

EDITORIAL

THIS EDITORIAL FEATURES A NUMBER of announcements and acknowledgements. First, our Spring 2010 issue, “Groundtruthing: Canada and the Environment,” was edited by two Dalhousie colleagues, Claire Campbell, from the Department of History, and Carrie Dawson, from the Department of English. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our guest editors for their great work on this special issue, which dealt with important questions regarding the relationship between the development of Canadian national identity and concerns about the environment.

Second, regular readers of *The Dalhousie Review* will have noticed the changes to the *Review*'s presentation over the past two issues, including the cover design and the layout of the fiction, poetry, essays, and reviews inside. All of this has been done in the interest of updating the look of our magazine in concert with our new online presence. Our website now allows readers to purchase or renew subscriptions online, and will soon enable subscribers to access our digital archive of past issues, dating back to 1921. The new website and the inspiration for the refreshing of the magazine's overall presentation were undertaken by Paul Williams, and we would like to thank him for his fine design work. I would also like to thank Jennifer Lambert, our production manager, for her continued work on the magazine, in general, and the renovation in particular.

On the subject of websites and technology, I recently stumbled upon the following description of our magazine on the *Canadian Encyclopedia*'s website, characterizing how H.L. Stewart, the *Review*'s first editor, “aimed to situate the publication's demographic between that of specialized journals and the popular press.” In the same article, *The Dalhousie Review* is described as “A Canadian Journal of Literature and Opinion,’ ... one of those academic quarterlies that have largely taken the place in Canada of the journals of affairs that flourish in Britain and the US.” And while we are no longer a quarterly, this description of an intermediate position between the specialized and the popular demarcates an important sector within Canada's intellectual life that

is presently underserved. Because we reside at a university, the increased specialization of intellectual discussion that determines much academic life has influenced how the *Review* has developed over time. In one sense, such an incremental development cannot be helped.

Perhaps because of the time I have spent working on two of the twentieth century's greatest essayists—George Orwell and Ralph Ellison—I have a longstanding love for the well-written, general interest essay that engages with a subject in a manner that acknowledges the existence and intelligence of the non-specialist, the constituency that Ellison and Orwell, among other great essayists, always included as part of their audience. Since we are at a juncture of renewal—with the website, the redesign of the magazine's appearance in general, etc.—we might also announce a return to H.L. Stewart's earlier description for the *Review*, a return to the space between the specialized and the popular. *The Dalhousie Review* cannot be topical in the way that magazines and journals can be when they are released more frequently than three times per year. Our emphasis on increasing the amount of high-quality fiction and poetry remains intact. However, regarding our non-fiction selections, we have started to favour essays that address subjects that might be of interest to a more general readership than to the sort of subjects one is more likely to see in more specialized, discipline-specific journals.

As things change, then, sometimes they return to a version of the way things used to be.

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