

REVIEWS AND ENDORSEMENTS FOR THE TRUE NORTH: How Canadian Creativity Changed the World

THE TRUE NORTH” SHOULD BE AT THE TOP OF EVERY CANADIANS 2020 READING LIST

Paul Schafer's new book on creative Canadians should be on your "must read" list, not only for Canadians but anyone outside our country's borders who has an interest in our remarkable country.

Above all it should be brought to the attention of all of the several million "new Canadians" who have come to live here over the past few decades. This book will give them a much greater appreciation of the past and present contributions made by many immigrants not only to their adopted country but their impact on the world at large.

This comprehensive list lays to rest the sometimes chronic self-effacement that many Canadians have adopted since Confederation in 1867. A powerful reminder that Canada is not a new country but one that has gradually developed its own identity as one of the most influential and creative countries in the world.

Overshadowed as Canada has been by its much larger neighbor to the south, "The True North" provides ample evidence that so many Canadians have demonstrated an extraordinary level of creativity and leadership in a wide range of fields.

While some, such as Doctors Banting and Best as well as Alexander Graham Bell, Sanford Fleming and Armand Bombardier are well known, what the reader will find particularly fascinating are the hundreds of other creative geniuses who came to Paul Schafer's attention as he worked his way through the Canadian Encyclopaedia. Quite apart from their sharing a creative spark and the tenacity to persevere with their ideas, he was struck by the diversity of those who came from all parts of this vast country - and from other countries.

"The True North" is divided into sections. For a start, it demonstrates how the challenging Canadian climate and geography have inspired so many innovations in the fields of transportation and communications. Canada's rich natural resources, agriculture and fisheries attracted and inspired minds to find new solutions. This has also been true in industry, healthcare, adult education and even politics; and Schafer provides many fascinating stories of pioneering work in these areas.

Above all, the section on the "Arts and Entertainment" draws attention to Canada's performing arts, literature and the visual arts that have gained world-wide recognition. In

popular music, he highlights the names of Leonard Cohen, Oscar Peterson, Joni Mitchell, Celine Dion and Drake. As Schafer states: "there is hardly a country in the world that hasn't been exposed to these and other Canadian popular singers showcasing Canada's vast talent pool in popular music.

In classical music, Canada has nurtured numerous opera stars such as Jon Vickers and Ben Heppner - and conductors like the prodigiously talented Yannick Nézet-Séguin. The reader will learn more about the Canadian literary giants: Margaret Atwood, Mordecai Richler, Alice Munro and Lucy Maude Montgomery. Canada also produced the film legends: Louis B. Mayer, Jack Warner and Mack Sennett. Collectively, these and so many other names demonstrate the breadth and depth of Canada's cultural vitality. Of course, the list of extraordinary artistic contributors includes the ground-breaking work of "Group of Seven" and the magic of the "Cirque du Soleil".

Sports leaders are also included, such as James Naismith the creator of basketball - and the legions of players who have been the shining lights in ice hockey - often referred to as "Canada's Game".

In drawing some conclusions to this comprehensive look at Canadian creativity, Paul Schafer comments "Given the present state of the world and prospects for the future, it is hoped that a sizeable portion of Canadian creativity will be directed to coming to grips with the difficult and dangerous problems that exist in the world, such as: the environmental crisis, the huge disparities in income and wealth, as well as the escalation of prejudice, inequality and injustice in the world". He clearly states his positive belief that "Canadians are capable of making as many creative contributions to the future as they have in the past and are making at present".

Based on reading this fascinating book I feel sure that readers will reach the same positive conclusions. "The True North" makes a compelling argument as to why "the world needs more Canada"!

John Hobday, Former Director, Canada Council for the Arts

TRUE NORTH IS MAGNETIC!!

While reading "True North" I began to feel proud to be a Canadian.

I felt proud reading how our ancestors overcame the challenges presented by our colossal geography, by being creative in transportation and communication, agriculture and industry.

Canadians are a compassionate people, who have shared our medical expertise with the rest of the world, while supporting the creativity of our own artists, activists, athletes, and educators.

I feel confident that our country will provide creative solutions to world-wide problems, such as climate change, economic disparity, prejudice and injustice.

Paul Schafer has written an important book that should be required reading in our Canadian school system, so students come to understand what is meant by "True North."

This book should also be read by our business leaders, our politicians, and anyone else seeking to continue Canada's creative response to adversity.

Frank Pasquill