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978-0-521-57912-4 - Nationalism and Literature: The Politics of Culture in Canada and the United States

Sarah M. Corse

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Sarah Corse's analysis of nearly two hundred American and Canadian novels offers a new theory of national literatures. Demonstrating that national canon formation occurs in tandem with nation-building, and that canonical novels play a symbolic role in this, Sarah Corse accounts for cross-national literary differences, addresses issues of mediation and representation in theories of "reflection," and illuminates the historically constructed nature of the relationship between literature and the nation-state. In this way, she also shows that there is no "natural" pattern of national literary difference across literary types, and, specifically, that high-culture national literatures are selected to appear different from other novels. By contrast, popular-culture bestsellers are best understood as mass market commodities for the largest and least differentiated audience.

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# Nationalism and literature

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*The politics of culture in Canada and the  
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Sarah M. Corse

*University of Virginia*



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This book is dedicated to  
the loving memory of my godfather  
Jan K. Sterling  
and to my parents  
Nathalie Bird Corse and John Murray Corse II

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

---

<i>List of tables</i>	page x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
1 Introduction: cultural fields and literary use	1
2 Nation-building and the historical timing of a national literature in the United States	18
3 Nation-building and the historical timing of a national literature in Canada	34
4 The canonical novels: the politics of cultural nationalism	63
5 The literary prize winners: revision and renewal	97
6 The bestsellers: the economics of publishing and the convergence of popular taste	129
7 Literary meaning and cultural use	155
<i>Appendix A: The canonical novels</i>	171
<i>Appendix B: The literary prize winners (1978–1987)</i>	172
<i>Appendix C: The bestsellers (1978–1987)</i>	174
<i>Appendix D: Coding sheet</i>	178
<i>Appendix E: Generic categories</i>	182
<i>References</i>	184
<i>Index</i>	204

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Tables

---

4.1	Familial patterns in the canonical novels	<i>page</i> 80
4.2	Type of central conflict in the canonical novels	93
5.1	Nationality of protagonists in the prize winners	111
5.2	Familial patterns in the prize winners	116
5.3	Generic distribution in the prize winners	118
5.4	Type of central conflict in the prize winners	121
6.1	Nationality of authors and protagonists in the bestsellers	135
6.2	Gender of protagonists and authors in the bestsellers	138
6.3	Familial patterns in the bestsellers	141
6.4	Type of central conflict in the bestsellers	144



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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*xii*      Acknowledgments

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