



Canada's Game: Hockey and Identity

Andrew C. Holman

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Almost every Canadian can hum the original Hockey Night in Canada theme - even those who don't think of themselves as hockey fans. For more than a century, Canadians have seen something of themselves in the sport of hockey. "Canada's Game" explores the critical aspects of this relationship. Contributors address a broad range of themes in hockey, past and present, including spectacle and spectator ship, the multiple meanings of hockey in Canadian fiction, and the shaping influences of violence, anti-Americanism, and regional rivalry. From the Gardens to the Forum, from the 1936 Olympics to the 1972 Summit Series, from the imagined depictions in Canadian fiction to the fan's-eye view, Canada's Game looks at hockey's ability to reflect Canadian identity. Contributors include Julian Ammirante (Laurentian University at Georgian), Jason Blake (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia), Robert Dennis (Queen's University), Jamie Dopp (University of Victoria), Russell Field (University of Manitoba), Greg Gillespie (Brock University), Richard Harrison (Mount Royal College), Craig Hyatt (Brock University), Brian Kennedy (Pasadena City College), Karen E.H. Skinazi (University of Alberta), and Julie Stevens (Brock University). From the book: The Giller Prize-winning author, David Adams Richards, tells a humorous anecdote from his days as a writer-in-residence at the University of New Brunswick - Fredericton. It was in 1984, on the day after Team Canada had defeated the hated Soviet national team 3 to 2 in overtime and, a committed hockey fan, he was dying to chat with someone, anyone, about the great victory the night before. The first person he encountered was a young English professor, a good but perhaps pretentious scholar who had once been overheard saying that she could not see how anyone could live without reading Henry James. Despite her erudition, like Richards she was from small-town New Brunswick, and because of this, he thought, she must be a hockey fan. 'Did you see the game last night?' No, she replied, 'we don't have a television don't approve of it', but continued on saying that her husband had been eager to find out the result that morning on the radio. 'He's heartbroken', she said. 'We were going for the Russians'. Richards' face displayed his bewilderment at her treasonous statement. 'Well we both hate Gretzky, you see'. Her accent now turned slightly British he's just such a Canadian. She smiled. He paused, uncomfortably, and then asked her: 'You hate greatness or just Canadian greatness?'

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