

# National Plots: Historical Fiction and Changing Ideas of Canada

Andrea Cabajsky, Brett Josef Grubisic



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Fiction that reconsiders, challenges, reshapes, and/or upholds national narratives of history has long been an integral aspect of Canadian literature. Works by writers of historical fiction (from early practitioners such as John Richardson to contemporary figures such as Alice Munro and George Elliott Clarke) propose new views and understandings of Canadian history and individual relationships to it. Critical evaluation of these works sheds light on the complexity of these depictions.

The contributors in *National Plots: Historical Fiction and Changing Ideas of Canada* critically examine texts with subject matter ranging from George Vancouver's west coast explorations to the eradication of the Beothuk in Newfoundland. Reflecting diverse methodologies and theoretical approaches, the essays seek to explicate depictions of "the historical" in individual texts and to explore larger questions relating to historical fiction as a genre with complex and divergent political motivations and goals. Although the topics of the essays vary widely, as a whole the collection raises (and answers) questions about the significance of the roles historical fiction has played within Canadian culture for nearly two centuries.

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