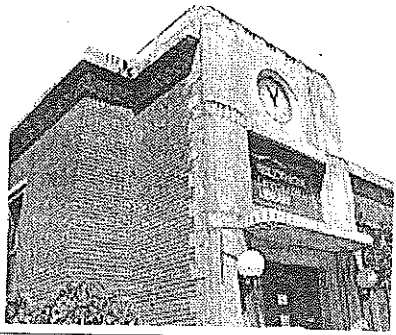


Can a life be copyrighted?

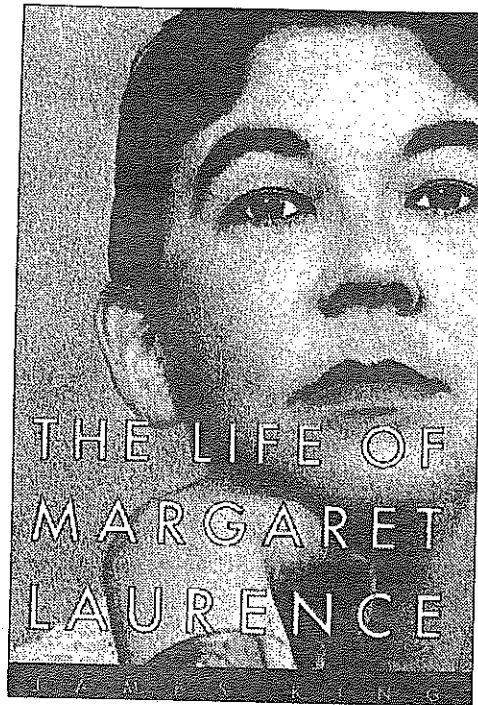


GOOD READS

ELEANOR BROWN

The Life of Margaret Laurence, James King's 1997 portrait of the infamous Canadian writer, begins with a fascinating contradiction that the Foreman Art Gallery's Community Arts Lab is tackling these next few months. It's the concept of copyright.

Without being properly paid for the rights to her own work, Laurence would have been even poorer than she at times was. Indeed, Laurence once panicked when inexpensive paperback editions of her books took over the market, and her royalty cheques were once reduced by 50



percent. Yikes.

But is Laurence's life itself subject to copyright? For even after her death, writes biographer King, Laurence's essential being — her writing — is controlled by her heirs: "in exchange for the ability to see and use the unpublished

material by their mother of which they hold copyright — particularly her letters to close friends, the unpublished journal and the other unpublished writings — they asked to read my typescript in order to correct any errors of fact. This arrangement has been adhered to strictly," King states, a state of affairs for which readers can only be thankful.

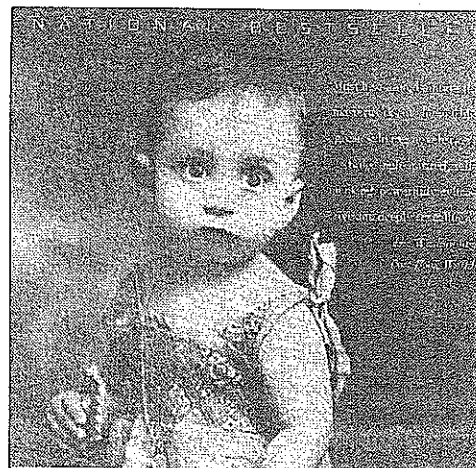
We must also be thankful that the heirs did the right thing and made Laurence's papers available (even as they must have known that their mother would not always be shown in the best light). Copyright law as it now stands could have left her fans with only a pale imitation of Laurence's reality, the censored version she herself portrayed in her final tome, 1989's *Dance on the Earth: A Memoir*.

Laurence died at the age of 60 in 1987. And in a twist that touches on the provincial government-sponsored debate on euthanasia currently happening in Quebec, Laurence took her own life, knowing she had terminal cancer.

The painfully insecure Laurence, who created novels that made her a household name — *Stone Angel*, *A Jest of God*, *The Diviners*, and more — saw her books banned from high schools as pornogra-

phy, and wrote controversial things about race and about the struggles of womanhood back when women were

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Living to Tell the Tale

GABRIEL GARCÍA
MÁRQUEZ

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE

Good Reads

CONT'D FROM PAGE 8

expected to be seen but not heard.

By comparison, Colombian magical realist Gabriel Garcia Marquez (100 Years of Solitude and, based in part on his parents' courtship, Love in the Time of Cholera) begins his life's story with Living To Tell The Tale (2003).

This is far more of a literary-style biography, written by a Nobel Prize winner who mixes memory with place and thing. Lovely writing, romance and joy, and a childhood spent overwhelmed by stories of the United Fruit Company and the soldiers who killed to ensure the bananas were delivered in time to America.

How much of what he writes is true, how much is glossed over? Garcia Marquez is in his 70s, so we may have to wait quite a few years to find out. Copyright doesn't (yet) last forever.

On Oct. 21, at 7 p.m., the Community Art Lab will show a documentary on how copyright impacts schools and YouTube at Cafe Java on Queen Street in Lennoxville. Call the gallery at 819-822-9600, ext. 2260, for details.

And there's a copyright round table scheduled the evening of Nov. 5 at the Foreman Gallery on the

Bishop's University campus.

In the meantime, the Lennoxville Library's biography section at the library is filled with delights.....

BOOK ENDS

Preschool Story Time, for ages 0 to 5, is every second Tuesday. The next story time is Oct. 26, starting at 10:30 a.m.

The Children's Saturday Activity from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. is on the first Saturday of the month: The next event is Nov. 6, followed by Dec. 4.

BOOK ENDS FOR ADULTS

Books and Brown Bags: Come and discuss a book you've read and enjoyed while having your lunch. Every second Wednesday, from noon till 1 p.m. — please come by on Oct. 19 for the next Books and Brown Bags.

For information on all Lennoxville Library events, call us at 819-562-4949 or visit us at our website www.bibliolennoxvillelibrary.ca or email bibliolen@gmail.com.