

on treating the site as a crime scene, and finds his bearings by showing what a formidable investigator he can be.

The novel's title refers to local lore about a missing prospector rumoured to have been murdered for his claim. Fradkin, a past winner of the Arthur Ellis Award, peppers her story with letters and journal entries from the prospector and his wife, and it becomes clear that the fabled mining claim was the true goal of Hannah's expedition. Fradkin deftly captures the spirit of adventure in the North, and incorporates well-integrated commentary about the area's natural resources and environmental issues.

By taking Green out of Ottawa, Fradkin also provides a fresh perspective for the series and its protagonist, while offering an accessible and enjoyable story that won't disappoint long-time fans or new readers. – *Chadwick Ginther, author of Thunder Road (Ravenstone Books).*

Riverside Drive

Michael Januska; \$17.99 paper 978-1-45970-674-3, 272 pp., 5 x 8, Dundurn Press, May
Reviewed from advance reading copy

In his debut novel, Michael Januska, author of last year's *Grey Cup Century*, explores the world of Prohibition-era liquor smuggling, focusing not on a typical locale such as Chicago, but rather on the strip of Canadian border communities that includes the author's hometown of Windsor, Ontario.

Riverside Drive follows the criminal rise of Jack McCloskey, who returns to Canada after the First World War mentally tortured and physically restless. His impressive ability as an amateur boxer draws the attention of a local crime boss who first manages McCloskey's fighting career, then hires him as an enforcer. When the gangster attempts to consolidate the area's trade in illegal liquor, McCloskey comes into conflict with his estranged father and brother, small-time bootleggers who will neither be bought nor cowed. The story expands to encompass a gang war and political corruption, with McCloskey in constant peril.

It's powerful material for a novel, and Januska shows great strengths for plotting and dialogue. But *Riverside Drive* never quite coheres. The pacing seems to run counter to the narrative, with dialogue and intimate conversations taking centre stage while gun battles – including what should have been an intense climactic scene – are dealt with perfunctorily. A strong storyline featuring a

young librarian who chafes at the social restrictions of her time demonstrates Januska's ability to develop characters, but is almost entirely detached from the main narrative.

Overall, the novel feels unbalanced and unfulfilling. Januska writes lovingly of the Border Cities area and landscape, and brings the history of the period to vivid life, but the story leaves the reader wanting more. Given that *Riverside Drive* is the first in a series, one hopes that future volumes will fill out the mythos and milieu in a more satisfying way. – *Robert J. Wiersema, author of Bedtime Story (Vintage Canada).*

NON-FICTION

Black Code: Inside the Battle for Cyberspace

Ronald J. Deibert; \$32.99 cloth 978-0-77102-533-4, 320 pp., 6 x 9, Signal/McClelland & Stewart, May
Reviewed from bound galleys

Like it or not, the Internet has become unavoidable for many people in the knowledge economy. "Cyberspace is everywhere," says Ronald J. Deibert, director of the Canada Centre for Global Security Studies, and its reach and penetration are advancing at an unprecedented rate.

Notwithstanding the ubiquity of the Internet, much about its inner workings remains deliberately hidden from the average user. Some of this "black code" is criminal in nature, but in this bracing book Deibert also points to other secretive practices such as corporate data mining, state security operations, and even informal hacking by libertarian groups.

The "battle" of the subtitle isn't a struggle between police and hackers, or among different nation states, so much as a struggle for the soul of cyberspace itself. Deibert, an idealistic cyber-crusader, argues that things aren't turning out the way they were supposed to, but that what we have seen thus far is typical of the evolution of modern communications technologies.

Though Deibert covers a lot of ground, a few arguments stand out. Chief among these is the need for netizens to educate themselves about their vulnerability to Big Brother and Big Data, and the need to stay alert to the dangers of an online environment dominated by a cyber-security-entertainment-industrial complex. For easily manipulable citizens, apathy can become complicity in our own control at the hands of millions of little bits of information. When

Deibert likens Facebook to "a giant python that has consumed a rat," he's sounding an alarm for (nearly) all of us.

Black Code is a timely book, and like most timely books, one suspects that a lot of the specifics won't be relevant five or 10 years from now. The essential political message, however, is as old as Toqueville, and more vital than ever. – *Alex Good, editor of Canadian Notes & Queries.*

Full Count: Four Decades of Blue Jays Baseball

Jeff Blair; \$30 cloth 978-0-34581-253-7, 272 pp., 6 x 9, Random House Canada, April
Reviewed from bound galleys

Reading the introduction to Jeff Blair's history of the Toronto Blue Jays is a maddening experience a few weeks into the 2013 season. He writes about the promise and hope at the beginning of the previous year, with fan enthusiasm hinging on players who either didn't perform or succumbed to a cascading series of injuries. "Has there ever been [a season] that tried your soul as much? That made you wonder if the baseball gods had it in for you?" Given the pain with which a once gleefully optimistic 2013 began, you want to accuse Blair of the infamous baseball jinx.

Herein lies the problem with a baseball narrative as sweeping and ambitious as Blair's: the game is an organic beast, constantly moving and changing in a way that is impossible to pin down. The length of the season – the forgiving (but also punishing) number of games – means hope is almost always alive. But the constant reversals of fortune also result in debilitating challenges for a writer charged with weaving a coherent narrative thread. Many baseball tomes avoid this trap by simply delivering a catalogue of facts, but this approach ignores what many fans long for: a story with which to mould the inscrutable data into something we can understand and enjoy.

Blair, a writer with more than 30 years' experience, has for the most part succeeded in building a compelling narrative out of the Jays' history. Amazingly written (if the author is to be believed) in "less than a year from idea to index," *Full Count* is learned and thorough, with a keen eye on engaging readers instead of drowning them in the deluge of the author's knowledge. Yes, the reader occasionally gets lost in minutiae, but the book manages that rare narrative pull that eludes so much contemporary sports writing.