Year China Discovered America, was rightly destroyed in the pages of *The Economist* – little more than mention. As to the impossible claims by Samuel Bawlf that Drake's *Golden Hind* made a surfer's tour of the Northwest Coast in 44 days and passed through then-deadly Seymour Narrows and the tide rips off Ten Mile Point without two large Yamaha outboard motors strapped on her transom, he has left it to the noted authority, Edward Von der Porten, to answer the indemonstrable claims. Twigg prints the obituary on this case – a damning indictment of Bawlf's scholarship and a comment on the culpable public who tend to think with their hearts rather than their heads.

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Don Kerr. *A Book in Every Hand: Public Libraries in Saskatchewan*. Regina: Coteau Books, 2005. 279 pp.; \$19.95. ISBN 1550503138.

Prolific Saskatoon poet, playwright, short-story writer, and scholar, Don Kerr, has written a history of Saskatchewan's "one province" public-library system to coincide with the province's centennial celebrations. Fittingly celebratory in its tone, this book is a partly personal and partly historical narrative. Kerr's central theme is to outline how one of the reportedly weakest library services in Canada came to be, in his words, one of the best.

In 1935, more than 80% of Saskatchewan was without library service, and the province ranked 43rd of 59 in comparison to other provinces and American states in regard to the quality of library service. But by 1975, Kerr reports that Saskatchewan had the best library system in Canada. Kerr outlines the development of library services in the province, beginning with the Mechanics' and Literary Institute of the territorial government in the 1890s, the Public Libraries Act of 1906, the emergence of a Travelling Library in 1914, and the Open Shelf Library initiative of 1922.

Kerr notes that the concept of a regional library system was part of Saskatchewan's co-operative tradition and that the greatest changes and developments with regards to the province's libraries came with the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF)

government after the Depression. *A Book in Every Hand* discusses the development of regional library services throughout the province, including the North Central (later Wapiti), Wheatland, Southeast, Parkland, Chinook, Lakeland, Palliser, and Northern districts, as well as library development in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Kerr also discusses the history of the Saskatchewan Library Association, the Saskatchewan Library Trustees Association, and the development of Aboriginal libraries in the province after 1967. With a significant (and ever growing) Aboriginal population in the province, Kerr's decision to highlight the specific characteristics and struggles faced by First Nations in Saskatchewan to lobby and establish libraries in their communities is commendable.

A Book in Every Hand presents three central conclusions. First, Kerr highlights the strength and initiative of small, rural communities in promoting and establishing library services – it was here, says Kerr, where the concept of regional libraries was born. Localized efforts are highlighted throughout the book. Second, Kerr demonstrates that library history in Saskatchewan is really about personal stories; the personal observations and accomplishments of individual trustees, librarians, and patrons are highlighted throughout the text and are at the very heart of the larger story. Libraries in Saskatchewan have helped to stitch the far-flung populace of the province together. Kerr's final observation and conclusion is that, although the provincial government was once the great-creator of library services, since the mid-1980s the Saskatchewan government has consistently underfunded the system. The strength of the provincial library system today, therefore, owes much to the creativity and persistence of the people of Saskatchewan.

The text is well illustrated with black-and-white and colour photographs, as well as tables, and includes endnotes and a detailed index. *A Book in Every Hand* should be of interest to library and book historians throughout Canada.

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