

reader would easily be forgiven for assuming it's a modern-day story.

Other unexplained references may end up frustrating or confusing a young reader who, for instance, isn't familiar with the names of yo-yo tricks, or terms such as car-hop and pedal pushers. The expression used as the title, in fact, is never actually explained, despite its repeated use.

That said, Jo's experiences ring true for anyone who was a girl at any time: the friends who shut her out, her tendency to exaggerate to win approval, and her on-the-boil emotions. When the boys surround her in order to take something from her in one episode — of "sharking" — the ritual feels all too real.

Lawson's deft but straightforward writing will have a young reader nodding her head in recognition. "The first day of school always felt like a piano exam," she writes, capturing the feeling perfectly, as she does when she describes Jo's baby-sitter and friend Mack as having "a polish that seemed too bright," on her return from Toronto.

It is the plot, though, and the barrage of events in Jo's life, that will keep the reader turning pages. In the short time we spend with her, she loses her best friend, gains another, discovers Mack is pregnant, finds out by accident that she is adopted, endures the sharking incident and even sees the newly launched Sputnik satellite.

As the middle book in Lawson's Goldstone trilogy, *Turns on a Dime* stands on its own reasonably well, although it suffers from some of the problems of its kind. Story lines such as Mack's pregnancy go unresolved, while doors to a sequel are left conspicuously ajar, as when Jo considers searching for her birth mother. A pendant she receives near the end of the book will no doubt play a key role in the final instalment.

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Hockey: Pedagogy, Promotion, and Play

Hockey Goaltending for Young Players: An Instructional Guide. François Allaire. Key Porter, 1997. 174 pp. \$21.95 paper. ISBN 1-55013-895-2. *Roller Hockey Blues.* Steven Barwin and Gabriel David Tick. James Lorimer & Company, 1997. 88 pp. \$16.95, \$8.95 boards, paper. ISBN 1-55028-569-6, 1-55028-568-8. *Hockey Night in Transcona.* John Danakas. James Lorimer & Company, 1995. 115 pp. \$16.95, \$8.95 boards, paper. ISBN 1-55028-505-X, 1-55028-504-1. *Amazing Forwards.* James Duplacey. Kids Can, 1996. 40 pp. \$6.95 paper. ISBN 1-55074-305-8. *Champion Defencemen.* James Duplacey. Kids Can, 1997. 40 pp. \$6.95 paper, ISBN 1-55074-390-2. *Face Off.* Chris Forsyth. James Lorimer & Company, 1996. 71 pp. \$16.95, \$8.95 boards, paper, ISBN 1-55028-533-5, 1-55028-532-7. *Two Minutes for Roughing.* Joseph Romain. James Lorimer & Company, 1994. 84 pp. \$16.95, \$8.95 boards, paper. ISBN 1-55028-459-2, 1-55028-458-4. *Goal Scoring.* Sean Rossiter. Douglas & McIntyre,

Greystone Books, 1997. 60 pp., \$10.95, paper, ISBN 1-55054-550-7. *Goaltending*. Sean Rossiter. Douglas & McIntyre, Greystone Books, 1997. 60 pp. \$10.95 paper, ISBN 1-55054-549-3.

"The winters of my childhood were long, long seasons. We lived in three places — the school, the church, and the skating-rink — but our real life was on the skating-rink." So begins Roch Carrier's Canadian children's classic, *The Hockey Sweater*, which captures a sense of the past while noting persistent sources of stress in Canadian culture, those between French and English, Catholic and Protestant, the Montreal Canadiens and the Toronto Maple Leafs. Although it never represents hockey being played, *The Hockey Sweater* captures, nevertheless, a kind of play in which action and imagination fuel each other. One memorable example of this occurs in the televised version of Ken Dryden's *Home Game*, when a woman in her 60s on an old-timers' team fields the question, "Do you feel like Charlie Conacher when you're out on the ice?" by saying, "Like Charlie Conacher? When I'm out there, I *am* Charlie Conacher." And so in *The Hockey Sweater*, "On the ice, when the referee blew his whistle ... we were five Maurice Richards against five other Maurice Richards ... all wearing the uniform of the Montreal Canadiens, all with the same burning enthusiasm. We all wore the famous number 9 on our backs. How could we forget that!"

Carrier's tone, the nostalgia here and in the opening sentence of the story, suggests that hockey was not what it used to be. Nor is it today. *Hockey Goaltending for Young Players: An Instructional Guide*, marks one change quite sharply, a change in the direction of the professionalization, which requires formal training such as that offered by hockey schools, power skating programs, and coaching workshops. Drawing on his expertise as a goaltender coach of the Canadiens and the Anaheim Mighty Ducks, François Allaire presents a four-year plan for the development of goalies under the age of twelve. Coaches, not young players, are the principal audience of this book's elaborately-coded charts and detailed accounts of on-ice moves, off-ice drills, performance assessments, and ways of communicating needed changes.

Goal Scoring and Goaltending, two volumes in the "Hockey the NHL Way" series, are also "how-to" books. Far less comprehensive than Allaire's, they are glossy, dynamic in lay-out, and full of practical tips pitched directly to youngsters. Besides the photos of young players, which do illustrate various useful manoeuvres, Sean Rossiter's books include lots of full-page pictures of NHL players in action, pictures that often have no clear connection to the topic of instruction. Suggestive of the glamour and dynamism of professional hockey, the purpose of these pictures seems promotional rather than pedagogical.

This is obviously the aim of the Hockey Superstars series. *Amazing Forwards* and *Champion Defencemen*, replete with colour photographs, provide brief biographical sketches, statistical details, and summary assessments by NHLers of NHLers, from Howie Morentz and King Clancy to Peter Bondra and Keith Tkachuk. The content highlighted on the back cover is the stuff of "Trivial Pursuit:" "Whose nickname is 'Big Bird'? Who's the only defenceman to win the League MVP four times?" "Which amazing forward scored a record ten points in one game?" As one might expect of the author, a former curator of the Hockey Hall of Fame, there is

some history and some hagiography in these books, and as the early lives of the saints served the purposes of the church, so these advance the interests of the NHL. This sometimes requires the suppression of crucial information, such as how Jaromir Jagr could possibly have won the scoring championship in 1994-95, when he scored only 32 goals. To make sense of the data one needs to know that a lock-out by the owners reduced the season to 48 games, but this crucial information is not to be found in *Amazing Forwards* (nor, incidentally, in the seasons' summaries on the NHL's website). Presumably labour disputes are bad copy? If the books on training and skills development bespeak the professionalization of the game, these on hockey superstars point to its appropriation by interests that privilege professional hockey, men's hockey, North American hockey, and reduce a team sport to a collection of individualistic achievements. In a time of diminishing public resources for the arts in Canada, I cannot comprehend why both the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council provided funds for these books, one of which makes explicit that it is "an official publication of the National Hockey League."

Unlike these books, which divorce the sport from its social context, hockey stories situate the game in a complex network of personal, familial, and societal relationships. In *Face Off*, *Hockey Night in Transcona*, *Roller Hockey Blues*, and *Two Minutes for Roughing*, hockey cuts across lines of gender, race, and ethnicity (as it does in the dressing rooms where I tie up skates), though the focus in all these novels remains on a boy's experiences, on the ice and off. These include the exciting action of the game itself (which comes with some of the purple prose endemic to sports journalism). Tied up with the fun of the game are other problems: rivalries with friends and foes, fanaticism of parents and injustice of coaches, selfishness and generosity, intimidation and pluck. And off the ice we meet embittered ex-pros, alcoholic coaches, juvenile delinquents, fathers absent because of divorce, and single mothers struggling to pay for league dues. The central characters take up the challenges presented on all fronts and they succeed, not by always by winning on the ice, but where success really counts, in their relationships with siblings, friends, parents, and other adults. Despite such an array of characters and the engaging conflicts among them, action is the essence of these stories and the principal means by which they achieve their expressed purpose "to encourage kids to read ... even reluctant readers."

To my mind, *Hockey Night in Transcona* is the best of this group of stories. It avoids problems too bad to be true or solutions too quick to be satisfying — as in *Two Minutes for Roughing*, which produces a happy ending for the central character by getting rid of the troublemakers. In *Hockey Night in Transcona*, on the other hand, twelve-year-old Cody Powell has insights that allow him to give his father, who has recently remarried and moved to Kamloops, a second chance. Perhaps more important, adults also learn and change: Coach Brackett does, realizing that he has been twice as demanding of his own son and has failed to see Stu's accomplishments. Unlike some other sports included in the Sports Stories series, hockey seems to be — it certainly is in all these novels — a special site for fathers and sons to meet, as they do here at the end of *Hockey Night in Transcona*, with some of the nostalgia of *The Hockey Sweater* and some of the simple pleasure of playing: "Coach Brackett and Stu ... glided across the ice in loose circles, their legs pumping easily, their sticks sweeping ahead of them. In time, as they crossed from one end of the rink to the

other, they began passing the puck back and forth. The only sound in the morning air was the slap of the hard black puck against first one stick and then the other.”

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Of Gods, Maidens and Mummies

A Gift for Ampato. Susan Vande Griek. Illus. Mary Jane Gerber. Groundwood/Douglas & McIntyre, 1999. 109 pp. \$6.95 paper. ISBN 0-88899-359-5.

In 1995 an American archaeologist, Johan Reinhard, discovered the mummified body of a teenage Inca girl near the top of the Ampato mountain in Peru. Researchers believe that the young girl, nicknamed the Ice maiden, was sacrificed by the Incas to appease the mountain gods. *A Gift for Ampato* is a short novel inspired by the discovery and scientists' study of it.

Susan Vande Griek succeeds in transforming this archaeological event from a potentially distressing account of loss, human sacrifice and victimization into a more uplifting story of redemption in praise of the right to choose one's own destiny and identity. This successful reworking of history in fiction is owed to the sophistication of Vande Griek's narrative structure and the transcendence of the theme she develops in it.

Like the woven shawl that appears to be a leitmotif in *A Gift*, the hallmark of this story is interlocking narrative threads. Vande Griek weaves a story out of two narrative strands: the fictional account of the life and experiences of the young girl prior to her sacrifice framed in the factual report of the finding and the investigation surrounding it. The latter begins and ends the novel and runs through the entire book in the form of introductory passages to each chapter. Fact and fiction are so interwoven stylistically and structurally that it is not always clear where one begins and the other ends. For one thing, although the framing account echoes newspaper reports of the finding, Vande Griek tells it in the subjective manner of the storyteller.

Furthermore, the narrative focus is not cast on only one character in the fashion of conventional stories or historical accounts, but rather on three female characters whose experiences are linked: Timta, an unwilling yet admirable heroine; her friend Karwa, a remarkable example of strength and maturity in a young girl, and Riti, an older woman whose loss of a daughter to the gods is redeemed in both girls.

A Gift for Ampato is by no means an easy story to tell on account of its subject matter, yet Vande Griek is able to carry it through because of her sensitive and intelligent approach. The story is bound to challenge the moral and ethical beliefs of young readers. It is perhaps for this reason that Vande Griek appends an author's note detailing her sources, her approach and objective: to express disap-