

LETTERS

Sadly, the Gillers are putting on the glitz

THE FACT THAT TV HOST Carolyn Weaver's dress gained more attention than anything else at the Gillers this year drives home the realization that it's not solely about the literature now; it's also about the glitz ("Live from the Gillers," *Citizen's Weekly* Reading, Nov. 9).

Sadly, the Gillers is going the Academy Award route where everyone tunes in simply to see who's wearing what. It is hoped that the Giller Prize will not turn into just another award show. This is literature after all, which should have some depth, not a shallow, phoney, tinsel schmooze fest.

Douglas Cornish
Ottawa

A ROCHESTER KEEPSAKE

A FRIEND GAVE US A COPY OF your Oct. 19 issue as we used to live in Rochester. I was so impressed by the article written by Don Butler ("Kodak's fading moment") that I had to e-mail you to congratulate him and the *Weekly* for having such a talented writer.

Everything was accurate, informational, in order, and reminded us of history we had forgotten. My husband was one of those in the big buyout from Kodak in 1991 and my Dad had worked there for 40 years starting in the late 1930s so we relate to everything Mr. Butler had to say.

It's an article I will keep for our grandchildren so they can learn more about my hometown.

Vera Johnston
Florida

BLOOM-ING HORROR

I WAS SLIGHTLY HORRIFIED TO read Harold Bloom's contribution to the *Citizen's Weekly* Reading section Sept. 28 ("Oh, the horror").

While I may agree with Mr. Bloom about Stephen King, and even J.K. Rowling, I cannot agree

with his choice of only "four living American novelists." Why only four? Why only male? In his opinion, and of course a very well-respected opinion it is, this is what we have come down to. I heartily disagree, and would point out that such a narrow view of literature from this century (the 21st!) may be due to his age, which prevents him from appreciating the fresh young voices of our age.

I appreciate male writers such as Michael Ondaatje and Rohinton Mistry, but I also appreciate much more the female voices of Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro and newcomer Mary Lawson. If all literature is to be held to the standard of dead male writers, then the world will surely be a poorer place. Those writers still living and working, according to Mr. Bloom, haven't published.

Daphne Christie,
Cornwall Public Library

WHY BLAME CATHOLICISM?

ROMEO DALLAIRE DIDN'T EXAMINE causes of slaughter in Rwanda, yet Paul Pflanzner suspects that the influence of Catholic missionaries was the chief factor behind the mass killings there in 1994 (*Citizen's Weekly* letters, Nov. 9).

I am curious why Mr. Pflanzner singled out Catholicism as a potential cause. It does not take much to find in recent history examples of genocide committed within single countries, e.g. Soviet Union, Cambodia, under directives coming from quite different sorts of "preachers."

Even today, our media report almost daily, from different parts of the world, of people killed because they belong to a nation or a tribe. And again, the killers are clearly not motivated by Catholic missionaries. To the contrary, the killers are often hostile to the Christian religion.

Tadeusz Drwiega
Kanata

'FRAUDULENT' WAS TOO UNDERSTATED

IN HIS ATTEMPT TO BELITTLE my claim that Joan Peter's pseudo-scholarship in *From Time Immemorial* was ultimately dismissed by Israeli historians (*Citizen's Weekly* letters, Nov. 9), Stephen Guttman angrily insults me and patronizingly urges me to consult the *Capitalism Magazine* website www.capmag.com/article.asp?ID=2135. This we did and found a series of six articles, 2135-2140, by Paul Blair, former editor of the *Intellectual Activist*.

2135 is basically Paul Blair's statement of intent to investigate the charges that *From Time Immemorial* is essentially dishonest propaganda falsely claiming that the Arabs had immigrated into the land of Palestine only after the Jews from the late 19th century onward caused the land to bloom.

I direct Mr. Guttman to 2140 and Mr. Blair's conclusion:

"*From Time Immemorial* is (a) work of propaganda ... Peter's case rests upon distortion and fabrication. Time and again, she misconstrues sources in a tendentious manner ... She conceals crucial calculations ... She exaggerates figures and selects numbers to suit her thesis. She adduces evidence that in no way supports her claims, sometimes even omitting 'inconvenient' portions of the citation ... She ignores sources that cast doubt on her conclusions, even when she herself uses those sources for other purposes. ... Peter's distortions apply not simply to minor issues, but to the central pieces of evidence for the principal contentions of her book. Her claim that the majority of Arabs in pre-state Israel were recent arrivals is false ..."

My characterization of Joan Peter's book as fraudulent was, in fact, an understatement.

Peggy Gualtieri
Ottawa



NATIONAL POST PHOTO

TV host Carolyn Weaver's Giller dress — a flashy, red silk affair with open back and slit front — gave the Giller Awards ceremony a glitzy, Academy Awards feeling, one *Citizen's Weekly* reader complained.