BUILDING CANADIAN LITERARY CULTURE
J. V. CLYNÉ LECTURES AT GREEN COLLEGE, UBC

John Valentine Clyne (1902–1989) was a justice of the BC Supreme Court, chair and CEO of the forestry company MacMillan Bloedel Ltd, and Chancellor of the University of British Columbia. The endowment for the Clyné Lectures at UBC was a gift made in his honour by his friends and admirers. In accordance with the terms of the lectureship endowment, the J.V. Clyné Lectures at UBC for 2018–23 will be delivered by speakers with expertise in the fields of law, business, government and the arts. The framing concern proposed to lecturers is Cultural Institutions, Technologies and the Public Interest: Canadian, Indigenous and Global Perspectives between the Late Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Centuries.

SCOTT McINTYRE, CM, OBC
co-founder, publisher and CEO of Douglas & McIntyre, 1972–2013

Beginning in the early 1970s as a small, regionally focussed publisher, the Vancouver-based firm of Douglas & McIntyre grew in the course of the next four decades into a significant national and international operation, producing some 2000 Canadian books. Its authors included Doris Shadbolt, Wayson Choy, Farley Mowat, David Suzuki, Emily Carr, Douglas Coupland, Bill Reid, Richard Wagamese, Wade Davis and Robert Bringhurst. The emphasis of their list was always on the history, political and cultural of British Columbia and of Indigenous cultures were a priority from the start. The company took the culture of BC and its region to the world. Scott McIntyre has an honorary degree from Simon Fraser University.

In three lectures that he will give at Green College between October 2019 and January 2020 as J.V. Clyné Lecturer at UBC, Scott McIntyre will develop an account of how Canadian publishers and writers, with the readerships that they formed and informed, helped reshape the Canadian public sphere after 1967 and put in place mechanisms to protect the freedoms of cultural creators as Canada and the world moved towards an age of digital media.

Lecture 1
THE GOLDEN AGE: BOOK PUBLISHING AFTER WORLD WAR II
5:45-7:15 pm, Tuesday, October 22, 2019

It was a time of optimism, fuelled by a rapidly expanding consumer market, and the energy unleashed by end of the War. Many of the great figures of early 20th-century publishing were still in command of their own companies, and were publishing with passion and verve. A Jewish diaspora from Germany and Austria was reinvigorating London publishing. American publishers were readily expanding and flourishing. New technologies and formats were beginning to democratize the book business. More sophisticated and interconnected distribution systems were broadening the marketplace. Agents were becoming more powerful and accelerating the pace of the business. And shifting social and legal values were removing previous constraints to subject matter. This led to explosive growth, emboldening companies to move beyond founder-owners to embrace different models, including going public and the first mergers. Scale began to drive much of the business, fuelled by a generation of great writers with powerful stories to tell, aided by an eager media and public enthusiastic about sharing them.

Lecture 2
IN THE SHADOW OF TWO EMPIRES: CREATING A CANADIAN LITERATURE
Moderated by Hal Wake, formerly director of the Vancouver Writers Fest
5:45-7:15 pm, Tuesday, November 19, 2019

Canada was slow to shed its colonial shackles, particularly in the arts. Writers and publishers were constrained by a small market, distant for all things Canadian in universities, libraries, public school curricula and much of the media, along with a paucity of bookstores. Beginning in the 1960s, and following the success of Expo 67, a younger generation determined to forge a stronger country moved past the mostly self-imposed restrictions of the past. A new ecology of writers, editors, publishers and bookstores emerged, aided by an expanding market and evolving public policy. Universities and schools began teaching Canadian literature. Publishers such as Jack McClelland were bringing new ideas, and new chutzpah, to the business. New federal and provincial policy began to support a wide range of young publishers, in every region of the country. Writers such as Atwood, Mowat, Lawrence, Richler, Davies, Munro, Benton, Newman, Hutchinson and a host of others began to dominate best-seller lists. Independent publishing houses, amongst them House of Anansi, Coach House, New Press, Hurtig, Talon, Key-Porter Books and Douglas & McIntyre began to make an impact. The Association of Canadian Publishers advocated a new collective sense of political urgency, greatly influencing government policy. The momentum created and nourished an ever-more self-confident national literature, now a legacy for further generations. Today’s digital world brings new challenges, but the power of storytelling and the written word prevails.

Lecture 3
PROTECTING CREATORS, ENSURING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD
5:45-7:15 pm, Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Many of our copyright conventions can be traced to the mercantilist nineteenth century and even further back, but my focal point will be the more recent and precedent-setting role Canada played in the fight to protect the creative industries. One result is the 2005 UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity. Equivalent language is also included in the FTA, NAFTA, CETA, CTTTP and, we think, even the USMCA. This will be a personal story of how Canada’s tilt at a windmill persuaded much of the world to acknowledge the essential role of the creative industries in nation building, and the right of individual states to ensure their unique stories—in books, magazines, film, tv and digital media—can reach the public. Despite meeting initially with open derision, the initiative succeeded, enshrining a wide range of measures from the toolkit of public policy to preserve space for local stories in the face of the juggernauts of international power. It was a fraught journey, with many bumps along the way. Ultimately, its success defied the odds: 147 countries have now signed the Convention.