

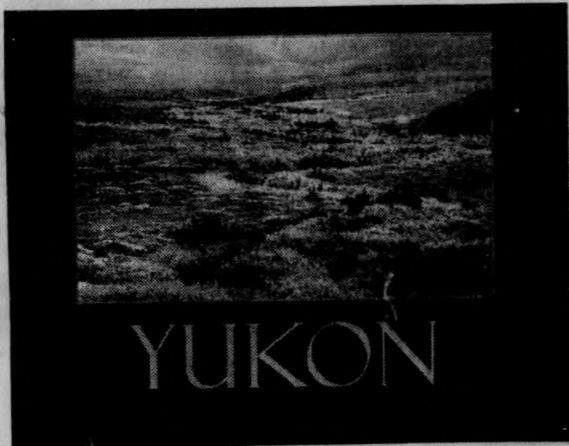
## Collection of photography showcases the stunning, ageless beauty of the Yukon

*Yukon: Colour of the Land*  
by Richard Hartmier  
Lost Moose Publishing

PAT FITZPATRICK

THE BRUNSWICKAN

*Yukon: Colour of the Land* is a stunning portrait of a territory which few Canadians have seen, let alone taken the time to try and understand. For many, the Yukon means little more than the



somewhat mystical land which Calvin seeks to escape to in the Calvin and Hobbes cartoon compilation "Yukon, ho!" by Bill Watterson. There are two things readers will not find in this book — cartoons, and text. While the absence of cartoons is pretty much what one would expect, the minimalist approach of presenting photographs with an absolute minimum of text generally results in a book which leaves many gaping holes. Many questions unanswered. Not so in Richard

Hartmier's *Yukon*. Whether presenting a burnout forest's emerging regrowth, a desolate mountaintop, daily aspects of Aboriginal life, an outpost store or stunning portraits of nature, Hartmier's compassion for the people and his love of the land shine through in visually rich images. Be they colour or the few examples of black and white, Hartmier's images are documentary photography at their best — paintings rendered with light, stunning and packed with detail and emotion.

Hartmier has been making photographs of the Yukon for over twenty years now. He is a professional photographer and his images have been sold to stock houses, travel and tourism departments and have appeared in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Backpacker*, *Canadian Geographic*, *Maclean's*, *Harrowsmith* and a host of others. While it may have been the "colourful landscapes, people and places" of the Yukon which attracted Hartmier to the Yukon, it was clearly a love of the land which drew him

into twenty years of photographing the people and places he loves. But *Yukon* reveals more of Hartmier the artist than it does of the stereotype of the weathered professional photographer. As a reviewer, I must confess my bias, and hence initial skepticism of Hartmier's work — I much prefer the rich and subtle tones of black and white to colour photography, and for me the subtitle "Colour of the Land" was initially somewhat off-putting. Fearing more of the same

tired old colour tourist brochure images with which we are inundated in this day and age, my fears were immediately assuaged by the photographer's introduction.

Here, Hartmier shows up-front that he knows what photography is all about, a concept which is lost on so many of the hacks who claim in this day and age to be professional photographers: "The colour of the land changes

**Hartmier's images are documentary photography at their best — paintings rendered with light, stunning and packed with detail and emotion.**

with the hours, days and weeks of the northern summer," says Hartmier, and he is right. What is incredible, however, is that his work goes on to prove that he has the artistic vision and professional expertise to capture those subtle yet vastly rich differences on a piece of film a few millimeters thick.

In "Robert Service Cabin, Dawson City" and "Hunker Creek," Hartmier takes us to an age gone by as a sartorially elegant tour guide indicates the poet's home while, on the opposite page, a leathery, weather-beaten gold panner evokes the timeless image of the Klondike Gold Rush.

It is in this sort of juxtaposition — of nature untouched by humans versus the decaying remnants of a flagstone cabin on a mountain top; of Aboriginal people celebrating Canada Day with Western instruments versus an elder in a Tlingit dance; of the power of steam which brought to Gold Rush versus decaying railroad tracks at a dead mountaintop mine — which makes Hartmier's work shine. It is not only in his choice of subjects but in his choice of facing images that Hartmier demonstrates his compassion for and love and knowledge of a land too few of us know.

Therein, however, lies the rub. Hartmier's work is beautiful, it is rich, it is evocative. So much so that the reader is left pleading silently for more text — just a little. While those with a more than passing interest in photography will hunger to know where, how and with what Hartmier made his images, such technical descriptions would likely sully an artistically rich and evocative work. On the other hand, even the casual reader is left with a thirst to learn more of Hartmier's concept of the land, to perhaps taste a tiny bit of the reason for a certain image's inclusion.

That, however, is quibbling over details which are perhaps best left untouched. For what emerges from Hartmier's book is more than just the "Colour of the Land" — it is also the colour of the people, of the way they were and where they lived and indeed where they continue to live today and of the nature with and in which



they will live tomorrow. After devouring Hartmier's book, I think I can now understand why Calvin may have chosen to run away to the Yukon...

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### The Arts 1000 Reader reviewed

EISE CRAFT

THE BRUNSWICKAN

As everyone in the Arts Faculty knows, Arts 1000: The Development of Western Thought is the only required first year course. Some love it, some hate it, but we all take it. I took the course in 1991, and I'll be honest — I really didn't like it. It was hot in the lecture hall, and the material was horribly Eurocentric, white, male and Christian. I picked up this year's reader, Volumes 1 and 2, to see if anything has changed in the past six years.

As a course which claims to chronicle the development of Western thought, the Arts 1000 reader seems to lack a number of key "developments." Lets start at the beginning: Arts 1000 begins with a focus on ancient Greek thought. Thucydides, Sophocles, Antigone, Socrates, Plato, Cicero and Marcus Aurelius introduce the novice to the impact that Greek thought has had on Western society.

Next comes excerpts from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. This on its own makes sense — the West has been dominated by Christian people since the initial conquest of the land by Europeans. It is the absence of any other religious perspectives and criticisms of Christianity that make the Reader inadequate in this area. That the Western colonizers used the Bible and their interpretation of its teachings to murder and assimilate thousands if not millions of aboriginal peoples also certainly merits mention.

Volume One is rounded out with five Christian scholars and Machiavelli. For students who come to UNB without a background in Christianity, this will be at least confusing, at most perhaps highly offensive. It is one thing to include Christian scholarship in general, but apparently things haven't changed from my Arts 1000 days; the Reader still feels preschy in the extreme.

Volume Two begins with Martin Luther, another Christian

(although he was considered a heretic for awhile). In this volume, the student is introduced to questions about the dogma of the Church, the purpose and foundations of government and society, theory from Marx, evolution, psychoanalysis, Hitler, existentialism, feminism and a little Robert Louis Stevenson thrown in for good measure. Why? I don't know. It is offered by the editors as "an example of the Romantic mood in literature." At the end is the only specific criticism of the rest of the materials; E. Said questions the racism and imperialism of the West. Interesting. Too bad it comes after eight months of all the other material.

What the editors of the Reader have failed to recognize is that by first year university, most people probably have a reasonably firm handle on the dominant Western ideology. Instead of compiling 36 readings of which only 5 or 6 are critical of this ideology, it is more useful and crucial for liberal arts students to be introduced not only to the development of the dominant way of thinking but also to learn about the ideas that have been suppressed, and the reasons why.

Some of the omissions are glaring. In the discussion of the social contract theorists and government, there is no mention of the Iroquois Confederacy. This was a federation of aboriginal nations in what is now called North America, on which the American Constitution and system of government were directly modeled.

This is quite an omission. So is the lack of sustained feminist content. Women have been theorizing for as long as men have. They have, however, been systematically ignored and oppressed. Certainly the editors could rationalize these exclusions, but in a course which seeks to introduce students to the "development" of Western thought, and at a university that professes not to be racist or sexist, such exclusions leave me wondering where the Arts Faculty thinks it counters racism and sexism. It is certainly not in Arts 1000.

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