwise. Further, many assert that it is not academization, but rather the anti-intellectual and anti-artistic movements that have made poetry inaccessible to the general public (Epstein, 1988). Simply put, poetry does not stand a chance against television, the Internet, and other forms of modern entertainment. As a result of technological advances, the “trained reader” has declined in number (Epstein, 1988, p. 17).

Conversely, others argue that poetry is not on its last legs. Instead, poetry connoisseurs are shunning the underground poetry movement, which consists of web-

based poetry, poetry slams, and spoken word contests. Due to the difficulty in measuring these non-academic occurrences, it is difficult to determine whether or not poetry is a diminishing art form. Instead, if one is to define “poetry” by employing wide parameters, some insist that the art is thriving (Beach, 1999, p. 36).

## Chapter 11. Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

### 11.1 Conclusion

It is impossible to determine what makes a “good” or a “bad” poem, as poems written by past greats may read as doggerel today. What some modern critics perceive as forced rhyme, quaint verse, antiquated themes, at one time in history might have been heralded as genius. To coin a cliché, an appreciation of a specific poem is “personal”.

One may warm to a particular verse because it reminds us of a certain instance in our lives, or we may be taken by striking imagery, a clever turn of phrase, wordplay, or a stunning conclusion. We may admire a narrator who as an old woman will wear purple, but then again we may not. In the end, it is not the job of sociologists to determine what is “good” literature, and what is “bad” literature. Instead, the task of sociologists is to examine the societies that create literature. Further, as sociology is, according to the Cambridge dictionary, “the study of the relationships of people living in groups, especially in industrial societies” (n.d.), what better topic to tackle than poetry, an endeavour created by the individual for society?

As has been evidenced, the sociology of literature has held a somewhat peripheral position in the field of sociology. While reviewing the literature, a few things stand out. First, how little work there has been pertaining to the sociology of literature, and second, how a great deal of the work has been written not by sociologists, but more often by those outside of the field. While some critics have labelled the discipline problematic, others have stated that the subject of literature is impossible to investigate empirically. Many argue that creative undertakings cannot be scientifically weighed, measured or, as the case may be, dissected, and therefore the subject should be disregarded. However, as

demonstrated in this thesis, it is possible to examine literature from an empirical standpoint.

To be candid, before analyzing the data I had predicted different outcomes. While I was pleasantly surprised by the increased female participation, I was dismayed by the reduction of visible minority and First Nations contributors. Moreover, the educational levels of the poets were also unsettling. Further, I suspected that the recent popularity of creative writing programs would have a far larger impact. Simply put, I expected the 1967 poets to be less educated, and the 2010 poets to have earned a higher percentage of MFAs. As has been shown, this was not the case.

While the change in location of the poets (i.e. a switch from Central Canada to the West Coast) was not too surprising, I questioned which factors stimulated the relocation of Canada's poetry community. I also pondered how new poets are going to get their start, as small press literary editors appear to be inclined to print the poetry of their peers. Another unanticipated finding was the number of poets, in both groups, that have acted as literary editors.

## **11.2 Limitations and Recommendations**

### **Limitations**

This study has several limitations. First, the sample size is too small to determine an enduring trend. However, the comparative nature of the datasets and the displayed variance of the independent variables, specifically those of gender, location, education and race, suggest changes in the demographics of published Canadian poets.

Another weakness is that the 1967 *Canadian Literature* poets are not representative of small press literary journals. Thus, the comparison of the 1967 poets to

the 2010 poets may be seen as specious. A final deficit was not having much secondary data to confirm the results and argument. Working with primary data has been both rewarding and demanding. For instance, while it was exciting to gather fresh data the task was incredibly laborious and due to time constraints some curiosities that arose were overlooked. The following section considers other areas that could be explored.

### **Recommendations**

This thesis has illuminated the fact that literature can be examined using an empirical lens; however, as a result of the aforesaid limitations, further investigation needs to be conducted—foremost an investigation of submission rates. For instance, what are the submission rates of female poets versus male poets? Why does there appear to be a gender bias in the United States, but not in Canada? What are the submission rates for ethnic minorities and First Nations poets versus Caucasian? What is the age of the featured poets? What are the submission rates for the territories and other omitted provinces? Why do British Columbian poets figure so prominently in the 2010 data? What are the submission rates of poets who are not formally educated? Moreover, what percentages of contributors provide their biographical details in cover letters? (Is it possible that some submitters may not forward their educational information? If this is the case, then perhaps editors are not purposely selecting educated poets.)

Another line of future research could involve a quantitative investigation pertaining to MFA programs. For instance, what are the publication rates of Canadian MFA graduates? What percentages of poetry submissions are from MFA graduates? These inquiries might provide a broader interpretation of the impact creative writing programs are having on the Canadian poetry community.

Moreover, further areas of investigation could involve a more detailed examination of the role of poetry editors. An exploration of why editors choose the poems that they do may be revealing and perhaps present a more nuanced argument. A complementary qualitative investigation could delve more deeply into what Becker (1982) would deem a “cooperating network”, as opposed to a clique of cronies. The answers to the above questions could very well tilt the data.

Finally, in regard to the purported issues of editorial bias, it would be unwise to propose blind reading as a means of addressing issues of purported prejudice, as blind reading does not prevent cronyism. Nameless or not, it is relatively simple to recognize a peer’s, or student’s, form and style. Moreover, blind reading does not prevent editors from serendipitously soliciting one another’s work. Instead, my suggestion is a simple one: I think that literary editors should practice a little reflexivity.

### **11.3 A Postscript**

I found my “first home” in *The Fiddlehead* seven years ago. In March 2004, I received an email from the journal—much to my amazement *The Fiddlehead’s* editors had selected two of my poems to be featured in their summer 2004 poetry issue. I did not possess an MFA. I had never been published before. I did not serve on any editorial board.

Although I had recently returned to university when I wrote the poems (two years earlier), beyond a handful of college courses from over twenty years ago I was not formally educated. Further, if memory serves, my cover letter omitted any details regarding educational achievement, chiefly because I had little to give. Although I lived in Victoria, British Columbia and am Caucasian, these were the only demographics that are in keeping with the above-mentioned data. Therefore, anecdotal as it may be, it can be

seen that some Canadian small press publications do publish novice, self-taught poets, as was the case with me.

That said, when curiosity inspired me to examine my fellow *Fiddlehead* contributors I discovered that the majority of the poets had been published previously (as far as I could discern, only one other was not), and a large number were associated with other literary journals. I also observed that many of the poets were highly educated. Although I was initially chuffed to be included in the esteemed ranks, the information that I had informally gathered eventually perturbed me. It appeared that contemporary poets were, no longer “unacknowledged legislators of the world” (Shelley, as cited in Rich, 2006, para 1), but rather *acknowledged* legislators of the world.

As this thesis attests, years later I decided to re-examine the issue of social characteristics of Canadian poets, to ascertain if my initial, informal data collection was an exception to the rule. It appears not. This discourages me for a number of reasons. First, I enjoy poetry and am saddened to see its general readership declining. Second, as a student of sociology I am concerned about the academization of poetry and its subsequent ramifications of elitism. Although what makes a good poem is extremely subjective, I believe that contemporary poetry, or at least *published* contemporary poetry, would benefit from less exclusionary practices.

While undeniably some forms of education are legitimate or/and necessary one might maintain that poetry, arguably the last bastion of the everyman and everywoman, does not need to be written *only* by the academic. In fact, if poetry editors only publish highly educated poets, some of whom may be colleagues, friends or lovers, then one may posit that these editors are overlooking the “fresh new voice” that they are allegedly

seeking. When I review my favourite poems they have been penned by the academic and the layman—the pedestrian, the wastrel, the everyman and everywoman. I find that the latter view is sometimes refreshingly different from those who reside in an ivory tower.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *Canadian Literature*, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
Percy Miller Adams	Male	Caucasian	ON, location unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No
Margaret Atwood	Female	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	MA, Radcliffe College/Victoria College, incomplete PhD, Harvard University	English instructor at Sir George Williams University	No
Margaret Avison	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	MA, University of Toronto	Instructor at Scarborough College, University of Toronto	Yes, but not poetry related**
Nelson Ball	Male	Caucasian*	Kitchener, On	University of Waterloo, degree unknown (categorized as “undergrad”)	Poet, editor, publisher, library technician	Founder, editor and publisher of Weed Flower Press, editor of <i>Weed</i> and <i>Hyphid</i>
Henry Beissel	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	MA, University of Toronto	English instructor at Concordia University	Editor for <i>Edge</i>
Edith G. Beggs	Female	Caucasian*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Earle Birney	Male	Caucasian	Waterloo, ON	PhD, University of Houston	Writer-in-residence at the University of Waterloo	Editor of <i>The Canadian Forum</i> , 1938 - 1940

\* Race determined by surname analysis

\*\* Editorial duties unrelated to the literary arts

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
William Bissett	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	Dropped out of the University of British Columbia and Dalhousie University (categorized as “undergrad”)	Poet	Founder of blewointment press
Paul Blackburn	Male	Caucasian	New York, NY	BA, University of Wisconsin, Fulbright Scholar, University of Toulouse, France (categorized as “graduate”)	Poet-in-residence at City College of New York	Former poetry editor of <i>The Nation</i>
Arthur S. Bourinot	Male	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	Osgoode Hall Law School graduate (categorized as “graduate”)	Retired lawyer, poet	Former associate editor of <i>Canadian Author, Bookman</i> and <i>Canadian Poetry Magazine</i> from 1948 - 1954.
George Bowering	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	MA, University of British Columbia, incomplete PhD, University of Western Ontario	Writer-in-residence, Sir George Williams University, Montreal, 1967-68.	Founding editor of the poetry newsletter <i>Tish</i>
James (Jim) Brown	Male	Caucasian*	Vancouver, BC	Educated at the University of British Columbia, degree unknown (categorized as “undergrad”)	Student, editor	Co-founder of Very Stone House Press, co-founder and editor of <i>Talon Magazine</i>
Ivan Burgess	Male	Caucasian*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Richard Clarke	Male	Caucasian*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Leonard Cohen	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	BA, McGill University. Dropped out of Columbia grad school.	Poet/musician	No

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
John Robert Colombo	Male	Caucasian	Ontario, location unknown	BA, University of Toronto	Editor	Editor for various Canadian publishing houses.
Helen Creighton	Female	Caucasian	Dartmouth, NS	Attended Halifax Ladies College for two years, earned a junior diploma in music at McGill University (categorized as “undergrad”)	Canadian folklorist	No
Frank Davey	Male	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	PhD, University of Southern California	Instructor at Canadian Services College, Royal Roads Military College	Founding editor of <i>TISH</i> and <i>Open Letter</i> .
Stacey Biswas Day	Male	Indo-Canadian	Montreal, QC	MD, Royal College Surgeons, Dublin, Ireland, PhD, McGill University	Lecturer in experimental surgery at McGill University	No
Ronald Gilmour Everson	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	BA, University of Toronto, LLB, Osgoode Hall Law School (categorized as “graduate”)	Public relations work	Co-founder of <i>Mainline Magazine</i>
Dorothy Alicia Farmiloe	Female	Caucasian	Windsor, ON	MA, University of Windsor	English instructor at Saint Clair College	Founding members of <i>Mainline Magazine</i> and Sesame Press
Robert Finch	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	University of Toronto, graduate studies at the University of Paris, degree unknown (categorized as “graduate”)	Professor of French at University College	Editor of <i>The Sixth Sense: Individualism in French Poetry 1686-1760</i> .

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
Raymond Joseph Fraser	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	BA, St. Thomas University	High school English and history teacher, freelance journalist, newspaper editor, and publisher (dates unknown)	Editor of <i>Midnight</i> , <i>Pottersfield Portfolio</i> , <i>Tom-Tom</i> , and <i>Intercourse</i>
M. Lakshmi Gill	Female	Indo-Canadian/ Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	MA, University of British Columbia	Unknown	No
Michael Gnarowski	Male	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	MA, Université de Montréal, PhD in progress, University of Ottawa	Student	Co-editor of <i>Yes</i> , co-editor of <i>1967: The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada</i>
Harold Griffin	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	Not formally educated (categorized as “high school”)	Journalist and author	Founding editor of <i>The People</i> , editor of <i>The Fisherman</i> **
Edythe Muriel Groves	Female	Caucasian*	Strathmore, AB	Unknown	Unknown	Editor of <i>The Prairie Hub</i> , <i>An Outline History of Early Western Events</i> **
John Deen Grube	Male	Caucasian	Windsor, ON	MA, AOCA date and University unknown	English instructor at the University of Windsor	No
Ralph Gustafson	Male	Caucasian	Sherbrooke, QC	MA, Bishops University	Professor and poet-in-residence, Bishop's University, Music critic for the CBC	Editor of <i>Anthology of Canadian Poetry</i>
William Hawkins	Male	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	Not formally educated (categorized as “high school”)	Singer, songwriter, poet	No

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
Eileen Cameron Henry	Female	Caucasian*	Antigonish, NS	Unknown	Unknown	No
Benjamin Herson	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	PhD in progress, Dropsie College	Director of extensions activities at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue	Editor of <i>The Bulletin</i> **
Robert Hogg	Male	Caucasian	Buffalo, NY	PhD in progress, SUNY	Student	No
Edna Jaques	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON or Saskatchewan, MB	Did not complete high school, attended business college in Vancouver (categorized as “high school”)	Lecturer, author and poet	No
George Johnston	Male	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	MA, University of Toronto, incomplete PhD	Professor of English at Carlton University	No
Margaret (Hurdon) Keifer	Female	Caucasian*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Edward A. Lacey	Male	Caucasian	South and Central America	MA, University of Texas	ESL teacher	No
Patrick Lane	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	High school	Manual labourer	Co-founder of Very Stone House Press

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
Cyril McColgan	Male	Caucasian*	Victoria, BC	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Gwendolyn MacEwan	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	Did not complete high school	Poet	No
Frances McLean	Female	Caucasian*	Quesnel, BC	Unknown	Unknown	No
Eugene McNamara	Male	Caucasian	Windsor, ON	PhD, North Western University	Instructor at the University of Windsor	Founder and editor of <i>University of Windsor Review</i>
Robin Daniel Mathews	Male	Caucasian	Leeds, England	MA, Ohio State, incomplete PhD, University of Toronto	Teacher	No
Seymour Mayne	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	MA, University of British Columbia, PhD in progress, University of British Columbia	Student	Former editor of <i>Cataract</i> , co-founder of Very Stone House Press
Herbert McRae Miller	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	Studied at the Art Students League, Monument National and Ecole des Beau-Arts, Montreal, date and degree unknown (categorized as “undergrad”)	Sculptor	No
Bp Nichol	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	Elementary teaching certificate, University of British Columbia (categorized as “undergrad”)	Book searcher at the University of Toronto	Founder of Ganglia Press

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
Richard Outram	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	BA, University of Toronto	Television stagehand at CBC	Founder of Gauntlet Press
Sidney Mansfield Parker	Male	Caucasian	Truro, NS	Unknown	Unknown	No
Mildred Pelton	Female	Caucasian*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No
Bluebell Stewart Phillips	Female	Caucasian*	Montreal, QC	Unknown	Writer	No
Edwin J. Pratt	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	Studied at the University of Toronto, degree unknown (categorized as “undergrad”)	Former professor of English at Victoria College	Literary adviser to the editorial board of <i>Acta Victoriana</i> , founder and former editor of <i>Canadian Poetry Magazine</i> .
Mervyn Procope	Male	African-Canadian	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No
Carlos Reyes	Male	Caucasian	USA, area unknown	Advanced degrees in romance languages (categorized as “graduate”)	Unknown	No
Alfred John Bradford Robinson	Male	Caucasian	Unknown	Unknown	Worked at the Toronto Metro Reference Library in 1964	No
Joe Rosenblatt	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	Did not complete high school	Poet, former freight handler of the old Canadian Pacific Railway.	No

## Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
Francis Reginald Scott	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	Rhodes scholar at Oxford University, BCL, McGill University (categorized as “graduate”)	Retired dean of McGill's law faculty	Editor of <i>New Provinces: Poems of Several Authors</i> and <i>The Blasted Pine: An Anthology of Satire, Invective and Disrespectful Verse</i>
Renald Shoofler	Male	Caucasian*	Montreal, QC	Unknown	Psychiatric nursing assistant (1964)	No
Glen Siebrasse	Male	Caucasian*	Montreal, QC	Unknown	Editor of Delta Canada	Editor of <i>Yes</i> , co-founded Delta Canada
Francis Edward Sparshott	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	MA, Oxford University	Philosophy professor at the University of Toronto	No
Charles Hollis Torville	Male	Caucasian*	Regina, MT	Received a brief education at a London orphanage (categorized as “high school”)	Farmer	No
Helena Turunen	Female	Caucasian*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No
Miriam Waddington	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	MSW, University of Pennsylvania	English professor at York University	No
Fred Wah	Male	Chinese-Candian/ Caucasian	Nelson, BC	MA, University of Buffalo	Instructor at Selkirk College	Co-founding editor of <i>TISH</i> , contributing editor of <i>Open Letter</i>

**Appendix A cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in Canadian Literature, Spring 1967**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Editorial duties
David Wevill	Male	Caucasian	Burma and/or Spain	BA, Cambridge University	Poet	No

**Appendix B: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Malahat Review*, Spring 2010**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
George Bowering	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	MA, University of British Columbia, Incomplete PhD, University of Western Ontario	Poet, professor emeritus at Simon Frazer University	Yes	Former co-editor of <i>Tish, Imago</i> , and <i>Beaver Cosmos Folios</i> , 2008 judge of The Griffin Poetry Prize
Brian Brett	Male	Caucasian	Salt Spring Island, BC	Studied writing at Simon Fraser University (categorized as “undergrad”)	Poet, author, adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia	Yes	Former poetry critic for <i>The Province</i>
Robert Bringhurst	Male	Caucasian	Quadra Island, BC	MFA, University of British Columbia, honorary doctor of letters degree from the University College of the Frazer Valley	Poet, typographer author, retired literature and art history professor	Yes	General editor of Kanchenjunga Press, book editor
Lorna Crozier	Female	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	MA, Alberta, university unknown	Creative writing professor at the University of Victoria	Yes	Editor of <i>Breathing Fire: Canada’s New Poets</i> , and <i>Breathing Fire 2</i>
Don Domanski	Male	Caucasian	Halifax, NS	Unknown	Poet	Yes	No
Lorri Neilsen Glenn	Female	Caucasian	Halifax, NS	PhD, University of New Hampshire	Professor of literacy education at Mount Saint Vincent University	Yes	Co-editor of <i>The Art of Writing Inquiry**</i>

**Appendix B cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Malahat Review*, Spring 2010**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
Isabel Huggan	Female	Caucasian	France, location unknown	BA, University of Western Ontario	Writer, former instructor at the University of Ottawa, Humber School for Writers	Yes	Freelance editor/ consultant**
Chris Hutchinson	Male	Caucasian	Kelowna, BC	MFA, Arizona State University	English instructor at Okanogan College	Yes	No
Tim Lilburn	Male	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	PhD, McMaster University	Poet, associate creative writing professor at the University of Victoria	Yes	Editor and contributor to <i>Poetry and Knowing and Thinking and Singing: Poetry and the Practice of Philosophy</i>
Heather McHugh	Female	Caucasian	Seattle, WA	MA, University of Denver	Visiting faculty member in the MFA program for writers at Warren Wilson College, writer-in-residence at the University of Washington	Yes	Guest editor for <i>The Best American Poetry</i> , editor of <i>New Voices: University and College Prizes</i>
Don McKay	Male	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	PhD, University of Wales/University of Western Ontario	Poet, editor, former creative writing professor at the University of Victoria	Yes	Manuscript reader for Brick Books, former editor of <i>The Fiddlehead</i>
Jane Munro	Female	Caucasian	Sooke, BC	MA, Simon Fraser University, MFA, University of British Columbia, DEd, University of British Columbia	Poet, distance educator	Yes	No
Susan Musgrave	Female	Caucasian	Sidney, BC	Did not complete high school	Adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia	Yes	Editor of various poetry anthologies and books

**Appendix B cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Malahat Review*, Spring 2010**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Previously Published</b>	<b>Editorial duties</b>
Steven Price	Male	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	MFA, University of Victoria	Poetry instructor at the University of Victoria	Yes	No
Robyn Rowland	Female	Caucasian	Torquay, Australia	PhD, university unknown	Poet, former professor of social inquiry at Deakin University, Australia	Yes	Academic editor**
Melanie Siebert	Female	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	MFA, University of Victoria	Sessional writing instructor at the University of Victoria	Yes	No
Anne-Marie Turza	Female	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	MFA, University of Victoria	Student	Yes	No
Jan Zwicky	Female	Caucasian	Quadra Island, BC	PhD, University of Toronto	Former associate professor in the Department of Philosophy, University of Victoria, former faculty at the Banff Writing Centre	Yes	Editor for Brick Books

### Appendix C: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *Prairie Fire*, Spring 2010

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
Barry Butson	Male	Caucasian	Woodstock, ON	MA, University of Western Ontario	High school teacher	Yes	No
Sam Cheuek	Male	Chinese Canadian	Toronto, ON Vancouver, BC, Hong Kong	MFA, New York University	Unknown	Yes	No
Barbara Craigie	Female	Caucasian*	Victoria, BC	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	No
Jesse Patrick Ferguson	Male	Caucasian	Fredericton, NB	PhD in progress, University of New Brunswick	Student, musician and poetry editor for <i>The Fiddlehead</i>	Yes	Poetry editor for <i>The Fiddlehead</i> . Previously worked on the editorial boards of <i>Bywords Magazine</i> , <i>Quills Canadian Poetry Magazine</i> , and <i>Qwerty Magazine</i>
David Groulx	Male	Ojibwe/ Caucasian	Thunderbay, ON	BA, Lakehead University	Unknown	Yes	No
Jessica Hiemstra-Van der Horst	Female	Caucasian	Melbourne, Australia	BA, location unknown	Language editor, painter and writer	Yes	No
Maureen Hynes	Female	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	MEd, University of Toronto	Faculty member at George Brown College where she coordinates the School of Labour	Yes	Poetry editor for <i>Our Times</i>

**Appendix C cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *Prairie Fire*, Spring 2010**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Previously Published</b>	<b>Editorial duties</b>
Christine McNair	Female	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	MA, West Dean College	Book conservator	Yes	No
Robert Riche	Male	Caucasian	Ridgefield, CT	BA, Yale University	Writer	Yes	No
Anis Shivani	Male	Pakistani-American	Houston, TX	BA, Harvard University	Freelance journalist, poet	Yes	No
Knute Skinner	Male	Caucasian	Killaspuglo-nane, Ireland	PhD, location unknown	Retired English professor	Yes	Former editor of <i>The Bellingham Review</i>
Daniel Scott Tysdal	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	MA, Acadia University, MA, University of Toronto	Creative writing instructor at the University of Toronto	Yes	Guest editor at <i>The Incongruous Quarterly</i>
Darryl Whetter	Male	Caucasian	Halifax, NS	PhD, University of New Brunswick	Assistant professor of creative writing at Dalhousie University	Yes	Book reviewer for <i>The Globe and Mail</i>

## Appendix D: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *Arc*, Summer 2010

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
Susan Braley	Female	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	<b>PhD</b> , University of Western Ontario	Writer, former professor of English literature and women's studies	Yes	No
Don Coles	Male	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	<b>MA</b> , University of Toronto, Cambridge University	Retired director of the creative writing programme at York University	Yes	Former poetry editor for the Banff School of the Fine Arts
Danielle Devereaux	Female	Caucasian	St. John's, NL Montreal, QC	<b>PhD</b> in progress, Concordia University	Student, instructor at Concordia University	Yes	No
Lise Gaston	Female	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	<b>MA</b> in progress, Concordia University	Student	Yes	No
Peter Golub	Male	Caucasian	Salt Lake City, UT	<b>PhD</b> , Columbia University	Poet and translator, instructor at the University of Utah	Yes	Editor of an anthology of contemporary Russian poetry
Robyn Jeffrey	Female	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	<b>MA</b> , Carleton University	Business architect	Yes	No
Ross Leckie	Male	Caucasian	Fredericton, NB	<b>PhD</b> , Concordia University	Director of creative writing at the University of New Brunswick	Yes	Editor of <i>The Fiddlehead</i> , poetry editor for Goose Lane Editions
Michael Andrew Lithgow	Male	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	<b>PhD</b> in progress, Carleton University	Student, research associate at OpenMedia.ca	Yes	Contributing editor of <i>Art Threat: Culture + politics</i>

**Appendix D cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *Arc*, Summer 2010**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
Nyla Matuk	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	MA, McGill University	Writer, freelance writer for the <i>Globe and Mail</i>	Yes	Associate editor at <i>Canadian Architect</i> **
Shane Neilson	Male	Caucasian	Erin, ON	MD, Dalhousie University/Memorial University of Newfoundland	Practitioner of family medicine	Yes	Editor of Frog Hollow Press
Lesley Pasquin	Female	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	MEd, location unknown	Adjunct professor in the Faculty of Education at McGill University	Yes	No
Pamela Porter	Female	Caucasian	Sidney, BC	MFA, University of Montana	Sessional writing instructor at the University of Victoria	Yes	No
Bren Simmers	Female	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	MFA, University of British Columbia	Park interpreter and poet	Yes	Former poetry editor for <i>Prism international</i>
Susan Telfer	Female	Caucasian	Gibsons, BC	MA, Simon Fraser University	High school teacher	Yes	No
Diane Tucker	Female	Caucasian	Burnaby, BC	BFA, University of British Columbia	English tutor and freelance editor	Yes	No
Anne-Marie Turza	Female	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	MFA, University of Victoria	Unknown	Yes	No

**Appendix D cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *Arc*, Summer 2010**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
Paul Tyler	Male	Caucasian	Ottawa, ON	<b>BFA or BA</b> (unable to determine), University of Victoria	Library reference assistant	Yes	Former associate editor at <i>Arc Poetry Magazine</i>
Nancy White	Female	Caucasian	Cambridge, NY	<b>MFA</b> , Sarah Lawrence College	English instructor at Adirondack College	Yes	Associate editor at <i>The Sow's Ear Poetry Review</i>

## Appendix E: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Fiddlehead*, Spring 2010

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
John Barton	Male	Caucasian	Victoria, BC	MLIS, University of Western Ontario	Poet, poetry editor of <i>The Malahat Review</i>	Yes	Former co-editor of <i>Arc Magazine</i> , editor of <i>The Malahat Review</i> , poetry editor for Signature Editions, co-editor of <i>Seminal: The Anthology of Canada's Gay Poets</i>
Melanie Bell	Female	Caucasian	Montreal, QC	MA in progress, Concordia University	Student	Yes	Formerly on the editorial board of <i>The Fiddlehead</i> , managing editor for <i>Matrix Magazine</i>
Jennifer Bronson	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	MA, University of New Brunswick	Yoga instructor	Yes	Former editor-in-chief of <i>Hart House Review</i>
Kate Cayley	Female	Caucasian	Toronto, ON	BAH, King's College	Playwright-in-residence at Tarragon Theatre	Yes	No
John Creary	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	Assumed BEd	High school teacher	Yes	No
Michelle Elrick	Female	Caucasian	Winnipeg, MB	Certificate in Creative Writing, Simon Frazer University (categorized as "undergrad")	Writer	Yes	No
Andrew Faulkner	Male	Caucasian	Hartford, CT	MFA in progress, University of Guelph	Student, founder of <i>The Emergency Response Unit</i> , a chapbook publisher	Yes	Former editor-in-chief of <i>Ottawa Arts Review</i> , on the selection committee for <i>Bywords</i>

**Appendix E cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Fiddlehead*, Spring 2010**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
Heidi Garnett	Female	Caucasian	Kelowna, BC	<b>MEd</b> , Western Washington State University, <b>MFA</b> , University of British Columbia, Okanagan	Retired teacher	Yes	Chapbook editor**
M.J. Golias	Female	Caucasian	New York, NY	<b>MFA</b> , University of Memphis	ESL teacher	Yes	Former editor of <i>River City journal</i>
Matthew Goss	Male	Caucasian	Canada and Switzerland	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	No
James Gurley	Male	Caucasian	Seattle, WA	<b>MFA</b> , University of Montana	Library worker	Yes	Co-editor of <i>Salmon Bay Review</i>
Jared Harel	Male	Caucasian	Hackettstown, NJ	<b>MFA</b> , Cornell University	Creative writing teacher at Centenary College	Yes	No
Sean Howard	Male	Caucasian	Main-a-Dieu, NS	<b>PhD</b> , University of Bradford, UK	Adjunct political science professor at Cape Breton University	Yes	No
Meghan Martin	Female	Caucasian	Kelowna, BC	<b>MFA</b> , Arizona State University	Creative writing and English composition teacher at Arizona State University	Yes	No
Shane Neilson	Male	Caucasian	Erin, ON	<b>MD</b> , Dalhousie University, Memorial University of Newfoundland	Practitioner of family medicine	Yes	Editor of Frog Hollow Press

**Appendix E cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Fiddlehead*, Spring 2010**

Name	Gender	Race	Location	Education	Occupation	Previously Published	Editorial duties
James Norcliffe	Male	Caucasian	Christchurch, New Zealand	MA, Canterbury University	Senior tutor in English at Lincoln University, NZ	Yes	Poetry editor for Christchurch Press, former editor of <i>Redraft</i> , and <i>Takahe Magazine</i>
Patrick M. Pilarski	Male	Caucasian	Edmonton, AB	PhD, University of Alberta	Post doctoral fellow in computing science at the University of Alberta	Yes	Co-editor of <i>Daily Haiku</i> and <i>Daily Haigu</i>
Tim Prior	Male	Caucasian*	Toronto, ON	Assumed BEd	Teacher	Yes	No
Harold Rhenisch	Male	Caucasian	Campbell River, BC	MFA, University of British Columbia	Arts columnist, freelance editor	Yes	Editor of <i>Milestones Review</i> and <i>The Wireweed Review</i>
Shawn Riopelle	Male	Caucasian*	Vancouver, BC	Unknown	Screenwriter	Yes	No
Hendrik Slegtenhorst	Male	Caucasian	Bowen Island, BC	BA, Carlton University	Former chief administrative officer of Bowen Island Municipality, principal of Falstaff Enterprises	Yes	No
Jeff Steudel	Male	Caucasian	Vancouver, BC	Assumed BEd	High school teacher	Yes	No

**Appendix E cont: Demographic characteristics of poets featured in *The Fiddlehead*, Spring 2010**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Previously Published</b>	<b>Editorial duties</b>
Susan Telfer	Female	Caucasian	Gibsons, BC	MA, Simon Fraser University	High school teacher	Yes	No
Christen Thomas	Female	Caucasian	Big Tancook Island/Halifax, NS	Unknown	Editor at Formac Publishing	Yes	Manages editorial for a book publisher, poetry editor for a small press
Kim Trainor	Female	Caucasian*	Vancouver, BC	PhD, McGill	Sessional English instructor at the University of British Columbia	Yes, however, this this is Trainor's first published poem	No
Christine Wiesenthal	Female	Caucasian	Edmonton, AB	PhD, University of Alberta	Poet, biographer, literary critic, associate professor at the University of Alberta	Yes	No