

COVER

looking for a way out of the quagmire of critical gobbledegook produced by the postmodern generation and once asserts, "So there is new activity." Gairdner again hunting for things general and universal." Gairdner things physical, moral legal cultural biological or linguistic, we do not live in a foundationalist or relativist world in which reality and meaning or what is true and false are simply made up as we go along and according to personal perceptions," Gairdner concludes. "On the contrary, we live in a world in which every serious field of human thought and activity is permeated by fundamentalists of one kind or another, by absolutes, constants and universals, as the case may be, of nature and human nature."

A volume for all thoughtful individuals, particularly judges and professors, *Jerry Todd-Jenkins*



The Tyranny of Nice
Kathy Shaidle and Pete Vere
The Inferno Publishing
\$9.95

WHEN I was working as a reporter in Toronto in the 1980s, a dear friend, who has since died, repeatedly warned me of the dangers of Canada's Human Rights Commissions. As a life-long rights activist and social worker, she had first hand experience with HRCs which she came to regard as totalitarian, brutal and unjust. But few would listen to her; they thought she was over-reacting because, after all, this was Canada where such things were impossible.

Or so I thought. Over the past couple of years her warnings have haunted me as stories of various HRC abuses finally found their way into the mainstream media, albeit in the smallest ways, likely because those prosecuted were unknown Canadians of small means.

Then came the case of Ezra Levant, former publisher of the Western Standard, who found himself in the crosshairs of an Alberta HRC complaint for publishing the notorious Mohammed cartoons. That prosecution was followed soon after by a complaint against Mark Steyn and Maclean's magazine for publishing an excerpt of his New York Times best-seller *America Alone*.

That's when the story hit the big time in Canada and even south of the border, and that's also when the routine thug-gery of the HRCs, both provincial and federal, began to be exposed for what they have been all along — a kangaroo court where the truth is no defense and where an accused is afforded no legal protection while the accuser's legal fees are paid for by the government, read, the taxpayer.

In Canada!

Not only was my friend right to be worried, it's also true that during those years of systematic abuse, she was repeatedly humiliated by all the media outlets she tried to get interested in what she'd seen first hand. And she was no crank! Now her experience has been posthumously vindicated in *The Tyranny of Nice*, a frightening little volume by Kathy Shaidle and Pete Vere in which the gross abuses of HRCs across Canada are fully outlined, from the complaints against Levant and Steyn to the outrageous persecution of model citizens such as Steve Boissin, Father Alphonse deValik and Mark and Connie Fournier, to name but a few—all prosecuted for the simple reason that someone was offended by their behaviour, its legality being no defense.

And for "offending" the sensibilities of one of the protected minority groups, these individuals have been financially ruined, their reputations trashed, and their sleep destroyed by complaints (the name and nature of which they weren't allowed to know for months) by human rights tribunals which boast a 100% conviction rate for so-called "hate crimes" and



Magic at the Museum
Jane Heinrichs
McNally Robinson
Publishers
£10.95
CANADA POST
Heinrichs is a cartoonist Jane Heinrichs is a young woman of many talents.

Currently studying art in London, the Manitoba native has just produced a delightful children's book now available at Somerset House in London.

It's the story of a little girl named Anne who is celebrating her birthday with a visit to a small museum. Here her mother gives her a necklace made of coral which thrills her and which comes with a promise of spiritual protection. She is also keen to have a slice of her birthday cake. Not until noon, says her mother who wants to spend time viewing the pictures. So Anne, who's not terribly interested in the museum's art, falls asleep on a gallery bench and into dreaming. Which is when the magic begins as angels from the various masterpieces that line the gallery walls begin to leave the constraints of their canvases and take flight. This is a wonderful story, enchantingly told with pastel illustrations in which Heinrichs' cartoon versions of works by such great masters as Manet, Rubens, Cezanne, Albrecht Dürer, Degas and Monet are beautifully rendered. An inspirational work for an inspirational season, and the perfect Christmas gift for any child. PA



The Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore
Ron Brown
Dundurn Publishing
£15

ACROSS Canada, as well as most of North America, rail stations have been torn down and rails ripped up, all in the name of progress. But these places are rich in architecture, tradition and memory as author Ron Brown points out in this tribute to rail travel history. In towns and villages all across Canada the rail station was the hub and nerve centre of these settlements from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century when immigrants had their luggage fumigated and were then sent by rail to the West. Once there, they were happy to get a hat and a shovel and a plot of land, all courtesy the federal minister of immigration, Clifford Sifton.

From Archie Bellamy in Temagami to Winnie the Pooh in Winnipeg, rail stations figured prominently in the national soul of the country. Brimming with archival images and colour photographs, this book celebrates the survival of that heritage. Three whistle stops for Brown. JJJ

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