



Slumming It at the Rodeo

The Cultural Roots of
Canada's Right-Wing
Revolution

(Douglas & McIntyre, 1998)

Gordon Laird

"Praise the Lord for Gordon Laird's experience in cleaning stables: it lets him sniff out manure."

Irshad Manji

"A compelling and original book... Laird understand the value of entertaining readers while informing them, so that although *Slumming It at the Rodeo* is as angry and effective an attack on right-wing politics as has been published in this country, the author never loses his cool or his good humour. ...A valuable primer for those puzzled Canadians who want to understand how politics works in this country."

Peter C. Newman, *Vancouver Sun*

"Enter Gordon Laird with an entertaining romp through old Westerns, saloons, the Calgary Stampede and country weddings. The same book is a seriously researched lament for our country's political situation."

Jennefer Curtis, *The Globe and Mail*

"A lively and insightful look at the rise of the Right. With wit and style, Gordon Laird shows that what parades as populism is really an extension of a slick corporate culture – and the negation of the democratic values it trumpets"

Linda McQuaig

“An engaging blend of diligent research, potent metaphors, telling quotations ... A creative and engrossing look into the souls and psyches of politicians for people who hate politics.”

Tom Snyders, *Quill & Quire*

“An entertaining and artfully energetic meditation. ...One metaphor seems especially compelling. Laird envisages Canadian politics as a ground where diversity has been replaced by monoculture – an image that ties his agricultural sensibilities to his worry about franchises as a way of life.”

Marc Lisac, *Edmonton Journal*

“Slumming It at the Rodeo is a well-documented, witty and refreshing analysis... Writers who attempt what Laird has done, unless equipped with the analytical powers of Linda McQuaig, too often poison themselves with their own high dudgeon. They become bores, and at times, during the bitter 1990s, it has seemed as though hectoring everyone about the excesses of ‘the right’ is the only historical mission of the ‘the left’ that remains.

...Laird’s approach to this phenomenon is a breath of fresh air. Now that he’s had a run at Klein, Manning and Harris, it would be interesting to see what he’d make of, say Alexa McDonough, Roy Romanow and Glen Clark.”

Terry Glavin, *Canadian Forum*

“Laird is a brilliant writer, using wit and considerable irony to take on his subjects one by one, and rarely (if ever) missing the target. Irony is perhaps the key word here. After all, as Laird explains to me, the book’s origins actually lie in a visit to China in 1989. In the days before Tiananmen Square, Laird met a number of young students whose commitment to the democratic ideal gave him pause to think about democracy in Canada.”

David Bright, *FastForward, Calgary*

“The argument is bold, the insights original, and the writing is provocative and fun ... One of the most entertaining and refreshing political analyses in a long time.”

Kitchener-Waterloo Record