



### WINTER, 2025

University of Winnipeg Retirees' Association Newsletter

**UWRA Board of Directors  
2025/2026**

President	Jim Christie
VP/President	Bob Young
Secretary	Debbie Machula
Treasurer:	Murray Wiegand
At-Large #1 (Communications)	Dawn Rittberg
At-Large #2	Lynn Jones
Past-President	Judith Huebner

Newsletter	Bill Rannie
Scholarship/Bursaries	Ed Byard
United Way	Linda Dietrick
Zoom Technical Team	Judith Huebner Brian McGregor Steve Coppinger

**Pension Trustees**

Mary Anne Walls (2024-2026)  
Jeff Babb (2025-2027)

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### THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When my late father was the age I am now, he regularly quipped, 'When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is check the obituaries to see if my name is there. If not, I go back to bed.' He did rather more than that, mind. There was the unfortunate incident of the roof repair he decided he was up to in his mid-eighties. The ladder stayed steady. The repair held. However ...

I follow a similar pattern, these days with the on line replica edition of the Free Press, though I don't begin with the obits. Some fascinating stuff shows up from time to time. Take a recent Monday morning.

Two articles grabbed, gripped, and held my attention; one was an obit, curiously enough. The article noted the passing of George Smoot, a Nobel Prize laureate in physics. Dr. Smoot was a contemporary of ours whose most celebrated accomplishment was to take a cosmic sonogram of the universe. Now I'm with the great scientist and science fiction writer, Sir Arthur C, Clarke, when he famously noted that any technology, sufficiently advanced, will appear as magic to the uninitiated.'

I have no idea what a cosmic sonogram is, let alone how one manages the thing, but, by means arcane to me, our Professor Smoot was able to capture a map of the cosmos dating to some 350,000 years after the Big Bang. His groundbreaking research with his lab partner took the so far best theory of the beginning of everything, and reinforced that theory exponentially. That may not boggle the mind, but it sure stretches it.

A few pages later I came across a less arcane but rather more whimsical piece concerning the inflight habits of frequent flyers. It seems that a majority of passengers eschew the latest new release or the golden oldies on their inflight entertainment systems in favour of following the seat back mounted flight map.

This comforted me strangely; I do the same. Somehow the

continued on p. 4

## NOTABLE DATES

November 2	Standard Time Begins (2:00 am)
November 11	Remembrance Day
November 16	Grey Cup
December 6	National Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
December 10	Human Rights Day
December 21	Winter Solstice
January 1	New Year's Day
January 27	International Holocaust Remembrance Day
February 2	Groundhog Day
February 3	The Day the Music Died
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 16	Louis Riel Day
March 8	Daylight Saving Time begins
March 14	Pi Day (3.14)
March 20	Spring (Vernal) Equinox (9:46 a.m.)
April 1	April Fool's Day



## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings are held at 10:30-12:00 at the University from September to April, on the first Tuesday of the month except in September when it is on the second Tuesday and in January when there is no meeting.

The meetings are offered in hybrid fashion with an in-person meeting at the University Club and via ZOOM.

### November 3: In-person + Zoom

Speaker: Neil Besner

(Professor Emeritus, U of W)

Discusses his recent book *Fishing with Tardelli*

### December 2: In-person + Zoom

Speaker: Dan Bolton

(Tea expert & professional Santa Claus)

Any 1 4 T?

### January – No Meeting

### February 4 - In-person + Zoom

Speaker: Ankita Suni

(Pharmacist, Entrepreneur, Philanthropist)

Whole Person, Whole Society

### March 4 - In-person + Zoom

Glen Bergeron

(Faculty of Kinesiology and Applied Health)

Fall Prevention for Older Adults

### April 1 – In-person + Zoom

TBA



*“The grand charm of our winter consists in its unchangeability. Winter while it is winter [is not a shifting about and humbugging one [like those in the east where it] thaws and rains and sleets.”*

(Nor’Wester Newspaper, March 6, 1869)

## **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Nominations Committee has compiled the preliminary slate of candidates given below. It will be presented at the December 2 General Meeting and may be approved or otherwise by a show of hands. If there are still vacancies in December, a completed slate will be announced and voted on at the February Annual General Meeting. If more than one candidate is proposed for a position, an election will be held by secret mail ballot.

### PROPOSED SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR 2026-2027

(Candidates other than Pension Trustees will assume office following the February AGM)

#### Board of Directors

President	Nominee: Jim Christie
Vive-President	Nominee: James Hanley
Past President	Nominee: Judith Huebner
Secretary	Nominee: Debbie Machula
Treasurer	Nominee: Murray Wiegand
Member-at-Large #1 (Membership)	Nominee: Dawn Rittberg
Member-at-Large #2 (Communications)	Nominee: Vacant

There is one vacant position – Member-Large for

still the at-

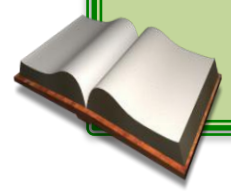
#### Other Positions

Pension Trustees on Trusteed Board (terms begin June 1)	Maryanne Walls (2024-2026) Nominee: Jeff Babb (2025-2027)
Newsletter Editor	Nominee: Bill Rannie
Scholarship and Bursary Delegate	Nominee: Ed Byard
United Way Delegate	Nominee: Linda Dietrick

Communications. If you are interested, or can suggest a name of someone who might be interested, please contact Judith Huebner.

We shall remember with joy and gratitude ...

August 28, 2025  
**Jane Barske**  
Library  
1969 - 2006



As a lasting tribute to UWRA members, a library book is plated in their memories.

## The President's Report (continued from p. 1)

... the shifting images of our flight path across vast oceans, seven continents, or the whole planet serves to stimulate my sense of awe and wonder in creation.

For me, awe and wonder have ever been the hallmarks of the academy. Nearly six decades ago, I began my undergraduate degree in history and theatre at Bishop's University, nestled in the hill country of the Eastern Townships of Quebec. And my universe expanded. When I consider the often stressed and harried students I meet at our own or other public universities, I worry that many students, burdened by financial considerations and balancing multiple responsibilities, including astronomical tuition and the need to hold several jobs just to keep afloat, will not experience the same luxury of learning that so many of our generation enjoyed.

I know times change, but I remain convinced that higher education, for its own sake, should be an investment of the public for all who qualify.

That is not the only thing that worries me about the current state of the U.

There is the ongoing abuse of free speech, and/or academic freedom. Free speech by all means, but that is predicated on informed and accurate data, not on TikTok algorithms.

Depth of thought? Absolutely. But in the academy our concern is how to think, to offer to our students strategies to navigate the labyrinth of the multiverse of ideas; not what to think.

Taken to a fortuitous degree, the Athenian school suggests that the best university consists of a log, with a professor at one end and a student at the other. Instead of the vast universe of the liberal arts and sciences, our universities are becoming market driven, transactional training centres. That can't be good: not for students, professors, nor society writ large.

There is still much good in the academy: excellent teachers and researchers among faculty, eager young minds – and some more ripened, of course.

But the future of the academy is dark to me, and fraught.

I realize my concerns are not everyone's. But I would cherish more opportunities to 'reason together'.

So what might your thoughts be on a kind of Seniors Symposium, say Wednesday mornings during the term in the University Club? The good people at Oxford offer three definitions of symposium/ Our late colleague, Professor Tom Faulkner, was keen on the third. So am I.

Symposium: 'a drinking party or convivial discussion as held in ancient Greece. ... Notable as the title of a work by Plato.'

What say we give it a shot? After all, Air Canada starts to serve at 11 am. I think I'll pop up to the Club on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

I'd love some company, and some solid chat. And maybe a drink.

Cheers all,

Jim



## RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA

The Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba (RTAM), now in its 36<sup>th</sup> year, was founded in 1989 to promote the economic, social, and professional needs of retired teachers. In 2024, RTAM members voted to expand their mission and vision to include the broader education community in Manitoba. A bold change, this expanded vision reflects the understanding that learning at all ages improves our communities, that educators and support staff share common professional

experiences, and have similar goals and needs in retirement. As RTAM begins walking this path, we are reaching out to other retirement associations in our sector to start conversations, find common interests and seek opportunities for partnerships.

RTAM, founded by teachers and working on behalf of the retired education community, offers opportunities for social connection and meaningful volunteer work through its programs and services. To promote physical health and well-being, RTAM sponsors a group benefits plan offering affordable extended health, dental, life and travel insurance to members. Through our webinar series we also connect members with current recommendations for healthy living. These webinars are delivered in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society, the Canadian Diabetes Association, the Canadian Red Cross, and other experts.

Social connection is key to well-being and to meet this need RTAM supports a range of activities, from our annual Summer Swing Golf Tournament in support of our Student Awards program, to our Winnipeg-based choir, virtual club de lecture (French book club), and local Chapter activities across Manitoba. As a vital part of connection, RTAM stays in touch with members through its quarterly Keep In Touch (KIT) magazine, available digitally and in print, a monthly e-newsletter, website news and events, and is developing a social media presence. Members are invited to submit articles and posts for these publications, and even to create new groups that support member interests.

To improve the economic outlook of our members, RTAM maintains a non-partisan advocacy approach, meeting annually with all provincial political parties to press for improvements to teacher pensions. In 2022, RTAM was recognized as the official voice of retired teachers in Manitoba through the unanimous passing of Bill C 208, which ensured a seat for an RTAM member on the Board of the Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund. As RTAM's membership grows, our advocacy work will expand to benefit its new members. In addition to political advocacy, RTAM offers regular webinars on financial planning, retirement planning seminars, and fraud-prevention advice through our partnership with CFEE and a growing member discount program with participating vendors.

By no means an exhaustive description of our activities, RTAM has a lot to offer prospective members and partners. We invite retirees from the University of Winnipeg to learn more about RTAM and welcome inquiries about individual memberships and partnerships by calling our office or visiting our website.

### RTAM Group Benefits

Offered in partnership with belairdirect, group benefits start at just \$83 per month for Extended Health Plan coverage and \$70 per month for basic dental. RTAM offers extended health, dental, travel and life insurance, designed as à la carte selections so members only pay for the benefits they need. RTAM's travel plan covers Sudden & Unforeseen medical emergencies, includes \$8,000 per insured, per trip in trip cancellation and has no limits for travel within Canada.

Scan to learn more!



#### Contact Us



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## FROM OUR MEMBERS' PENS

❖ **Bill Rannie** published a paper “ Monarch of the Plains: The Buffalo of the Eastern Prairies” in *Prairie History*, no. 17, Summer, 2025, pp. 5-20.

❖ **Jock Lehr** and **Bill Rannie** continued their *Diverse Landscapes of the Prairies* series for *Prairie History* with “The Great Saskatchewan Sandhills”, *Prairie History*, no. 17, Summer, 2025, pp. 42-43.

## FROM LINDA DIETRICK

Recently, I've been involved in some activities that might interest other UWRA members.

As a Master Gardener (a somewhat overblown designation for a volunteer gardening educator), I help organize our Manitoba group's educational events. The next one, on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, features Melissa Scouten presenting the therapeutic power of plants. It's on Zoom and free to all. Details and registration at [mgmanitoba.com](http://mgmanitoba.com).

Continuing with some of my career research, I am collaborating with colleagues at UBC and the Foundation for Weimar Classicism in Germany on a dual-language edition of four plays by Charlotte von Stein (1742-1827), a friend of Johann W. Goethe and Friedrich Schiller. The plays include a tragedy about the takeover of a female-ruled state, a comedy involving cross-dressing and mistaken identities, and a dramatization of a novel by Sophia Lee. The edition is expected to appear in 2026.



As you may already know, I also host garden tours abroad. In May 2025, we had a lovely time visiting gardens in mainly Devon and Cornwall, as well as the London area, with the Chelsea Flower Show as our final highlight. Our next tour, Great Gardens of Scotland, takes place May 6-17, 2026. Join us! Details at <https://www.worldwideecotours.com/great-gardens-of-scotland>.

### If you have

- ✦ photos (other than of your cat) which you would like to share
- ✦ received an award or honour
- ✦ accounts of an interesting thing you did or plan to do
- ✦ descriptions or pictures of places you have visited
- ✦ something you crossed off your bucket list
- ✦ publications or other academic endeavors
- ✦ anything else which might interest our members

please send them to me at [mewalker@mymts.net](mailto:mewalker@mymts.net) for inclusion in a future Newsletter.

# UPDATING AN ACADEMIC CAREER

## by David Cheal

In the last couple of years, I have been gradually trying to reclaim my old academic career as a researcher and author in Sociology. That is because after intentionally being completely out of the field for over ten years, I became aware three years ago that some people were still reading my work and citing it in their publications. I realized then that there must have been some long-term value to the research and publication I did after all. That thought was confirmed when I reviewed the citations reported by Google Scholar during a random six-month period, though not quite in the manner I had expected. This was further reinforced when I found out some of my ideas had been included in the curriculum for a sociology course in schools in England.

After these experiences, I felt a combination of having been neglectful of those who had been interested in my work, wasteful of opportunities not granted to everyone, and having failed to complete something I began a long time ago. I have therefore become re-engaged in a way that still contributes to the academic mission of the University of Winnipeg. Most academic publications identify the institutional origin of their author, and in this way they add to the academic reputation of the University every time they are read.

The first step I took on the path to reclaiming my academic career was to pull together everything I had done in a comprehensive and up-to-date curriculum vitae. I finally finished doing that in February of this year. I have used the publications list from my new cv to complete the details for my publications in the Google Scholar online data base. That site includes the ability to find out how many times a piece of work has been cited by other writers, and by whom. This is very useful information to have.

The academic and publishing industries have changed enormously in recent years, and I have been trying (struggling) to catch up with current realities. There has been a mass digitization of documents everywhere, together with the proliferation of websites of many kinds. These days it seems to be essential for authors of any kind to have a presence online as that is where most people look for their information. This means setting up profiles of yourself and your work on various websites.

A "Profile" might be a brief biography, a description of some feature of your work that might interest people, or just a list of publications or other achievements. Book publishers on both sides of the Atlantic recommend that an author's first online move should be to set up an "Amazon Author" page on the Amazon bookselling site. I have done that as well as setting up a Google Scholar Profile, and I am now working intermittently on several other profiles on websites considered particularly important for academic authors.

Recently, I have begun to take up writing sociological analyses again, and we will see where that goes. I get more tired now and have fewer of what I call "usable hours" in a day. And of course, I no longer have all the resources of a university behind me. Less is possible, therefore, but something more than nothing would be good.

If my summer activities had gone as planned, I would have spent a lot more time outdoors rather than on the computer doing this kind of academic work. However, since an important family event kept me in Manitoba, and health and wildfire smoke combined to keep me indoors, I have been determined to turn my enforced confinement into doing something else I find personally rewarding, and which may also be rewarding to others.

My wife thinks I should just be relaxing at my age, and some of my family think all this academic activity is distinctly weird. But then I saw a quote in one of the newspapers recently that said "University professors never really retire, even when they are retired."

David Cheal

## ANNUAL DONATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR UWRA MEMBERS



### UNITED WAY APPEAL

A message from **Linda Dietrick**, the UWRA United Way Campaign Delegate

By early November, those of you who are past United Way donors should receive by mail a letter of appeal from our president, James Christie, along with a pledge form. If you do not receive it, or if you'd like to start or resume donating, please let me know at [l.dietrick@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:l.dietrick@uwinnipeg.ca), and I'll make sure you get the mailing. Your donation using this pledge form will be counted as part of the UWRA cohort's contribution.

In recent years, retirees have been an absolutely crucial group of donors in the University of Winnipeg's United Way campaign. In 2024, we contributed 39.5% of the total amount raised, surpassing our previous record of 36.6%. The administration is well aware of this and shows its appreciation with ongoing support for the UWRA and its activities.

Yet it's not just for this reason that I urge you to be at least as generous as before. The many agencies of the of the United Way depend on us to help them meet so many needs in our community, especially the downtown community close to the University. This is one of the most direct ways we have to help people of all ages who live and work in the city. Our support matters.

The University of Winnipeg's United Way Campaign officially launches on Friday, November 7 at the UW Club from 4 to 6 pm. Admission is just \$5, all of which goes to the campaign. Come out and enjoy some tasty finger food, a few inspirational remarks, and the tight vocal stylings of Hammer and Nail.

### UWRA SCHOLARSHIP and BURSARIES APPEAL

A message from **Ed Byard**, UWRA Scholarship and Bursaries Representative

It is my pleasure to report on the UWRA Scholarship and Bursary funds established in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Currently, we award one \$3,000 scholarship and two \$1,000 bursaries each year to support continuing students who have completed at least 60 credit hours, and who have a record of volunteerism. Since their inception dates, 20 scholarships and 29 bursaries have been awarded.

As of Fall, 2025, the Association has contributed \$175,000 to the endowment of these awards, \$95,000 to the Scholarship and \$77,000 to the Bursaries. Their market value –ie the amount of the contributions plus what these monies have earned from investment by the UW Foundation--is in excess of \$260,000 allowing us to comfortably fund the scholarship and bursary with money left to be reinvested. In addition, our contributions are eligible to be matched through the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative, thus expanding our ability to support students. The UWRA should be proud of its support for these awards, but also for its generosity in supporting the annual campus-wide campaign.

In the fall, the UW Foundation conducts an internal fundraising campaign, making an appeal for donations from faculty, staff, and retirees. It is possible that as you read this you may have already received a letter from me asking for a contribution. The letter will indicate an option to contribute to the UWRA Scholarship and Bursaries, and I hope that you will consider doing so.



# University 55-Plus Programme

## WHAT IS 55-PLUS?

- Initiated almost 40 years ago, 55-Plus offers short, non-credit courses which promote life-long learning.
- Courses are drawn from diverse areas, including the arts, science, history, religion, current affairs and more.
- Courses are taught by current or retired UW or UM faculty or from the broader Manitoba community.
- Classes involve one 2-hour lecture per week for 6 weeks.
- There are no tests, assignments, or exams but lots of discussion and social interaction.
- The cost for each 6-week course is \$99.

## FALL OFFERINGS (November-December, 2025)

### CONCERTO: WHAT ABOUT THE SOLOIST?

Presented by **Dr. Dietrich Bartel**

Six Mondays November 3 to December 8, 1:30 – 3:30

History can be read in a myriad of ways, one of which is through the art produced by a community's artists. In the music of the western European tradition, the concerto can be viewed as one of these history texts. Who were some of its composers? What did they write? How does their music reflect their time? This course will look at the history of the concerto for orchestra and various instruments, and explore its story in six sessions.

### HOW RESEARCH AND MEDICINE CHANGED SINCE YOU ARRIVED

Presented by **Drs. Kent HayGlass, Bernie Chodirker, and Michael West**

Six Wednesdays, November 5 to December 10, 1:30 – 3:30

From the day your proud parents brought you home in a fluffy pink or blue blanket to today, an unprecedented revolution has taken place in our understanding of human biology, wellness/disease diagnoses and medical treatments. Join us as we share our expertise to provide insight into what changed since you arrived. We will examine the current state of the art and newly emerging knowledge, its benefits, challenges and concerns.

### PERESTROIKA 40 YEARS LATER: SUCCESSES & FAILURES OF GORBACHEV'S VISION & THE END OF THE COLD WAR

Presented by **Olexandr Shevchenko**

Six Thursdays, November 6 to December 11, 1:30 – 3:30

In 1985 it seems like the bi-polar world we lived in was consolidated once and for all. The Cold War was at one of its coldest moments, the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan was dragging on, both sides were placing more and more short and medium range nuclear missiles in Europe. Some "optimists" considered stashing up on lethal poisons to get it over with in case of a real outbreak of WWII.

Since 1982 aging leaders of the Soviet Union were competing with one another on their one-way race to the cemetery. The death of 73-year-old Konstantin Chernenko in March of 1985 was initially seen as rather insignificant. However, his replacement was not one of the old guards but an active and vigorous 54-year-old Mikhail Gorbachev. He unleashed the processes collectively known as perestroika which in 6 short years resulted in the changes that no one dared to imagine in 1985.

FOR REGISTRATION, GO TO <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca.55-plus/>

THE COURSES FOR THE COMING WINTER AND SPRING 2026 TERMS HAVE NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED IN TIME FOR THIS NEWSLETTER BUT WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE ON THE UNIVERSITY WEB-SITE.

# WINTER, 2025, ALMANAC

## Sunrise and Sunset Times, Day Lengths, and Average Temperatures in Winnipeg

Date	Sunrise (am)	Sunset (pm)	Day length (hr:min)	Ave. Max. (°C)	Ave. Min. (°C)	Average (°C)
November 8	7:30	4:53	9:23	2.6	-6.2	-1.8
November 15	7:41	4:44	9:03	0.2	-8.7	-4.3
November 22	7:52	4:36	8:44	-2.0	-11.0	-6.5
November 29	8:02	4:30	8:26	-4.2	-13.2	-8.7
December 6	8:11	4:27	8:16	-5.9	-15.0	-10.5
December 13	8:18	4:27	8:08	-7.3	-16.4	-11.9
December 20	8:23	4:29	8:05	-8.8	-18.0	-13.4
December 27	8:26	4:33	8:07	-9.6	-18.8	-14.2
January 3	8:26	4:40	8:14	-10.7	-20.1	-15.4
January 10	8:23	4:48	8:25	-11.9	-21.0	-16.5
January 17	8:18	4:58	8:40	-11.3	-21.2	-16.3
January 24	8:11	5:10	8:58	-11.0	-21.1	-16.1
January 31	8:02	5:21	9:19	-10.6	-20.9	-15.8
February 7	7:52	5:33	9:42	-9.8	-20.2	-15.0
February 14	7:40	5:45	10:06	-8.8	-19.2	-14.0
February 21	7:27	5:57	10:30	-7.8	-18.4	-13.1
February 28	7:13	6:09	10:56	-6.0	-16.6	-11.3
March 7	6:58	6:20	11:22	-3.9	-14.5	-9.2
Note: Times after March 8 are shifted one-hour later due to Daylight Saving Time						
March 14	7:43	7:32	11:48	-1.6	-12.1	-6.9
March 21	7:28	7:43	12:14	0.8	-9.5	-4.4
March 28	7:13	7:54	12:41	3.2	-7.3	-2.1

## Some Neologisms I Wish I'd Thought Of

Every year the Washington Post publishes a list of neologisms – newly coined words or combinations of words that are particularly clever. Below are a selection from this year's list and other sources.

**Pokemon** (n.) – a Rastafarian proctologist

**Flabbergasted** (adj.) – appalled over how much weight you have gained

**Coffee** (n.) - the person who is coughed upon

**Willy-nilly** (adj.) – Impotent

**Dopeler Effect** (n.) – the tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly

**Inoculatte** (v.) – to take coffee intravenously when you are running late

**Bozone** (n.) – the substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating

**Giraffiti** (n.) - vandalism spray-painted very high

**Cashtration** (n.) – the act of buying a house or car which renders the subject financially impotent

**Decafelon** (n.) - the gruelling event which requires surviving the day without coffee

**Straycation** (n.) – a holiday for polygamists

**Sellebrity** (n.) – a well-known person who is used to sell a product – e.g. George Clooney and Nespresso

**Trumpkin** (n.) – an especially frightening orange Halloween decoration

**Phonehenge** (n.) – a very old mobile phone

**Covidiot** (n.) – a person who refuses to take the steps necessary to prevent the spread of the virus

**Flabsolution** (n.) – self-forgiveness for failing to lose weight



## GREY CUP STUFF

(which you certainly couldn't make up)



**The "Tripper"** – In the 1957 game at Varsity Stadium in Toronto, a Hamilton Tiger Cat defensive back Ray "Bibbles" Bawel made CFL history before both a live crowd of 27,051 fans and the first coast-to-coast national audience to see the Grey Cup on TV. Late in the game, Bawel intercepted a Winnipeg Blue Bomber pass and was racing down the sidelines with a clear path to the end zone when he was tripped by a spectator standing on the sidelines (in those days, spectators were allowed to stand right on the sidelines and around the end zones). Pandemonium ensued and the rather inebriated spectator, a Toronto lawyer named David Humphrey, was fortunate the furious Bawel was restrained before he got to him. Humphrey later explained his action as the result of having been the lawyer for a man who had been convicted of murder and sentenced to death (he was hanged in 1956) and when by chance he met the foreman of the jury on the sidelines, instead of taking his anger out on him, he reacted irrationally when the opportunity arose as Bawel streaked by him. "It just seemed like a funny thing to do" he said later. The faux-pas had no effect on the game's outcome as Hamilton easily defeated the Blue Bombers 32-7 in the first of 5 Hamilton-Winnipeg Grey Cups in the next six years. Humphrey later became a Justice in the Superior Court of Ontario and claimed he sent Bawel a gold watch, engraved with "The Tripper", as an apology (Bawel denied receiving the watch). At his death in 2009, Humphrey was described as a brilliant defense lawyer, a thorough prosecutor, and a fair-minded judge, but his most memorable action was his Grey Cup indiscretion 52 years before.

**The Missing Football** – In 1956, the Grey Cup game was terminated early when they ran out of footballs! With minutes left in the game and Edmonton far ahead of Montreal, Jackie Parker scored another touchdown for Edmonton. He was swarmed by fans in the end zone and in the pandemonium, one of them (a fellow named Doug Bower) grabbed the football and disappeared into the crowd. The problem was that this was the only football they had left and thus they had no ball to kick the extra point with, let alone play the rest of the game. In a fine moment combining sportsmanship and practicality, a huddle of players from both teams elected to call off the rest of the game and Edmonton won 50-27. The actual ball was returned to the league decades later and in 2024 it was presented to Jackie Parker Jr. It is now in the CFL Hall of Fame.

**The Stolen Grey Cup** – The Grey Cup trophy was commissioned in 1909 by Governor-General Earl Grey for the Dominion Football Championship. Since then, it has been forgotten and left behind in a hotel (1964) and a bar (1997), damaged in a fire which destroyed the Toronto Argonaut Rowing Club (1947), broken during post-game celebrations (1987, 1993, 2012), and stolen twice (in 1967 and 1969). The first theft was a prank and the trophy was missing for only 3 days. However the second theft in December 1969 was actually a kidnapping - the trophy was stolen from the Ottawa Roughriders' clubhouse at Lansdowne Park and a ransom demand was received (the thieves can't have been too bright, having targeted a shoestring, monetarily challenged operation like the CFL). Although the league regretted the loss of such a sentimental part of Canadian history, it refused to pay (and probably couldn't afford to). Three months later, an anonymous tip led the police to a pay phone which contained a note with a key to a locker in the Royal York Hotel where the trophy was recovered. The league finally created several replicas for use in public occasions other than the game itself.

**A Horse in a Hotel?** – The festivities during the week before the Grey Cup, often called the 'Grand National Drunk', began in 1948, the year that turned a mere football game into an excuse for a national party. In that year, Calgary was playing Ottawa and trainloads of Calgary fans descended on Toronto, the host city, with pancake breakfasts in the streets, fiddling, square dancing, chuckwagons, horses, and cowboy hats all over the place, and much beer and spirits consumed. Plus the making of a legend - that a horse was ridden into the lobby of the Royal York hotel after Calgary's win, reputedly with Calgary alderman and future mayor Don Mackay in the stirrups. As with most legends, this might or might not have actually happened. Numerous people other than Mackay have claimed to have ridden the horse, many were sure it happened because a friend insisted someone they knew had seen it, it took two days for Toronto newspapers to report it, and a musician claimed to have been playing his accordion in the lobby as the horse appeared. And there is no picture! So the veracity of the event is uncertain but the myth is too good to dismiss and it remains central to Grey Cup lore. And it has been replicated many times since (but only with permission of the hotel).

**The Infamous “Sleeper” Play** – The Calgary Stampeders’ win in the 1948 Grey Cup marked the only year in which a team has gone through the entire season undefeated. Calgary defeated Ottawa 12-7 partly on the strength of a “sleeper play”. At the end of the previous play, Norm Hill of the Stampeders hid himself by lying down on the sidelines on the other side of the field just inside the sideline! He went unnoticed by the Ottawa defence and was completely uncovered. When the Calgary quarterback threw a wobbly pass to him, he got up and ran into the end zone. Another “sleeper play” to Bobby Simpson in the late 50’s helped Ottawa defeat Toronto in the playoffs and the league then, unfortunately to my mind, outlawed the play.

**The “Pee Bowl”** – This is a purely personal entry - it hasn’t been given this ‘official’ designation by anyone but me and was incidental to the actual game but it was a part of a Grey Cup that brings a smile to my face whenever I think about it so you’ll have to indulge me. In 1964, I was in the Queen’s University football band in the Grey Cup parade. In those days, the parade was a very big deal, nationally televised, with elaborate entries from across the country. As the parade was forming up, we were adjacent to the BC Lions’ contingent, the centerpiece of which was a very very large male lion lounging lazily on its side in a cage which had only open bars around it. As we waited for the parade to start, suddenly there were screams coming from the vicinity of the lion cage so we ran down, terrified by what might have happened, but we could never have guessed at what we found – Sandy, our head Majorette, was standing absolutely drenched in lion pee which (as she described it) had erupted like a fire hose as she stood just outside the bars! Her heavy woolen highland dress uniform was sodden and dripping with the stuff. Needless to say, she couldn’t lead the band in the parade and when she eventually calmed down, we sent her in a taxi back to the hotel where she spent a very long time in a very hot shower. 😊😊

**The Joe Kapp-Angelo Mosca Fight of the Aged** – Old animosities die hard. In the 1963 Grey Cup, Hamilton Tiger Cat Angelo Mosca delivered an outrageous late hit on BC Lions star Willie ‘The Wisp’ Fleming. Mosca, who doubled as a professional wrestler ‘King Kong’, was one of the meanest, most hated, players of his generation (and perhaps ever). Fleming was already out of bounds and down when Mosca’s 270 lbs came flying in on him, delivering a suspected concussion which finished him for the rest of the game. Without Fleming, the Lions couldn’t recover and lost 21-10 before their hometown fans. Flash forward 48 years (!) to 2011 when in the week leading up to the Grey Cup game, the CFL Alumni Association sponsored a charity luncheon hosted by comedian Ron James to bring attention to the problem of post-concussion syndrome in athletes. and featuring none other than 73-year-old Joe Kapp, the Lions quarterback in 1963 and 74-year-old Mosca. At the start of the question-and-answer session, Kapp attempted to give Mosca a bouquet of flowers as a peace offering but Mosca shoved them away with an expletive. Kapp then swatted Mosca with the bouquet and Mosca followed by hitting Kapp in the head with his cane. Kapp retaliated with a right to Mosca’s jaw and a left that knocked him over. As shocking as this may sound, the video of the incident has been replayed hundreds of times and the sight of two large but decrepit septuagenarians whaling each other on live TV over an incident almost a half a century old has become one of the most amusing and entertaining Grey Cup happenings of all time.



**“Weather Bowls”** – Who could possibly believe that weather in November might have had a role in Grey Cups? Well, preposterous as it may seem, it certainly has happened and nearly all possible weather elements (other than extreme heat!) have played their part.

**Mud Bowl** – 1950 – A combination of events led to the infamous “Mud Bowl”. A strong late November storm dumped much snow on the field at Varsity Stadium in Toronto in the days before the game. Then heavy equipment was called in to clear the field and in doing so, the turf, which was already in bad shape, was badly torn up. Then on the morning of the game, the weather turned much warmer, the snow changed to steady rain, and the field became a sodden mixture of water and mud, called a “pig’s wallow” by one writer. Toronto beat Winnipeg 13-0 in a “lackluster” affair.



**Fog Bowl** – 1962 - In this most famous bowl game, fog began drifting from Lake Ontario over Toronto’s Lakeside Exhibition Stadium in the morning of the game and by noon, a decision had to be made whether to hold the game. Contributing to the decision was the fact that for the first time it was being shown on a national US TV network (ABC). It was decided to proceed with the game and for the first quarter or so, things weren’t too bad. Conditions on the field were tolerable although fans



couldn't see the play very well. As the game progressed, however, the fog deepened and soon fans and the TV audience couldn't see much at all and the players were pretty well restricted to running plays. Eventually the game was suspended with 9:29 minutes to play, to be completed the next day. That day turned out to be sunny with perfect weather but neither team scored for the meager crowd who showed up. Fans from Winnipeg and elsewhere who had to be home for work on Monday were unable to attend and were particularly disappointed but the Bombers won, 28-27, over Hamilton.

**Wind Bowl** – 1965 – The game was played with winds of 50-70 kph blowing off Lake Ontario onto the adjacent Exhibition Stadium in Toronto. All points were scored with the wind, only 17 passes were attempted, and on some occasions, kicks hung in the air and if they were high enough, they were even blown back behind the kicker's position! Hamilton won the game 22-16 over Winnipeg. On a personal note, I was in the Queen's University football marching band for the Grey Cup parade on the morning of the game. The parade formed up on an E-W street just south of Bloor which was somewhat protected from the wind. However, when we moved off and turned onto Yonge St., we faced the full fury of winds funneling northward off the lake. It was all any of us could do to play but the sousaphone players, with their instruments' very large bells acting like giant sails, had to simply hang on for dear life and forget about playing altogether.

**Swamp Bowl** – 1971 – The 59<sup>th</sup> Grey Cup in Vancouver's Empire Stadium was played after two days of rain and in a steady downpour throughout the actual game. It has come to be known as the "Swamp Bowl". Despite being the first Cup played on artificial turf, the field hadn't been crowned properly and was badly drained, allowing sheets of water to accumulate on the surface. The treacherous soggy footing played a part in the most critical and memorable play when very late in the game, Toronto Argonaut star running back Leon McQuay slipped, fell, and fumbled the ball on the Calgary 11-yard line. Calgary recovered, preventing an almost certain Toronto touchdown, allowing them to survive with a 14-11 victory over the heavily favoured Argos.

**Ice Bowl** – 1977 – A blizzard of wet snow descended on Montreal two days before the game. Stadium crews salted the field to melt the snow but then temperatures plunged, turning the field into a skating rink. Just before game time, many Montreal players discovered that staples in the bottom of their sneakers gave them a bit of traction and a massive competitive advantage over Edmonton who were wearing useless standard cleats. Montreal won the game 41-6.

**Rain Bowl** – 1982 - The game between Toronto and Edmonton was played at Exhibition Stadium in Toronto in a driving rainstorm with a fierce wind off Lake Ontario. Many of the 55,000 spectators sought refuge at the concessions under the stands and missed most of the game. The abysmal conditions provided the crucial argument in favour of the construction of the Skydome (now the Rogers Centre) which opened 7 years later. Edmonton won the game 32-16.

**Frigid Bowl** – 1991 – Played before 52,000 fans at the old Winnipeg Stadium, the game between Toronto and Calgary began under bright sun with little wind but a temperature of -17°C. That was as good as it got. By half-time, the wind chill was a bone-numbing -35°C. Despite this, the Winnipeg fans who had dressed for the conditions were treated to an entertaining game highlighted by a 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 87-yard kickoff return for a touchdown by 'Rocket' Ismail which sealed a 36-21 victory for Toronto.

**Snow Bowl** – 1996 – The game at Ivor Wynne Stadium in Hamilton began with heavy snow, strong winds, and a temperature of -10°C. Tractors removed the snow prior to the game and again at half-time but these were futile efforts against the continuing snow which obscured lines on the field and made playing very difficult. Despite the appalling conditions, the game was entertaining, ending 43-37 for Toronto over Edmonton.



- ✦ In 1965, Gerry James of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers became the first (and undoubtedly the last) player to play in both the Grey Cup and Stanley Cup finals in the same season when he played for the Blue Bombers in the Grey Cup against Hamilton and then for the Maple Leafs in the Stanley Cup 6 months later when they lost to the Canadiens.
- ✦ Lionel Conacher won both Cups as a player in different seasons- the Grey Cup as a Toronto Argonaut in 1921 and Stanley Cups as a Chicago Black Hawk and Montreal Maroon in 1934 and 1935.
- ✦ Wayne Gretzky has his name on both the Grey and Stanley Cups - as an Edmonton Oilers several times of course but also as a part-owner of the Toronto Argonauts in 1991 (with his co-owners John Candy and Bruce McNall).
- ✦ Eleven cities have hosted the game. The first western host was Vancouver in 1955. In the 70 years since (including this year), western cities have played host to 35 games. The four most-attended games have been at the Olympic Stadium in Montreal. The record was 68,318 in 1977.



- From 1950 onward, the median date for the game has been November 26 and the latest was December 12, 2021. Wisely, the league has been moving the dates earlier in hopes of better weather.

GREY CUP HOST CITIES and GAME DATES					
CITY	GAMES	FIRST	LAST	DATES (after 1950)	No.
Toronto	48	1909	2016	Nov. 15, 16	4
Vancouver	16	1955	2024	Nov. 17, 18	2
Hamilton	12	1910	2023	Nov. 19, 20	4
Ottawa	9	1925	2017	Nov. 21, 22	3
Montreal	8	1931	2008	Nov. 23, 24	12
Edmonton	5	1984	2018	Nov. 25, 26	15
Calgary	5	1975	2019	Nov. 27, 28	19
Winnipeg	4	1991	2015	Nov. 29, 30	12
Regina	4	1995	2022	Dec. 1, 2	4
Kingston	1	1922	1922	Dec. 3	1
Sarnia	1	1933	1933	Dec. 12	1

- The last time Winnipeg hosted a Grey Cup game was November 29, 2015, at Investors Group Field (as Princess Auto Stadium was then known) which had opened two years earlier. The game was sold out but attendance was only 36,634, the second lowest for a Grey Cup game since 1975. Game-time temperature was -5°C but with a 15 kph wind, the wind chill was -10°C (but see 'Frigid Bowl' above for much worse conditions in Winnipeg).
- Winnipeg is hosting this year's game on November 16** which will tie for the second earliest (next year in Calgary on November 15 will be the earliest). Will Winnipeg offer a repeat of the coldest game of all time in 1991 or surprise us with a balmy, sunny, calm perfect day? Winnipeg's November weather is notoriously fickle but average values for November 16 below might serve as guidelines.

**AVERAGE WEATHER CONDITIONS IN WINNIPEG ON NOVEMBER 16**

Maximum Temperature: **-0.1°C** Minimum Temperature: **-9.0°C**

Wind Speed: **18 kph** Wind Chill: **-20°C** (assuming -9.0°C and 18 kph)

- The Baltimore Stallions won the Grey Cup in 1995 during the CFL's short-lived experimental expansion into the US which means that an American team has won the Grey Cup more recently than a Canadian team has won the Stanley Cup (the last of the latter was the Montreal Canadiens in 1993).
- In 2008, the Grey Cup was sent to Kandahar Air Field in Afghanistan where it was passed around on Canada Day by Canadian military personnel stationed there.
- Politicians and the Cup** – A number of Grey Cup players have gone on to political careers at different levels and for varying durations. The following are the ones I could find. Foremost would be **Don Getty**, one of the most successful Canadian quarterbacks, who won two Cups with Edmonton (1955, 1956) and went on to serve two terms as Premier of Alberta. **Normie Kwong** won 4 Cups, with Calgary (1948) and Edmonton (1954, 1955, 1956), and was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta. **Larry Smith**, a winner with the Alouettes in 1974 and 1977, served as Commissioner of the league, and became a Liberal Senator. **Lionel Conacher** won with the Argos in 1921 and became an MPP and MLA in Ontario; **Gene Makowski** of the Saskatchewan Roughriders played in 4 Cups, won in 2007, and became a Saskatchewan MLA; **Neil Lumsden** won three Cups (1980, 81, 82) with Edmonton and another as GM with Hamilton before becoming an MLA and Minister of Sport in Ontario; **George Springate** won with the Alouettes in 1970 and became a member of the Quebec National Assembly; **Willard Reeves** won the Cup with Winnipeg in 1984, became Deputy Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party in 2023, and Leader in 2025; **JC Watts**, quarterback of the Ottawa Rough Riders, was MVP in the 1981 Cup (but lost) and then served multiple terms for Oklahoma in the US House of Representatives; **Emery Barnes** won in 1964 with the BC Lions and became an MLA in BC. **Bill Smith** won in 1956 with Edmonton and then became Mayor of Edmonton. A number of players became city councilors (in bracketed cities). **Chris Czarka** of Saskatchewan Roughriders won in 2007 (in Regina), **Sandy Annunziata** won in 2004 with Toronto and 2005 with Edmonton (in Fort Erie); **Vince Scott**, a two-time winner with Hamilton in 1953 and 1957 with four other appearances (in Hamilton); **Dave Sprague**, a winner in 1932 and 1940 with Ottawa Rough Riders (in Ottawa); and **Larry Watrin** a winner with the Alouettes in 1974 and 1977 (in Okotoks, Alberta).



## “Campus Novels”



Beginning in May 2018, these Newsletters have featured short reviews of “Campus Novels”, the genre of novels set in a university or college, which began to appear in the early 1950s. The subject matters include campus politics, collegial romances and sexual peccadillos, academic misbehaviours, tensions surrounding tenure, even murders; from the 1980s onward, such contemporary matters as gender inequities and sexual harassment have become increasingly common. Given universities’ eccentricities, absurdities, pettiness, egos, pomposities, and idiosyncrasies, it’s not surprising that comedy and satire are prominent. The great majority involve English or Writing Departments; a few other disciplines such as Sociology and Anthropology make occasional, often tangential, appearances, but the Sciences are almost nowhere to be found.

The varied British, American, and occasional Canadian settings depict real differences in national institutional cultures and practices. The earlier books, particularly those set in Britain, portray academic environments that are quaint and eccentric, certainly very different from current ones. For several decades, the main characters were almost all men but women became increasingly prominent in the 1980s. The books also reflect the mores of their times, with all the misogyny, homophobia, socio-politics, political incorrectness etc. that mark the past 60+ years. In recent decades, it seems like the standard satirical or serious academic plots have been mined out, largely replaced by murder mysteries set (sometimes loosely) on campus.

If you’ve read a ‘Campus Novel’, send a paragraph or two describing it and why you liked (or disliked) it.

### Cumulative List with the Newsletter in which they appeared

1. *Lucky Jim* – Kingsley Amis – Summer, 2018 - (Winnipeg Public Library)
2. *Changing Places* - David Lodge – Summer, 2018 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
3. *Small World* – David Lodge – Summer, 2018 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
4. *The Rebel Angels* – Robertson Davies – Fall, 2018 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
5. *A New Life* – Bernard Malamud – Fall, 2018 – (UW Library, PS 3563.A4N4 1962)
6. *Nice Work* – David Lodge – Winter, 2018 – (part of Lodge Trilogy, Winnipeg Public Library)
7. *The Groves of Academe* – Mary McCarthy – Winter, 2018 (UW Library)
8. *The Masters* – C. P. Snow – Winter, 2018 (UW library – PN 6037.N58M3 1951)
9. *Dear Committee Members* - Julie Schumacher – Winter, 2018 (Winnipeg Public Library)
10. *Death in a Tenured Position* – Amanda Cross – Spring, 2019 – (UW PS3558 E4526D4 1981)
11. *Sticks and Stones* – Janice MacDonald – Spring, 2019 – (UW PS 8575 A1633S7 2001)
12. *Death Without Tenure* – Joanne Dobson – Spring, 2019 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
13. *Purely Academic* – David Stephens – Summer, 2019 – Winnipeg Public Library
14. *Moo* – Jane Smiley – Fall, 2019 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
15. *The Shakespeare Requirement* – Julie Schumacher – Fall, 2019 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
16. *Straight Man* – Richard Russo – Winter, 2019 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
17. *A Large Harmonium* – Sue Sorensen – Winter, 2019 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
18. *The Devil and Webster* – Jean Hanff Korelitz – Spring, 2020 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
19. *The History Man* - Malcolm Bradbury – Spring, 2020 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
20. *Gaudy Night* – Dorothy L. Sayers – Summer, 2020 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
21. *The Secret History* – Donna Tartt – Summer, 2020 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
22. *Stoner* – John Williams – Fall, 2020 – Winnipeg Public Library)
23. *The Tenured Professor* – John Kenneth Galbraith – Fall, 2020 – (Kindle)
24. *The Human Stain* – Phillip Roth – Winter, 2020 – (Kindle)
25. *The Lecturer’s Tale* – James Hynes – Winter, 2020 – (Kindle)
26. *Pnin* - Vladimir Nabokov – Spring, 2021 – (Kindle)
27. *A Killing Spring* – Gail Bowen – Fall, 2021 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
28. *Burying Ariel* – Gail Bowen – Fall, 2021 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
29. *The Night the Gods Smiled* – Eric Wright – Winter, 2021 – (Kindle, Amazon)
30. *Disorientation* – Elaine Hsieh Chou – Summer, 2022 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
31. *Vladimir* – Julia May Jonas – Summer, 2022 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
32. *The Mark Twain Murders* – Edith Skom – Summer, 2022
33. *Matricide at St. Martha’s* – Ruth Dudley Edwards - Fall, 2022
34. *The Madness of Crowds* – Louise Penny - Winter, 2022 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
35. *Disorientation* – Elaine Hsieh Chou, Spring 2022 (reviewed in Time Magazine)

36. *The Memorial Hall Murder* – Jane Langton, Spring, 2022
37. *All Souls* – Javier Marias, Summer, 2023 (reviewed by Neil Besner)
38. *Simon Said* – Sarah R. Shaber, Summer, 2023 (reviewed by Dan Stone)
39. *The Long Lost Jules* – Jane Elizabeth Hughes, Summer, 2023 – (reviewed by Dan Stone)
40. *The Marriage Plot* – Jeffrey Eugenides, Fall, 2023 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
41. *The Theory of Death* – Faye Kellerman, Fall, 2023 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
42. *The Late Scholar* – Jill Paton Walsh, Winter, 2023 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
43. *Campusland* – Scott Johnson, Spring, 2024 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
44. *Thinks...* – David Lodge, Summer, 2024 – (Winnipeg Public Library)
45. *Another Margaret* – Janice MacDonald, Fall, 2024 (Winnipeg Public Library)
46. *The Seventh Function of Language* – Laurent Binet, Fall, 2024 (Winnipeg Public Library)
47. *The Wrap* – Mark Sampson, Winter, 2024 (Winnipeg Public Library)
48. *The Truants* – Kate Weinberg, Spring, 2025 (Winnipeg Public Library)
49. *Talent* – Juliet Lapodos, Summer, 2025 (Winnipeg Public Library)
50. *How I Won a Nobel Prize* – Julius Taranto, Fall, 2025 (Winnipeg Public Library)
51. *The Professor* – Lauren Nossett, Winter, 2025 (Winnipeg Public Library)

**THE PROFESSOR** by Lauren Nossett (2023) involves an apparent suicide by a talented German language student (Ethan Haddock) who is found dead in his apartment, his Professor Dr. Verena Sobek, a police detective Marlitt Kaplan who has



been suspended for somewhat obscure inappropriate actions during a previous investigation, and a miscellany of other characters. Professor Sobek is being investigated as a possible cause of the suicide, the result of a suspected romantic affair with Ethan that has gone wrong. This has resulted in a possible “Title IX” violation which prohibits sex-based discrimination. Marlitt’s mother is a colleague of Sobek in the German Languages Department of the University of Georgia and she pressures Marlitt to use her detective experience to demonstrate Sobek’s innocence. The trouble is that her suspension prevents Marlitt from having any contact with her former colleagues or the use of the tools normally available to police (search warrants, access to records, etc.). Despite her misgivings, Marlitt agrees to help her mother, and of course Verena who is a struggling junior faculty member facing a tenure decision and is understandably a basket case over it all. She has been found guilty in the court of public opinion, has been suspended, and is receiving quite vicious hate mail. To overcome the limitations of her status, Marlitt poses as a student and manages to rent the room freed up by Ethan’s death, thereby giving her to the opportunity to interact surreptitiously with Ethan’s roommates, to learn more about his character to answer the implicit question of whether Ethan had either committed suicide or had been murdered, and to determine whether Ethan and Verena had in fact been having an affair.

The book, then, has all the ingredients for an excellent ‘campus novel’. And by and large, it’s a pretty good read but certainly not flawless. It has a tendency to become unnecessarily complicated early on, a tendency which becomes particularly annoying in the last quarter or so when numerous possible scenarios arise quickly and then fade just as fast. Some of the confusion arises because it is actually a sequel to the author’s first novel in which, I gather, the circumstances which led to Marlitt’s suspension and the tensions with her former colleagues occur. It took awhile for this to become clear. None of these things really interfered with the story but they were frequent enough that I kept wondering if I had missed some important things. For the most part, they are never really explained so this is only a partly stand-alone book. Then there were the chapter headings. The story is narrated in chapters each by the different characters but the chapters didn’t clearly identify the speaker, except by ambiguous words like HER and HIM or dates and times. Most of the other chapters were headed by dates and times and were narrated by Marlitt but at times there seemed to be more than one HIM. It all took some getting used to and seemed rather pointless.

On balance, I would agree with the bulk of most reviews that put the book just on the positive side of average.