



# UNIVERSITY OF **ABERDEEN**

Dr Marjory Harper  
Lecturer in History

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

MESTON WALK, KING'S COLLEGE OLD ABERDEEN AB24 3FX  
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17 June 1997

Ivan Doig,  
17021 10th Vanue N.W.,  
Seattle,  
Washington 98177,  
USA.

Dear Mr Doig,

Following my phone conversation with you on 6th June, I am writing in an attempt to clarify some of the rather garbled points I made then.

During my visit to Albuquerque for the Western Social Science Association conference in April, Ferenc Szasz mentioned to me that he believed you were interested in revisiting Scotland in the course of your research, and he thought I might be able to facilitate such a visit. Unfortunately, I do not have any institutional or other funds at my disposal which I could use to invite you to a conference or seminar, but if you were to send me details of the subject matter on which you would be prepared to speak, (preferably involving a Scottish theme) I could talk to the English Department in this University, and perhaps be given contacts with English departments in some of the other Scottish universities, with the possibility of arranging a seminar tour. So far I have not discussed this possibility with anyone in the English Department, so I may be entirely wrong in my expectations, but I hope not.

I greatly admire and make regular use of your work, particularly *Dancing at the Rascal Fair*, in my Senior Honours course on "The Emigrant Scot". Part of that course involves a study of the emigrant in fiction, and I should be delighted to meet you and hear you lecture. However, I feel it would be more appropriate, not least for funding purposes, for any visit to be orchestrated through the Department of English, rather than the Department of History.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Marjory Harper



17021 10th Ave. NW  
Seattle, Washington 98177

16 July 1997

Dr. Marjory Harper  
Lecturer in History  
University of Aberdeen...

Dear Dr. Harper,

My writing schedule, some brief travel, and the general slippage of time have delayed this reply, but at least it has all given me a chance to ponder the calendar and your highly interesting offer to facilitate a visit to Aberdeen. I have to say, regrettably, I can't see an opportunity to take the kindness you've extended; I'll be involved with the novel I'm working on until at least early 1999, by the time I make the bookstore tour for it etcetera. There will then be considerable retooling of life that I've promised my wife and myself, other book ideas will present themselves (I hope!), and so it will go. Should any of these plans change, I would happily be back in touch with you an Aberdeen possibility. By the way, I will convey all this to Ferenc and Margaret--they are better travel agents for me than I am for myself.

I'm pleased to hear that you're able to use Dancing at the Rascal Fair in your course. It has become the best-selling of my eight books. And, I hope by some glint of fate, your letter mentioning Rascal Fair arrived to me just as I was writing the scene in my current novel where the great-granddaughter of Angus McCaskill is returning from a photo expedition to Scotland with pictures of the Bell Rock lighthouse.

Again, my gratitude for your offer, and I hope your own work is thriving.

Yours sincerely,

Ivan Doig



Josie - 1-541-389-1165

- major L.A. to
- English / writing / editing
- diff / nt on paper
- focus

NU Admissions

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### ACADEMIC HONORS

Briefly describe any scholastic distinctions or honors you have won beginning with ninth grade:

Honor roll 9-12 grade	01 / 1998
CIM (certificate of initial mastery)	01 / 2000
Drama Letterman 9-12 grade	01 / 1998
National Honor Society	06 / 1998
	/

### EXTRACURRICULAR, PERSONAL, AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES (including summer)

Please list your principal extracurricular, community, and family activities and hobbies in the order of their interest to you. Include specific events and/or major accomplishments such as musical instrument played, varsity letters earned, etc. Check in the right column those activities you hope to pursue in college. **To allow us to focus on the highlights of your activities, please complete this section even if you plan to attach a résumé.**

Activity	Grade level or post- secondary (p.s.)					Approximate time spent		Positions held, honors won, or letters earned	Do you plan to participate in college? Yes
	9	10	11	12	PS	Hour per weeks	Weeks per years		
Show jumping horses	X	X	X	X	X	30	50	Nationally honored	X
School Drama	X	X	X	X		15	20	4 year letterman/actor	X
Piano lessons/rescites	X	X	X	X	X	10	40	Pianist	X
Community Service	X	X	X	X		15	20	Co-managed show barn	X
State Drama Competition	X	X	X	X		10	10	Competitor	X
NASA space camp	X					112	2	Graduate and best group	X
City disaster drill			X	X		10	1	Volunteer	X

### WORK EXPERIENCE

List any job (including summer employment) you have held during the past three years.

Specific nature of work	Employer	Approximate dates of employment	Approximate no. of hours spent per week
Nanny for 2 and 5 year old	Anne Nugent	06 / 1997 to 06 / 1998	10
Trainging and managing horses	Ten Barr Ranch	06 / 1997 to 10 / 1997	20
		/ to /	

In the space provided below, or on a separate sheet if necessary, please describe which of these activities (extracurricular and personal activities or work experience) has had the most meaning for you, and why.

I am a very lucky person. At the age of six I was given a pony and riding lessons. This turned out to be the most wonderful gift I have recieved or will ever recieve. This gift was a passion. My passion for riding has led me to amazing adventures and priceless life lessons. This passion for riding shines through in my everyday life; it gets me up in the morning and allows me to dream at night. This gift not only gives me a passion for jumping horses, but a passion for life.



# UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

June 22, 1997

Ivan Doig

Dear Ivan

I just finished seeing the TV program that Jean Walkinshaw did on Western Writers which I caught by chance as I was surfing -distraction while I did dishes after a dinner party last night. This was the second time, the first was also by chance, and so I missed both times the section devoted to your work (which must have come at the beginning), and I am sorry.

That made me come straight up to my study to write to thank you, belatedly but sincerely, for sending me a copy of "Bucking the Sun". And even more: for acknowledging my small contribution. I loved the novel, I read it very slowly and let you create a world for me to live in- 'to taste and see' as the Psalm says. Those are, for me, unusual people but by the end of the novel I had come to understand their logic in the Fort Peck/ Ivan Doig world.

A few months after I finished it, we read in our bookclub Doris Kearns Goodwin's No Ordinary Time - it too certainly created a sense of place, the second floor of the White House, but I am uneasy about the motivations she so beautifully but almost glibly describes because of her sources. It seems glib. For example, can oral interviews about childhood-for example with Harry Hopkins' daughter-be a guide for that other time and place. Goodwin's description of Roosevelt's inspection tour to the West seemed less convincing than yours, the novelist's intuition feels like a truer guide (you can see from my adjectives that I still-in this post-modernist world-turn back to universals. Still I just reread Wallace Stegner's Angel of Repose, which is based on a diary, and was persuaded by his writer's vision. And he certainly was comfortable with universals.)



Now that you have put down some roots in the thirties decade, why don't you write about the volunteers from the Northwest that went to Spain to fight. Bob Reed has compiled and left in the University of Washington Library Archive copies of an enormous amount of biographical data (the originals went to Brandeis which houses the 'Abraham Lincoln Brigade' archive, including the Comintern files purchased from the Russian archives just a few years ago). Although I know so little of American history, and even less of the Pacific Northwest, I helped Bob because I was the only one available-and time is running out for the 'Vets'. But I did so also because I grow weary of the 'canonical' text which in the 1990s is exhausted, lifeless (if indeed it ever did bear witness to the Spanish experience. Many thoughtful Spanish writers and historians -on the left as of course on the right-don't think so. They don't think Malraux or Hemingway did either). That particular narrative was reworked, not well, in a book ('Letters from Spain') published last year to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Civil War. More than one reviewer said it offered nothing new. It is possible to say something new. The Abraham Lincoln mythology does refer to an American experience; the westerners' vision has not been explored at all. I had thought of doing a place-centered, collective biography of the approximately one hundred individuals who either left from this area or came here to live after the Civil War-a prosopography in historians' jargon, a genre not currently in fashion but potentially vital. Loyalty to the Communist party was a core of the volunteering, particularly those who went in 1938 (when the Republicans were clearly losing) and died within one or two months of their arrival. At this remove, only some few years after 'the Wall' came down, I am not yet convinced that it is possible to gain fresh insight into membership in the Communist party in the 1930s, detached from the 'Cold War', meriting respect (and for me, assuredly, the American version is not reachable). In the event, there is a rich trove of data for you to explore if you should choose to do so.

Reading your novel, wanting to talk about it, made me feel again the loss of Jeanette Carstensen-we talked a lot about writing for she knew so much. You were certainly kind to her, and to Vernon, to visit during those last painful years, including several times when Jeanette and I went to lunch-and I admired that for Vernon was lonely.

Initially I had delayed writing this letter because I wanted to send along a copy of Louise Erdrich's The Blue Jay's Dance, also one of our book club selections. I like her work so much, it seemed so authentically autobiographical. But Michael Dorris' suicide and the ensuing revelations about their private lives makes me wonder if I confused form with substance. (An author's private life should not matter of course. I have, for example, refused to admit into my for T.S. Eliot any concern about his antisemitism-although as you know I helped to found the Jewish Studies Program and taught for more than two decades a course on the history of the Jews in Spain. But then Eliot does not talk though an 'I' as does Erdrich-there I am again, back to universals, in this over long letter.

My best wishes to Carol, and to you.

*Cordially*

*Joan Ullman*

*Mon Ullman*

*J.C. - 325-9117  
1111 McGilvray Bv E.*

*Ullman, UW  
315 Smith, Dept of History  
Box 353560  
Seattle 98195-3560*





512 North Park Drive  
Arlington, VA 22203  
December 1997

Dear Friends:

Many of you have told me through the years that the annual Ridings holiday letter was one you always enjoyed---despite the usual groanings and jokes about Christmas letters in general. We used division of labor for those letters that we wrote beginning with the first Christmas of our married life in 1962 (gadzooks!): Don wrote them, I addressed and mailed them.

As almost all of you know by now, all the labor is now mine following Don's unexpected and much too early death (at age 59) on June 17. For those of you for whom this is news, his death came after surgery that was designed to improve his walking ability, and it totally stunned all the medical personnel as well as his family members. Don's ashes are interred in the memorial garden at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, where we had his memorial service. Please write me if you want more details.

This devastating low point of the year came, incredibly, just two weeks after the emotional high point of the year: our older son, Don Jr.'s, marriage in Norway to Berit Enge. Don the Dad was unable to attend at the last minute, due to doctor's cautions about being over-tired for the surgery, but about 50 people from the United States joined other friends of the newlyweds from Japan, Nigeria, Finland, England and, of course, Norway, for the beautiful wedding service in a church near Berit's hometown, a small fishing village north of the Arctic Circle. Don and Berit are living in Washington, D.C., where he is in his second year of law school at George Washington University and Berit is working at the Norwegian Embassy.

I am blessed to have them, and Matt, living so close during this special time when family closeness is so extra-important. Matt lives at home and works full-time at Home Depot, riding the Metro (subway) to and from work. I commute to downtown Washington where the Council on Foundations is located; I'm now in my second year as the Council's President, and I feel so fortunate---especially now---to have a career that is challenging, demanding and engaging. Surprisingly, I haven't missed the newspaper business one bit! I resigned from most of the boards on which I served, including two foundation boards, when I took the job as Council president. I still serve on the Louisville Seminary board, though, and I get to Louisville several times a year for that. I'm also still traveling on business a good bit---both domestically and abroad---although I plan for that to slow down in 1998.

Please do let me hear from you. And if your own travels bring you close to Washington, let me know. I love to have visitors. Meanwhile, let me send these wishes for peace and joy in 1998. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers during this holiday season.

Dot Ridings



July 1

Lt -

This is a VERY belated thank-you and  
book trade in return for Bucking The Sun —  
I thought it was a wonderful story, and  
it's since been making the rounds with my  
father (just retired from the University of  
Wisconsin) and his four brothers. Summer  
jobs on the Oake Dam in South Dakota  
put all of them through college ca. 1948-  
60, and they were thrilled to see so accurate  
+ moving an account of western dam-making  
captured in a novel. So thanks x6,  
and I look forward to your next one!

Best,

Anne Matthews



25 Nov. '97

*Dum*  
Dear Dick--  
^

I could have been more clear in my mention of the course Carol taught; as you'll see from the syllabus, she did it as Literature of the American West, with about half that component Pacific NWers. She changed a few books every year, I think, keeping the emphasis on contemporary writers (the students always wanted some Steinbeck as well) and I believe she had good luck with Molly Gloss's The Jump-Off Creek, Velma Wallis's Two Old Women, and my Sea Runners. She has other stuff about the course around here, if it'd help.

Good to hear from you. You're onto good causes.

best,  
*Kwan*



4 Nov. '97

Dear Jerry--

This is just really, really quick to get you a snatch of reply before your buddy Emery's tape sinks to the bottom of the desk morasshaere.

As you maybe remember, I know not much about opera unless it has the words "Grand" and "Old" in front of it. All I can come up with is the country name of a mover-and-shaker (a bookstore owner, natch) in Chief Josephywhom Dick Emery might get in touch with, on the chance that ~~there~~ there's some civic angle to this--I think, and you might be able to find it on a computer search, there's been a NY Times article earlier this year about the area around the Wallowa Mtns. wanting to have some Nez Perce around again, inviting them back, etc. In any case, the guy I know in that country is Rich Wandschneider, PO Box 38, Enterprise, OR 97828, phone (503)426-3623; he's been running the Fishtrap Conference at Lake Wallowa, a good gathering as those things go, and he knows the flight of every civic swallow therearound.

Would you believe, I out of the blue heard from Ziesmer the same day your letter came. Jerry Day, Jer-ry Day... He's of course written a book (read: manuscript) and was perturbed that he hadn't heard back from the agent in a whole month--"Ivan, in Hollywood a hot script makes the rounds of everybody in a weekend!"

I'm going to jam this in the mail, but will get back to you further in the holidays or after. My next novel has in it, ta da, an environmental reporter. Sort of the last of his species, working for a Seattle weekly that might be akin to the Boston Phoenix, I guess. (He also has a grown kid in San Francisco; are you sneaking in here at night and leading the life I'm trying to make up for this guy?) May ask you for a few bits of texture of that job, like your point of how worry warty the utility-beat people were. Anyway, until then all best wishes to the whole gang of you.



353 Western Ave.  
Gloucester MA 01930  
19 October 1997

Dear Ivan,

This has been my year of settling back and contemplating how to better use the balance of a shortening life -- not that I am feeling morbid about my age, but just a bit more alert that there's ever less time to waste. I just did an interview with a 92-year-old retired businessman who spends time with SCORE, Senior Corps of Retired Executives, of which you've probably heard. Unable to adjust to retirement, or perhaps just to get out of the house, they do good works by coming into an office one or two days a week and advising would-be business people what they need to do to succeed -- or, more often and more usefully, helping them come to see that they've got a lousy idea and shouldn't sink a cent into it. Of my elderly subject his colleagues say that he is extremely quick in the course of interviews to come right to the point. "At his age he doesn't have much time to waste and isn't about to do so on something that has no future," said one of his pals. So, among other things, I have wrapped up a project at the private school where two of our kids went, shepherding them into the 20th century quick before it ends as to their need to do some strategic planning. Specifically I ran the buildings and grounds committee where, based on what I learned during five years of covering commercial real estate and development, I managed to assemble a great committee and get the administration to understand that it would no longer do to go hire the founder's old college buddy to design the buildings and be general contractor. For this outfit that was a giant step. With a professional consultant finally hired, I then quit the board completely, figuring that nine years of effort in their behalf was quite enough. Besides, I had good books to read and wanted to get working on my painting, a pastime I began taking up two years ago by taking a drawing course in which I discovered that I can, in fact, do a decent job of laying images onto paper in media other than words. Indeed, discovering the wonders of translating directly from eye to hand without bothering with words has been exciting, almost a to the point of a rush of excitement when I first experienced it. No paintings are yet ready for sale, much less public display - but I get terrific pleasure out of it. As for good books, Cormack McCarthy has been a wonderful discovery, as was a revisit with Doig via *Bucking the Sun*. It will be a terrific movie, especially with your plot twist, if ever they can come up with the money to build the sets. I kept thinking of your visit years ago to Jerry Ziesmer on whatever movie set he was then working and the joy he (and you) took as he commanded a flood to commence! Maybe Jerry's the one to do the film of *Sun*.

All right, there's the long slow windup -- what's the pitch? you correctly may ask. It is this. A friend of ours, Dick Emery, a commercial artist by trade and a musician by avocation, last year wrote an opera, *A Death in Wallowa Valley*, based on the life of Chief Joseph and the extirpation of the Nez Perce tribe. He has drawn inspiration from Indian writings for quite some time now, both personally and musically, and wanted much to chronicle this saga musically and especially for Eastern listeners. He in fact has never been to the Northwest, and at this point in his life fears he is unlikely to do so soon, or at least is not likely to be able to make a prolonged visit. The principal obstacles are his son, who is multiply handicapped and, while living alone at age 23, requires major family support. Meanwhile, his wife, Pat, is losing her vision, which prevents her from driving and thus carrying as large a share as she once did of Seth's support.

And so?

So, I suggested to him a while back that one way that it would be interesting to see how his interpretation of the Chief Joseph story would be received in Chief Joseph country -- and whether there might be any market for a production of it (which, while I did not say it then, would provide him a chance to go see for himself what it looks like out there). He was charmed by the thought, and further charmed when I told him that I would be glad to send you this letter, along with a copy



of the libretto and a tape of a performance that was done here last year, to see if you might have any thoughts on such a proposition -- and any avenues by which this might be brought to reality sometime. The production here was done with funding from the state arts council and local arts councils (I think he got three municipalities involved) along with, as they say on NPR, "the generosity of people like you," namely friends and the church that gave up its sanctuary for the staging. The money let him hire some very good soloists; for the chorus he fell back on a church choir with which he sings (which is a fairly good group). Unfortunately, it wasn't enough to pay also for a top-notch taping, although he was able to get a second tier recording professional and did not have to rely on the likes of me to hold a rusty Realistic tape recorder in my lap in the front row.

Would you mind giving it a read? A listen? Talking it up with whomever you think might be appropriate? And letting me know what you think? If you (or anyone else) would want to get in touch with Dick directly, he's:

Richard S. Emery  
7 Walker Road  
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass. 01944

Yep, -by-the-Sea is for real. There's a story about it, too, but another time.

His phone is (978) 526-4274.

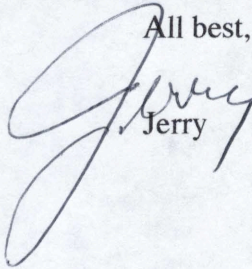
A short précis on what the Ackerpeople are up to otherwise: I somehow ended up back covering utilities but got sick of it and am now assigned to a two-reporter crew at the Globe that writes on Emerging Business and Small Business. It's a world of perpetual optimists and a welcome respite, I can tell you, from the world of worry warts who dog the utility business (their fears are well placed, just tiresome). Officially I can collect my pension starting in May 1999, but while I do look forward to an end to a daily grind, I think that will be a little too soon. Carol meanwhile is still teaching, at junior high level, French mostly but occasionally Spanish, and is department head at a snooty private school (not the one we sent our kids to) in Beverly, about a 20 minute drive away. She is also department head, which pays a little bit more, incurs many more administrative headaches and granfalloon, but which it appears impossible to escape because the two other women in her department have declared flatly they won't do it. Oldest daughter Laurel is in Philadelphia with boyfriend, an intern perfecting his doctoring skills, and tells us she plans to be there a while. They signed a three-year-lease on a house, so I guess she means it. She's pretty happy there and has, after years of working as a baker because nothing else was coming along, is about to start a new job as a marketing manager for a company that arranges for putting up all those posters on college campuses touting innocent freshmen to sign up now for Newsweek, MasterCard or AT&T Long Distance. It's also the first job she's had since graduating that promises to pay more than \$500 a week. Steven graduated from Wesleyan (in Connecticut) in 1995 and headed almost immediately for San Francisco, where all his classmates (including a girlfriend) seemed to be heading. He got there and she dumped him, but he has been eking out a living working in a thrift store and most recently waiting table at a tea cafe, a job that also includes teaching a weekly class about the wonders of tea, a subject on which he has waxed ecstatic for some time. He is, however, looking now for real work that will pay more than \$300 a week, and hopes to capitalize on his degree (liberal arts but with a Studio Art major - he's primarily a painter and his style is fairly traditional). He also has computer typesetting skills and a bit of a background in same. Names of any contacts in S.F. would be welcome. Youngest daughter, Suzanne, is a senior at Columbia, majoring in comparative literature and wondering what comes next. The path her life has followed is the best yarn of all. She started at Michigan, stayed two years, ran off to England with an Indian-heritage boyfriend (India the subcontinent) who is a UK citizen. She got kicked out of England for overstaying her tourist visa (as well as possessing a small amount of pot while trying to go through customs when returning from a weekend in France). She came home, he followed, dominated her life, lived off her meager earnings, and then managed to charm some



investors into capitalizing a software startup company that he said would quickly be the king of Internet marketing. The software product may or may not have been real, but it turned out the money was out of the pocket of a corporate CEO whose misdeeds with his own company were foul enough that he now is in jail awaiting trial on SEC charges and his saga was strong enough to be a paper leader one day last summer in the Wall Street Journal. Ralph (the boyfriend) and Suzanne were already breaking up, but these events capped this dissolution as both he and one of his partners hopped in the partner's Ford Explorer and headed for California and god only knows where. I think the partner is likely to be in trouble with the law as well; he was the conduit for the money in a fast shuffle that has gotten Lehman Bros, where he worked, into the soup as well. Now that the scales are falling from Suzanne's eyes we are delighted to have our daughter back in the family again. But both of us went through a wringer during this soap opera.

Enough entertainment. Carol would be very unhappy if she knew I was spreading this story so widely, but I note that she does the same thing. In spite of it involving our own flesh, it's too good a story not to tell. Another movie for Ziesmer, perhaps, but only after he finishes yours.

All best,

  
Jerry



Oct. 26, 1997  
Ben Groff  
17832 66th Pl. W.  
Lynnwood, WA 98037  
425-745-8855

Dear Ivan:

It has been ten years since I interviewed you for that profile in Pacific magazine. Don't know if you still remember much of that, but I have followed your writing, and read all of it except for *Bucking the Sun*. Haven't found the time for that one yet, but I will.

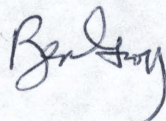
I wrote more profiles and first-person things in the late '80s, mostly having to do with mountaineering, then turned to what I really wanted to do, which is write fiction. I had half a dozen short stories published in little (and littler) magazines, the pinnacle of these small successes being *The Iowa Review* and the Pushcart Prize anthology for '91-92. An agent called me up and we tried to interest a big publisher in a collection of my stories, with no luck. I then turned to what I *really* really want to do, which is write novels. My first was dangled around to some nibbles but no bites. I parted ways with my agent over the second novel. Am now at work on the third.

I still -- as I did in '87, when I met you -- have my career as a nurse to pay the bills. Beyond that, I love to write, enjoy just doing it, the plastic shapes that phrases take in your head, the sound of language, the thrill of newness; and I understand that publication is not tops among the reasons for living, given wife and children and good food and mountain climbing. Nevertheless I feel isolated, writing better and better but having less and less opportunity to bring my work to any sort of notice whatsoever. I know very few real writers, and those only passingly. I don't feel desperate, rather more at peace with the pen than ever before; but I do feel restless, or goaded, or I would not have the temerity to send this to you.

Of course, it's no big deal: If you haven't the time or inclination to give it a read, I'm sure you'll be good enough to mail it back. If you *do*, however, it's the first chapter of my first novel (written roughly '94-95), the one that was read and rejected by a number of well-known editors. I still believe in it, and have shortened it and changed it a lot. I'd be very interested in your comments, and if you would like to see the rest, only let me know.

I never did like writing profiles of real people very much. It ends up being fiction, anyway, and it just ain't right. Left a bad taste in my mouth. So whether you read the enclosed or not, I've always felt the need to apologize in some way or another for all those damned questions. I guess this is not much of an apology, but a thank you. Anyhow, best wishes and happy writing.

Yours,





8 Nov. '97

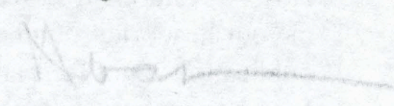
Dear Ben--

Maybe it says enough, that it's taken me this long just to get to your packet.

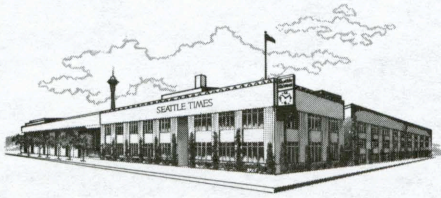
First off, I can't take a squint at your manuscript for you, as I have an iron policy just not to do that. Sundry reasons, none of them personal.

I can try think off the top of my head to you about writing/publishing (although the general outlook isn't good) if you want to give me a call after the first of the year. Sorry for that timeframe, but among all else in life I'm entering the world of orthopedic exploration with a nagging knee and don't know yet how much of me and my time that's about to consume. Until '98, okay?...

regards,







# The Seattle Times

FAIRVIEW AVENUE NORTH AND JOHN STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 70  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98111

**ERIC NALDER**  
INVESTIGATIONS

Ivan

Congrats on  
the Governor's  
Book Award

— Eric





*Iris Suziana*



September 22, 1997

Hi Ivan and Carol -

Just to say that it was  
a joy seeing half of you  
Friday night — and I'm  
sorry not to have seen  
the other half.

You were exceedingly  
kind, Ivan, to include  
mention of my earnest

efforts in your remarks.  
I WISH I were worthy of  
your praise; I LIKED hearing  
it, regardless.

Hope to really see  
you one of these days.  
The calendar pages rustle  
even faster though it  
always seems that there'll  
be time "later!"

Fondly -

Ruth  
R.K.R.R.



The New York Botanical Garden, founded in 1891 and located in the Bronx, is a museum of plants and a scientific research center dedicated to environmental education and the conservation of plant diversity. The Garden's 250 acres include the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, 27 gardens and plant collections, a 40-acre forest, a herbarium, and a library. The educational programs, scientific research, and horticultural offerings of The New York Botanical Garden are internationally recognized for their excellence.

## IRIS

*Genus Iris, Iris family IRIDACEAE*

The popular iris, a herbaceous perennial, is native to most parts of the northern hemisphere. The genus is comprised of 300 species plus thousands of varieties and hybrids, spanning a rich spectrum of colors and a variety of textures.

*Iris Suziana*

P.J. Redouté, Belgian, 1759-1840

Stipple engraving in color

from *Les Liliacées*, Paris, 1802-1816

© 1995 The New York Botanical Garden

Reproduced in conjunction with the  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



22586201



August 18, 1997

Dear Mr. Doig,

As the new editor of *The Portland Review Literary Journal*, I have made it my goal to produce the best publication possible. Toward that end, I would like to form an advisory board comprising highly regarded and accomplished authors from the Portland area, including Portland State University. I would like the Advisory Board to be a resource of literary judgment to help make the final selections for *The Review*'s several editions during the 1997-98 academic year.

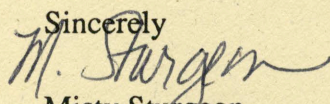
*The Review*, which publishes submissions of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, book reviews, art and photography, will be produced three times during the year by Portland State University's Student Publications Board. One of the editions of *The Review* is prepared in collaboration with the Literary Arts Council. *The Review* is directed towards a literary and academic audience across the country. All styles and genres are considered, allowing *The Review* to remain a creative outlet for all authors.

Advisory Board members would each be asked to evaluate six submissions (three poems and three short stories) and select two. The preliminary screening will have already been made by myself and my colleagues. Unless Board members request it, there will be no meetings or other time commitments.

I believe that the Advisory Board would provide insight and experience that would help elevate the literary standard of *The Review*, and bring much needed attention to our small student publication. We are planning to publish the names of the Advisory Board members in each edition.

*The Portland Review Literary Journal* would be honored if you would become a member of our Advisory Board. If you have any questions or comments please contact me. I will be calling you in a couple of weeks to discuss this with you.

Sincerely



Misty Sturgeon  
Editor

P O S T   O F F I C E   B O X   3 4 7  
P O R T L A N D ,   O R E G O N   9 7 2 0 7 - 0 3 4 7  
(503) 725-4533 FAX (503) 725-5860  
[review@vanguard.vg.pdx.edu](mailto:review@vanguard.vg.pdx.edu)



27 Aug. '97

Misty Sturgeon  
Editor, Portland Review

Dear Ms. Sturgeon--

I'm flattered to be thought of for the Review's advisory board. But frankly, I'll be such a moving target because of travel plans and the book I'm working on now that I wouldn't be worth your effort. My regrets, and all good wishes to you and the Review.

sincerely,  
*Robert D. King*



# Seattle Post-Intelligencer

8/5/97

Ivan \_\_\_\_\_

So here 'tis . . .

Thanks so much for your help  
on this. And congrats!

Best,  
Vol



Aug. 11, '97

Dear John--

Got back in town to find the literary tearsheet from you; many thanks for sending it along. And a lot more thanks for putting that piece together. All in all, it looked to me like the best book came out on top--have you read that Kesey-Stegner antipathy in the Jackson Benson bio of Stegner? odd thing is, Kesey was finding time to write Sometimes....!--and I'm glad to be on the list. I know it ain't easy these days to get space for books and the doings of writers, but you're doing the best job of it around. More power to your arm, as the Irish say (and get bestsellers out of it).

best,



P.O. Box 7487  
Tacoma, WA 98407  
6/22/97

Dear Ivan,

I've been thinking about you often, in fact have made it easy to do because of a plan I concocted and my wife and I recently executed. Thanks to my long-standing admiration for This House of Sky, which I used to "teach" and indeed have written about, I said to her, "Let's take a couple of weeks to reacquaint ourselves with Montana." We've passed through many times on I-90 and I-94, and several times have scouted around Kalispell and Flathead Lake. But this time I proposed a close-up look at the "Ivan Doig country." I had in mind four specific destinations: Dupuyer, Valier, White Sulphur Springs, and Ringling plus of course the Little and Big Belts and the Smith River Valley. So that was our itinerary, some days in Helena, then north through the Gates of the Mountains where we thought a lot about Maclean's Young Men and Fire, then up to Augusta and Choteau to pay our respects to the memory of A. B. Guthrie, then to Dupuyer. A crisp, brilliant day with the Rockies in stunning focus--indeed a "steel-blue army of mountains" as your guidebook described them. Then further north to the Reservation where we saw "a horizon-brimming tan ocean" and imagined the three of you doing battle with the July storm that ~~destroyed~~ destroyed not a few of your ewes and lambs, and where you had your own turning point. Then down and over to Valier and thoughts of "Mrs. Tidyman." Then to Great Falls where we spent a day with Charley Russell and another at Fort Benton where we consulted our DeVoto edition of the L & C Journals (as we did often) as well as Guthrie's The Big Sky to imagine Boone Caudill and Dick Summers and of course the keel boats unloading supplies from St. Louis and loading furs for the return. Then a day driving down the Little Belts and the spacious descent into White Sulphur Springs: a visit with three elderly ladies at the fire station who knew you well; ~~lunch~~ lunch at was-it-Dori's cafe? right across the street from the Stockman bar; a meandering drive around the town's side streets and then out to the cemetery to see the DOIG marker and the RINGER, and to read your poignant prose about that "bitter, wind-whipped April weather, and the last glimpse of Dad's casket"); also a brief chat with the sexton who's maintaining this special piece of earth. Then, sweeping our eye around the distant hills to the south, we headed down to Ringling, my ~~wife~~ wife Carolyn reading about it from your earlier pages. As you know, not much remains there now, only a few ~~beating~~ beleaguered houses and some rusted RR tracks. Then across the valley, ~~kn~~ up and over the Big Belts and on to Townsend, down to Three Forks and a couple of days exploring while headquartered in the Sacajawea Inn. Then back home via the Lolo Pass, Lewiston, LaGrande, Portland.

The point of this ragged account is merely to say how much your book has meant to both Carolyn and me, and because of it how much more we deepened our appreciation of the land, its settlers, and especially the three-generation triad that the land shaped, tempered, and made strong--the same triad that, like a three-chambered heart, gives your book life, marvelous life.

It's unfortunate we don't see <sup>each other</sup> as we once did in the UW library, faculty club, and my Western lit. classes. I'm glad our paths did converge however. Having been retired now for 5 years, I drive to Seattle infrequently. I think the



commuting back and forth from Tacoma battered my psyche more than I was conscious of, resulting now in my abhorring the drive and just not doing it unless unavoidable. As you perhaps remember, my roots started in Tacoma and remain. After retiring from the UW I taught part-time a few academic quarters at UW (Tacoma) but only found the distance between where I stood and the front row of students ever-wider and too broad for leaping. So I said no to any further effort. What I did do was serve with a friend as co-interim minister of Tacoma's First Congregational Church for a year and a half, taking over all duties for the last 5 months of that period, for which the Church ordained me in 1994. Since then I have occasionally preached, officiated at weddings and funerals, and given much time to leading an Adult Study class where I have no qualms about theological stretching to the (my) limit. All this culminates my long interest in the linkage of religion and literature, past enrollment at Princeton Theological Seminary and Yale Divinity School during sabbaticals from the UW, and a B. Phil. in Div. from Scotland's University of St. Andrews back in 1972. I must be the first (only) American ~~xx~~ professor of English to do that there. O yes, I still attend the annual Western Amer. Literature conferences though my interest flags as the "criticism" gets increasingly polluted by god-awful jargon and callow pretensions. I've said each time before the last two conferences that this would be my final one, and am saying it again with even more conviction as I look ahead to the Albuquerque one in October. Of course, like you I harbor rich memories of Northwestern where I met my wife and did my doctorate, etc., etc. After my last two--Beyond the Frontier (1989) and Going Where I Have to Go (1996)--I wonder if I have another book in me. I have yet to hear my doctor say (as in a New Yorker cartoon some years back), "I'm afraid that novel in you will have to come out." May~~h~~I should consult your doctor. Obviously you've heeded his advice. Indeed, indeed you have. And what a trail you're leaving, what wonderful trail words.

Let this be enough. It's a letter I wanted to write, and the enclosed book is one I've want to send you. All best wishes to you and Carol.

*Hal Simon*

Dear Hal--Excuse this mode of response to your terrific letter about traveling in Guthrie/Maclean/Doig country, but Carol and I are in and out of town all this summer, and amid the manuscript I'm working on, mail and clean laundry are both suffering. In any case, I trust you know you are missed at the UW and in the field of PNW Lit, and your letter is evidence why. The novel I'm at work on now has, again, some of the Rocky Mountain Front country you went and saw, as well as Ballard, San Francisco, and Alaska; in short, new excuses for you and Carolyn to travel to those exotic sites! The book will take some Baby Boomers (yup, one of them is a McCaskill, offspring from my Two Medicine trilogy) back to their Montana roots, put them up against those fading little towns they came from, get them to asking what the absolutes of life are. You know the sort of thing; do write another book, and thanks for the copy of Going... Let's hope we can cross paths sometime. All best,





June 23, 1997

Ivan Doig  
17021 10th Ave. NW  
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan:

Hello there. I've been meaning to tell you that I thought *Bucking the Sun* turned out wonderfully! Also, I owe you a belated thanks for the mention in the acknowledgments. Small-press publishing is just as all-consuming as big-press publishing, even if its frustrations and rewards are somewhat different.

I've resisted the temptation to send you galleys of everything we publish that is even remotely literary, but here is a book that I believe you'll find interesting (and you know the author): *Rains All the Time: A Connoisseur's History of Weather in the Pacific Northwest* by David Laskin. I'm circulating a few copies in the hopes of eliciting some comments for the back cover.

For this book, David has dug deeply into the regional record to extract the individual and collective response to the weather out here--whether it is Mrs. Arthur A. Denny weeping in the drizzle on the shore of what will be Alki Beach, or Hall Jackson Kelley rhapsodizing on the paradise to be found in the Willamette Valley (although he had not yet set foot there). While the rain is a certainty (statistically guaranteed to come down on November 19), it is both cursed and celebrated by the revolving voices of explorers, pioneers, writers, painters, and meteorologists who pass through Laskin's lively pages. What's fascinating to me is the evolution of the attitude toward the weather out here, from George Vancouver's general condemnation of the "stinking fogges" to Tom Robbins's excitement in the variety of drips and drops of precipitation.

I do hope that, after reading, you're inclined to offer a few words that would help set the proper tone when we publish this fall. I've enclosed an addressed postcard, but you can also leave a message on my voice mail (667-8803 x.304) or send e-mail ([gluke@sasquatchbooks.com](mailto:gluke@sasquatchbooks.com)) if you're into that. Production schedules being what they are, I'll need to hear from you by mid-July.

Thanks for reading.

Sincerely,

Gary Luke  
Editorial Director

Regional Books Without Boundaries

800.775.0817 • fax 206.467.4301  
615 Second Avenue, Suite 260  
Seattle, Washington 98104-2200  
<http://www.sasquatchbooks.com>



1 July '97

Dear Gary--

I'm literally just out of the car, between trips in and out of town this summer, but let's see if I can come somewhere close to the mood of David's book. As a blurb try, how's this:

"In the country of the goose-drowning rains, a dry wit counts doubly, and David Laskin takes us on a lively, enlightening, and not least affectionate excursion through our drinkable climate. Rains All the Time is the inspired sheet music to the natural anthem we Pacific Northwesterners march--er, splash--to."

--Ivan Doig, author of Winter Brothers

Will do? I always try keep 'em to a couple of sentences, but if this needs adjustment leave me a phone message at 542-6658, OK? Hope you're thriving. Congratulate David on the book for me, and takemae to that promised lunch sometime this fall, how about.

best,



# *Featherstone Productions*

[A Pty. Ltd. Co. ACN: 002893718 - Inc. in NSW]  
68 Denison St, Bondi Junction, NSW, Australia, 2022  
Tel: (612) 9389 1199 or (612) 9369 5690  
Fax: (612) 9369 1432

Ivan Doig  
17021 10th Avenue N.W.  
Seattle WA 98177  
USA

23.5.'97

Dear Ivan,

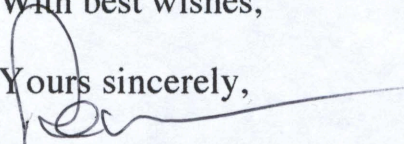
I am writing to thank you for coming up to Victoria to take part in our documentary about Tim.

I have just seen the 'rushes' and was very pleased with your interview and the sequences of yourself and Tim.

Geoff also sends his regards.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

  
Don Featherstone



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# The Writer



THE PIONEER MAGAZINE FOR LITERARY WORKERS

FOUNDED IN BOSTON IN 1887

120 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116-4615

(617) 423-3157 • FAX (617) 423-2168

INTERNET: <http://www.channel1.com/thewriter/>

March 24, 1997

Mr. Ivan Doig  
17021 Tenth Avenue, N.W.  
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Mr. Doig:

Many thanks for your good letter. I readily can understand why you cannot at present write an article for THE WRITER. Your mention of being able "to talk usefully" about writing, and we do publish interviews quite frequently, several supplied by a man in New York who regularly interviews authors on the radio and sends us the transcripts: We have recently done A. S. Byatt, Clive Cussler, Susan Isaacs, and two "self-interviews with van Hunter. We also have on hand interviews with Elmore Leonard, Joan Didion, among others. The problem for us is that our staff is so small (four editors including me) that we just can't do these interviews ourselves. But in the course of your speaking tour, if you find a few topics that come up and that you respond to, perhaps you would consider jotting down a half dozen or so relating to the how-tos of writing techniques (of novels or fiction), with your responses, it would be wonderful. I now how much it would mean to the thousands of would-be writers among our readers to have specific, practical advice, based on your experience writing such splendid novels.

Don't be surprised if I jog your elbow ever so gently at some point in the fall to see if you would like a change of pace and could address some of the questions aspiring writers have raised when you have been on a speaking tour. It's not that I mean to nag you, but I am what I think Peanuts once called a "Stubborn Optimist."

Meantime, all good wishes,

Sylvia K. Burack, Editor  
THE WRITER

skb/k



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# The Writer



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January 9, 1997

Mr. Ivan Doig  
17021 10th Ave. N. W.  
Seattle, WA 98177

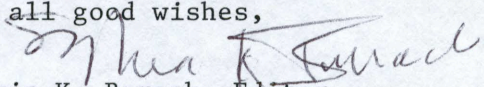
Dear Mr. Doig:

One of the bonuses of the holiday season is having, or taking the time to read some of the books that I've had for some months, but waited I could have some uninterrupted time in which to lose myself in at least one of them: That has been the case with BUCKING THE SUN, which I actually bought last summer. But the wait was more than worthwhile. I think that possibly not since reading THE BIG SKY have I felt so rewarded as a reader, and somehow proud to be an American against this vast backdrop

Since reading some of your earlier works--THE HOUSE OF SKY, of course, and RIDE WITH ME, MARIAH MONTANA--I have admired your books and look forward to the next one, though I don't always have the time to read all of them. In any case, your talent for blending your characters and their stories into the background is very impressive. And because of that, and the fact that I know you are a teacher, I am hopeful that you will have the time and the will to write an article for THE WRITER on some of the basic techniques and approaches you have found important to master in producing your splendid work.

You may be familiar with THE WRITER, now in its 110th year, and know that we offer articles that will give practical help to our readers on the how-tos of writing a range of literary forms and types--short stories, novels, articles, nonfiction books, drama, poetry, and the subgenres that they have spawned. Our articles run to about 2000 words (roughly eight double-spaced pages), and the more specific your advice the better for our readers, all of whom have one goal in common: publication. If you haven't seen the magazine recently, I will be glad to send you some sample issues, to give you an idea of the scope, focus, and style of the material we regularly publish. I look forward to sharing your ideas and advice with our readers in a forthcoming issue. I know how much it will mean to them.

With all good wishes,

  
Sylvia K. Burack, Editor  
THE WRITER

skb/k

P. S. I hope you have not suffered seriously from your recent weather.



20 March '97

Dear Sylvia Burack--

I suppose it's some measure of busyness that I'm just now getting to your letter of January. Greatly appreciated your estimation of Bucking the Sun, but sorry to say, I'm actually not doing any teaching of writing and so I don't have anything prepared that could go toward an article for you. And when I'm in the midst of writing a book, as I always am any more, I simply can't tackle magazine articles from scratch: too little time, too little of me!

Regrets, truly. Best wishes to you and The Writer.

sincerely,

p.s. I'm sometimes able to talk usefully about writing, or the writer's life, so-called, in interviews, if that's a format you ever do. After a California speaking tour I'm about to go on, I'll be holed up working on the next novel the rest of this year, but beyond that, could try to make myself available if you had somebody out here who wanted to do an interview piece. Just a thought.



January 7, 1996  
Box 114  
Strasburg, VT 05845

Dear Ivan,

I'm sure that you must be busier than busy these days, but on the chance that you might have time to take a look at my memoir North Country and find parts of it amusing, I've asked my editor at Houghton Mifflin to send you the galleys.

I've been a big fan of your work since Edward Hoagland gave me This House of Slay years ago. The Sea Runners is one of my all-time favorite novels, and I love your Montana fiction. My wife and I read Bucking the Sun this past summer and couldn't put it down! (Our son, just out



at college and embarked on a writing career himself, has moved to Butte and is enjoying everything about that marvelous and wretched place.)

If you don't have time to look at North Country right now or it doesn't appeal to you, please feel free to serve it the same as I did that letter from Harper's that I mention on p. 9 of the galley.

Thanks for your wonderful books!

Very best,

Howard Frank Moore



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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

Feb 12 1957

Dear Ivan —

I'm so far behind that I'm acknowledging your Christmas note at Valentine's Day. It was a pleasure to meet you in Chicago after reading you with admiration all these years.

I am in the last round of my public running around and longing to get the bit out of my teeth. Hope this year treats you well.

but

Bob Han







of the Seattle Weekly and  
his wife, and Gary Luke, who  
I believed signed up Bucking the Sun  
for STS. Nice symmetry there.

Give a call if you two can  
make it -- 346-8856. If not, we'll  
have to keep trying.

Best -

David Laskin

Jan 30

Dear Ivan Doig -

This is to thank you for your  
kind note about my review of  
Bucking the Sun in Washington Post.

I've been hoping we'd meet ever  
since I learned we were practically neighbors,  
but I see I have to take the bull by  
the horns. Could you + your wife join  
me + Kate for dinner on Feb. 8 (Sat)  
at 7PM? We're also having David Brewster's



*Turn in the Road*  
Paul Cézanne, French, 1839–1906  
Oil on canvas,  $23\frac{7}{8} \times 28\frac{7}{8}$  inches  
Bequest of John T. Spaulding  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
48.525      3.87



Chris Offutt  
501 Tulane Place NE  
Abq, NM 87106

1.6.97

Dear Ivan,

Thank you for the fine quote. More importantly, I'm glad you enjoyed the book. I'm pretty nervous about it. It's my first novel, and I've worked a long time on it. Write now I'm playing cards and staying busy with various mini-projects around the house. My wells need to refill.


Looks like we'll be moving back to Missoula in May after all. My wife has convinced me that teaching three months isn't such a bad idea. She's less taken with my idea of turning pro on the poker circuit. I love Montana, as I hope is evident by the novel.

It occurs to me that if I made a novel protagonist a poker-player, I could deduct expenses. Now if I can only get Becky to front me a stake, I mean advance...

Also, I'll be in Seattle on tour in June/July sometime. I'll make sure and let you know. Possibly the whole family will be along. I'm trying to do much of it by car. I love driving, and having company keeps me grounded and avoids hotel room depression. It'll take longer I guess, but driving always gives me a sense of the reality of travel. I've not been farther northwest than Spokane.

Again, thank you for the kindness of a quote. I appreciate it very much.

yrs,



P. S.

Happy New Year