

On the Road with Tomson Highway's Blues Harmonica in "Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing"

Tomson Highway observes in the Production Notes that precede his play "Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing":

The 'sound-scape' of 'Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing' was mostly provided for by a musician playing, live, on harmonica, off to the side. The 'dream-scape' of the play is laced all the way through with Zachary Jeremiah Keechigeesik's 'idealized' form of harmonica playing, with a definite "blues" flavor (Highway 10).

The harmonica player invites the reader/audience to enter the dream, but the link between the play and the Blues warrants a preliminary explanation.

The blues is the music that arose from the recently freed slaves of the United States at the end of the 19th century. The Hayes Compromise of 1877 ended the hopes of Afro-Americans for authentic political participation in American life. This law caused the withdrawal of federal troops from the South, troops who were perceived as a buffer against white southern prejudice. By 1896 the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was declared unconstitutional and a situation of apartheid existed, for the doctrine of "separate but equal" (Cone 101) was the law. The blues emerged out of this socio-political setting.

The spirituals, which came directly out of the slavery experience, at once resemble and differ from the blues in that both forms of music emerge from the suffering of slavery and move toward transcendence, but the transcendence of the spirituals involves life after death, whereas that of the blues involves only that of historical reality on earth. The blues, although sometimes referred to as "secular spirituals" (Cone 100), are totally secular. "The blues are about black life and the sheer earth and gut capacity to survive in an extreme situation of oppression" (Cone 97). Not surprisingly, the blues

have strongly sexual overtones since on this earth the only possession the Afro-American had was the body, the body that must be celebrated.

The blues music emerges from the horror of the failed reconstruction of the South, but its power lies in the affirmation of the Afro-American self as it transforms itself through song. Thus, the structure of the blues moves from the tragedy of a lost dream, lost in the tragedy of the Post-Civil War South, toward a transcendence of this agony within the visceral affirmation of the Afro-American self.

The role of the Blues harmonica is one that parallels that of the Blues itself. Known as "the French harp," this instrument is well suited to the songs of a people hungering for a freedom that they have, yet do not have. Since the mark of the slave had been the absolute curtailment of all movement, trains and buses are important images in the Blues. Because the harmonica player could easily mimic trains, the sound of locomotives, the symbol of movement, of freedom, the harmonica was the ideal Blues instrument. Furthermore, the harmonica is seen by Blues experts as having a considerable expressive range, more volume, more versatility than the other instruments that were used by the Blues musicians. The harmonica, more easily than other instruments, can mimic the human voice.

Although Tomson Highway's characters have a very different history from that of the Afro-Americans in the South after the Civil War, the Blues harmonica suits well the situation of the Native People who are also struggling with a freedom that they have and do not have, toward some form of transcendence, some affirmation of the self. Thus, the Blues harmonica is an excellent medium of exodus for Highway's characters on the road toward meaningful liberation. This harmonica is the music that leads the characters from the poisons, sufferings, of their present state, on a journey that takes them toward a new world.

The Blues harmonica player does not participate in the play as one of its characters. Nevertheless, the musician's absence-presence is crucial for the full development of the play's potentiality. The placing of the musician on the side is symbolic of the assertion of a dynamic intertextuality by forces outside the text upon the actual play itself. Outside forces are always potentially disruptive, but in this case, this outside historical force, the suffering of the Afro-Americans of the Post-Civil War South, is interwoven into the play in such a way as to add a powerful, supportive new dimension. The eruption of an outside into the work has tremendous transformative potential for

two different reasons. (1) The sound of the Blues harmonica sings of free movement and the possibility of transcendence. (2) The concept of performance, as personified in the semi-invisible musician, also carries within its process the transformation of the text. In the new idea of performance, the work that is being performed is opened up to the forces outside it (Lenticcia and McLaughlin 97). “[P]erformance can be defined as an activity which generates transformations, as the reintegration of art with what is ‘outside’ it, an ‘opening up’ of the ‘field’” (Lenticcia and McLaughlin 103). Since, in a sense, the musician is performing Highway’s play, the musician takes the characters on a journey that will allow them to move outside the confines of their narrow, sordid existence, toward the transformation of their lives.

The tools of Northrop Frye and Jacques Derrida will be helpful to the reader/audience who must accompany the characters on this journey. Although these critics are so obviously dissimilar, analyzing the play from these two different perspectives will add two different, but meaningful, dimensions to the deciphering process. The use of Frye will reveal an exodus that moves from the bondage of misery to freedom, whereas the use of Derrida will lead the characters, as well as reader/audience, on a journey from the present moment of this misery back, back in time, beyond time, toward the origins that allow such an exodus to take place.

The Frye perspective

Deep within the rhythm of the Blues harmonica lies a hidden impetus that finds the characters within the world of tragedy, not that of an apartheid American South, but that of a Native People’s reservation that bears all the marks of an apartheid North. But this Blues harmonica, with its images of movement, of trains toward true freedom, will direct the characters from the present world of tragedy to the road of satire. On this road the characters will be given the weapons of liberation; they will see clearly all that is wrong with their society. A powerful light will shine upon them and they will understand their reality. They will see in the lucid light all vices, depravities, cruelties, all the demonic forces that have imprisoned them in a labyrinth of darkness, of violence. Highway will expose for them the torture and crucifixion of their women, the destruction of the vulnerable foetal brain of their children through foetal alcohol syndrome and the premature, senseless, violent death of their young men. But the Blues harmonica will give hope, will give the characters the gut capacity to survive, will tell the people on this reservation that the road from Corinth to Thebes is not

caught within the strange circular path of the moebius strip.

Now, a brief look at what this circular path is, this structure of classical tragedy, is necessary. If one uses Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex" as an example, the structure becomes clear. Points A and B on the opposite sides of the circle are Corinth and Thebes. No way out of this enclosed circle is possible except through ostracism, exile, death. At first, on the road from Corinth to Thebes, while one watches Oedipus fleeing his fate of parricide and incest, as predicted by the Delphic Oracle, the reader/audience thinks that true escape is possible. But as the play progresses, every step that every character in the play takes on the road to Thebes from Corinth is really a step on the road to Corinth from Thebes. Corinth represents the irreparable fate of the past. Thebes seemingly represents the freedom to create one's own destiny of the future. But Oedipus, in fleeing his past, his fate, is actually moving toward it of his own free will. Similarly, Big Joey, in attempting to flee the fate of misery on the reservation, goes to Wounded Knee in 1973. But instead of finding liberation from his fate, he finds murder and assassination. When he returns to the reservation, he brings with him the hatred and violence of the South Dakota site. Seething in hatred and despair, he becomes responsible for the three strikingly tragic events of the play: the damaged birth of his son, Dickie Bird, whom he refuses to recognize, the brutal crucifix rape of Patsy by Dickie Bird, and the subsequent accidental, suicidal death of her lover, Simon. His hatred has both caused and allowed Black Lady Halked to drink constantly for the three weeks preceding Dickie Bird's birth. This same hatred allows him to watch silently as Patsy is raped. Every one of these events can be seen as one of the steps that binds Big Joey and his people more securely than ever in their agonizing fate of impoverishment.

This tragic structure is one of narrowing inevitability in which all the characters move closer and closer to hell. The plagues of Sophocles' Thebes, which threaten to kill all life, would have killed all life here as well, but the aching beautiful strains of the Blues harmonica are heard. Somewhere within their feverish brains, the characters, through the Blues, become aware of an opening in the tragic circle. Somewhere, on this earth, within history, some form of transcendence of this agony is possible. The Blues song purges anguish, horror, just as did the ancient plays of the Greek tragedians. The harmonica, with all its range and versatility, tells them that this narrow hell is not all that exists. The Blues harmonica places them on the road toward satire which will give them the code that leads them out of

the Corinthian-Theban impasse. As Frye reminds us, this world of satire is often a wasteland, a desert, but, in this case, because the Blues harmonica continues to play, the desert is not that of the wilderness and death of the ancient Greek exiles. Rather, it will be the desert of Moses and his followers going to the Promised Land.

The weapons of satire that break the structure of the tragic circle are: militant irony, burlesque, caricature, wild, obscene humour, the hallmarks of satire. The militant irony contains a sharp-edged attack against all that the characters see. The militant aspect contains the passion and the irony contains the intellectual ability to invert reality so that contradictions are unearthed, so that the present reality is juxtaposed with an ideal of Wounded Knee that has been absolutely defiled. Instead of being a source of transcendence, Wounded Knee casts a long shadow of devastating drunkenness, brutal rape, razor-edged misogyny and accidental death over the reservation.

The burlesque, wild, obscene humour that works with this militant irony on the wasteland road of satire, allows the characters, and ourselves, the reader/audience, to have the courage to face the horrors with a bravery that otherwise would not have been possible. A drunken nine months pregnant Black Lady Halked, looking very much like the Virgin Mary, suddenly appears in the bright spotlight in mid-air, trying very hard to become more inebriated than she already is. A few scenes later the reader/audience realizes that the mid air is held up by a jukebox. This same drunken Virgin, in the Dickie Bird Bar, giving birth astride this jukebox to a brain-damaged child, is the epitome of this type of humor. So too are all the appearances of Nanabush as she, in true Rabelaisian manner, romps through the play wearing either false, gigantic rubberized breasts, belly or bum. This burlesque humor allows the characters and the reader/audience to see the demonic, chaotic labyrinth in which the characters live in such a caricatured manner that a liberating process begins. The gross exaggeration is so close to the truth that a shock occurs. What appears as wild exaggeration on the printed page or on the stage is a faithful representation of the tragedy of reservation life. But the burlesque humour creates a distancing effect allowing the recognition that what is portrayed is so absurd that surely it is not normal and natural; it is not given. Surely another way must be better. The grotesque humour creates a sense of utter chaos, but, ironically, this realization of chaos means that a certain kind of freedom exists, the freedom that comes from not having to destroy the rigid structures of society, for in this play there is no society.

Hope lies in the realization that such unbounded freedom is the stuff with which to build a new world. The zeitgeist of the Postmodern world suggests that it is only upon ruins that creativity takes place⁽¹⁾. The world of satire is a world of ruins, of pure anarchy. Within the Frye perspective, the world of comedy, which succeeds that of satire, rises from the chaos of anarchy toward the creation of a new society. The most paradigmatic example of this new society is the wedding banquets that end so many comedies, banquets to which the entire human community is invited.

The musical strains of the Blues harmonica fit beautifully into this bawdy world, for “the most expressive and dominant theme in blues is sex” (Cone 114). Here Nanabush can bump and grind and strip and kiss men’s bums to her heart’s content. Here the harmonica can sing the agony and praises of the only possession that these characters have: their bodies.

Then, faithful to those who have been on the road of bawdy, Bakhtinian carnivalesque satire, Highway moves the play in the last scene, from the desert wasteland of satire to the Promised Land of comedy. Suddenly the dream-scape of the Rabelaisian world disappears as Zachary awakens from the dream that has been the play, and all the elements of the comic world are neatly in place, including the happy ending.

Through the comic classical twist in the plot that is clearly manipulated by the intelligence of the author, the play moves from the world of satire where chaos reigns to a new order that is that of a new society. Here we see Zachary united with his wife Hera and their infant daughter. The reader/audience realizes that the mayhem of the previous scenes, the riotous drunkenness that leads to brain damage, rape, and suicide was Zachary’s nightmare. Now the scene is one of peace and love. Even the less harmful, but, nevertheless, disruptive actions of the earlier scenes were all a play within the sleeping brain of Zachary. In the opening scene of his play dream, he awakens naked on the couch of Gazelle Nataways. Panic ensues when he realizes the situation. What will Hera say? To make matters worse, he cannot find his shorts and he discovers the marks of a woman’s lips in lipstick on his bum. Throughout the dream play, his male friends, who have found his shorts, threaten to send them to Hera. The threatening complications that could perhaps destroy Zachary’s relationship with his wife are suddenly removed by the manipulated twist of Zachary’s awakening. Zachary had indeed fallen asleep naked on a couch, but it was a couch in his own house. His shorts are missing, but Hera discovers them beneath the

couch. The lipstick mark is indeed on his bum, but the conveyor of the kiss is Hera. Thus, in a sense, from the point of view of the reader/audience, a reconciliation has occurred. The furious Hera of Zachary's dream is serenely happy with the now happy, rather than harassed, Zachary. Furthermore, the reader/audience recognizes that Hera, Zachary and their infant daughter are the proper and desirable society that all have desired. The proper act of communion occurs with the reader/audience who feels that "this should be".

The new society that Highway depicts is an interesting one. Hera and Zachary's names are rooted in Western culture. Hera was the wife of Zeus and Zachary was the Hebrew Testament prophet. But Hera speaks Cree to Zachary, and a powwow bustle hangs over the poster of Marilyn Monroe on the wall. It would appear that the ingredients of the new society are composed of the richest roots of Western and of Native society. The bustle hanging over the photograph appears to imply that the richest roots of Native society can become more powerful than some of the more superficial, glossy Hollywood aspects of Western society.

Frye says that the new society of comedy is pragmatically free, free from the old obsessions that haunt tragedy and satire. Oedipus's obsession with parricide and incest, Antigone's obsession with the burial of her brother, and Big Joey's obsession with the massacre at Wounded Knee have vanished, along with the classical comic blocking character, Big Joey, himself, a constant source of hatred and violence. This pragmatic freedom exercises itself visibly as Zachary lifts his infant daughter high into the air in an act of exaltation, of celebration. She is the future and, freed of ancient poisoning obsessions, she will be able to create her own new world. The shape of that world is not defined, as it never is in comedy.

But that world will be founded upon reality, rather than upon illusion. Big Joey and Simon had lived with the illusion that traveling to Wounded Knee would free them from the grinding poverty and misery of the reservation. The Marilyn Monroe poster, with no powwow bustle draped over it at the beginning of the play, can be interpreted as a symbol of illusion. Norma Jean, the original name of Marilyn Monroe, was a signifier of the real, but the face of the woman named Marilyn on the poster is an image of illusion that led to drug abuse and suicide. Now, at the end of the play, this illusion is exorcised(2).

In true Frye fashion, one of the great myths of the Judaeo-Christian culture has been accomplished. An exodus has occurred. To the strains of the Blues harmonica, the characters have boarded the train and traveled the road from

the fallen world of tragedy to the new world of comedy through the chaos of satire. The Blues harmonica, through the structure of its music, through its singing the human heart out of its anguish toward transcendence and exodus, has enabled the characters to accept and to use the weapons of satire so that they could tread the difficult road toward comedy, the land of milk and honey. Moses is the invisible musician of the harmonica. True to scriptural tradition, once the characters have arrived in the new world that has been promised, the music of the Blues harmonica ceases. Moses never reaches Israel. Only his people do. Our harmonica player has expired in the desert. Once the world of freedom has been created, the Blues Harmonica, the instrument of liberation, has fulfilled its purpose, is no longer needed.

The Derridean Perspective

In Derrida's poetic piece *Cinders*(3), whose 1991 publication by the University of Nebraska has an excellent introduction by Ned Lukacher, the concept of "cinders" becomes the primary tool through which to understand what Derrida means by the non-presence within language. Derrida's theory concerning language, the written language, in particular, states that in order to read language properly, the reader must pay attention to the site within language, within the word, which is haunted by a lack, a kind of absence. This absence is "irreducible to either presence or absence"(Derrida 7). On the one hand, non-presence threatens all meaning, but on the other, it presents a promise that calls one to undertake a journey that can never be fully accomplished toward the origins of language, of the universe itself. Lukacher makes clear that it is Derrida's concept of "cinders" that inaugurates the journey toward the reading of the absence\presence. Cinders precede words; they are the "clinging to language of something beyond language"(Derrida 12), "the quarks of language"(Derrida 1). The call, the clinging of something entirely other(Derrida 12), is that of the "You"(Derrida 14), the Other, the Nameless One that can never be named. The reader must, in reading the word, listen to the "inaudible song, prayer"(Derrida 14), this quark of language, and in so doing, take a journey to the "there" where the cinder is, "on the far side of Dasein, just on the edge of its Being-in-the-world"(Derrida 15). It is here, "there," on the border between speech and the silence of that which lies beyond the universe of language that the cinder lies. It is there, where it beckons to an unreachable site "that is not to be conceived or experienced spatially"(Derrida 15), where "the voice of the Other burns in the silence," at the site of the first all-burn-

ing, the original holocaust that marked the big bang, the all-incineration that brought being, the universe, into existence. Derrida's methodology thus takes the reader to the Alpha moment of time.

The undertaking of the Derridean journey toward that Alpha moment will reveal that we need not mourn the death of the Blues harmonica player. We must find her\him again by making a reverse journey through the play. Toward the end Highway states that Zachary "sleep-walks through the whole lower level of the set, almost as though he were retracing his steps back through the whole play. Slowly, he takes off his clothes item by item, until, by the end, he is back lying naked on the couch where he began the play..." (Highway 124). Let us now walk backward with him.

In the final scene, two very important things occur in relation to this backward journey. Hera speaks Cree, and in her laugh one hears the laugh of Nanabush which, because it is wordless, carries one toward the silent ringing that lies beyond language. As the androgynous trickster of Native religion who is the mediator between ourselves and the Great Spirit(4), Nanabush is the perfect guide toward the big bang of the all-burning, the originary moment of creation. One also hears the silent ringing in the inaudible song of the Cree words, the song that is promised in the cinders that cling to language. The combination of the spoken Cree and the laugh of Nanabush will take the characters and the reader/audience on the road, back through the world of satire, through the world of tragedy. But the world beyond tragedy takes on the characteristics of a Derridean, rather than of a Frygian space. This world is one of shimmerings, of flickering fires, of space beyond language, rather than the green new world of Frye's romance. Frye's world of romance is the world at the time of its birth and infancy. Derrida's shimmering world is the space beyond the origin of our world, the space that moves one toward that moment of the all-burning, that moment of the birth of the cosmos. The laugh of Nanabush, the laugh beyond language, will guide us back to this world where all things are possible, the world before poison is poured into the ear of the king and into the minds of the Highway characters in the fallen world of the tragic circle.

In the land of satire, the Blues harmonica player will join us on the road so that we can more easily follow the laugh of the trickster. The musician will readily follow her. In the Production Notes Highway states that "the sound of this harmonica...under-line[s] and highlight[s] the many magical appearances of Nanabush in her various guises" (Highway 10). We need the

structure, the rhythm, the cathartic sorrow and hidden promise of the Blues to prevent us from going astray.

Perhaps more than anything else, the language of Cree (as well as Ojibway), that Hera speaks and that many of the characters speak throughout the play, makes possible Zachary's retracing sleep-walk journey. Hera's words of Cree enable the reader/audience, the characters, to set out on the journey of sensing the non-presence in her words that leads us to the cinder that clings, that calls us through its inaudible song. For a non-Native reader/audience, the hearing of the Cree language is a defamiliarizing experience that causes an awareness, in an acute manner, of the absence that clings to the words, to the silence that haunts them. Re-immersion in the play through Zachary's walk backward takes the reader/audience once again to the dramatic hockey game of the women and the wild narration of that game in Cree. Such an extended defamiliarizing experience can then apply to the words of English that inform most of the play.

The final words of the fatally wounded young Simon allow us to follow the cinders of words on the journey toward the hockey game, with its barrage of Cree words. Simon, who has dreamed of restoring Native spirituality to his people, utters these words: "Kammoowanow...apple...pie...patima...neetha...igwo Patsy...n'gapeetootanan...patima...apple...pie...neee" (Highway 116). The cinder that clings to every English word is accentuated by the juxtaposition with the Cree words. "Apple" and "pie," the most familiar and everyday of words, appear to develop an unrecognizability, an inaudibility that makes them strangely alien, as if the meaning that they usually convey is absent. A mysterious code is presented to us, a code that is augmented by the pauses that the dying Simon places between his words. This sense of the absent meaning of the code calls the audience toward something, towards the laugh of Nanabush. The call toward this journey is facilitated by the Blues harmonica, an audible song, whose sound, with its familiarity, urges us onward. Since the harmonica, a great simulator of the human voice, is without words, this instrument is a perfect vehicle for calling the characters beyond the world of language toward the silent ringing.

The stage directions say, "From the darkness of the theatre emerges the magical flickering of a luminescent powwow dancing bustle" (Highway 38). "The two bustles "play" with each other, looking like two giant fire-flies (Highway 38). Another stage direction says, "The shimmering movements of the bustle balloon out into these magical, dance-like arches" (Highway

115). The luminescent shimmerings are the cinders of the fires of the original all-burning toward which all language takes us. The presence of Nanabush is strongly associated with shimmering fire.

But one must recognize also in the shimmering fire the semi- invisible figure of the Blues harmonica player who has now become silent. This player was the initial absence/presence that called the characters toward the original all-burning. By means of an audible song, the Blues harmonica called everyone toward the inaudible song which the strains of the music always promised. The Blues harmonica is now part of that inaudible song.

We, the reader/audience and the characters, cannot reach that unreachable Other who is the origin of this wondrous activity, but the words of the languages lead us toward the Other. This is the journey that Zachary takes as he sleep-walks backward through the play. This journey is toward the “place for giving, rendering, celebrating, loving” (Derrida 39), for it is the site of the promise of the giving of the original, all-burning moment of creation, the promise of the name of the Nameless Other beyond Being that holds everything in being. A nice comic twist occurs within the last scene when Zachary, who has just awakened from his walk toward the origins of time, to a fresh world that still shimmers with the fires of creation, holds aloft in a triumphant gesture, his infant daughter, who, as yet, is a nameless one.

Thus, a strange dialectical movement pervades the play: one is the exodus of those fleeing bondage, and one is the free falling through time of those seeking the origin of the giving which created the universe. Perhaps the cinders of the dying words of Simon, the one who most passionately wanted to journey toward the shimmering fire of Nanabush, are one of the most important guides on that free falling journey. Both movements involve journeying on a road that is perilous, but one must remember that the greatest facilitator on that road is the Blues harmonica. Perhaps on a journey toward his own roots, songs of free West Africans, the harmonica player sings the audible song that makes the journey possible. The harmonica expresses the sorrow and, in the luminescent shimmerings of Nanabush with which it is so closely joined, promises the joy of liberation that permeates the lives of those who are “en marche,” those who are on the road.

NOTES

- 1 The works of such Postmodern novelists as Alain Robbe-Grillet's *Recollections of the Golden Triangle*, are filled with scenes of devastation, abandoned and derelict buildings, smoldering ruins of luxurious mansions. In short, this novel is filled with narrative fragments

that the narrator finds among the flotsam and jetsam of these ruins, jetsam from which he creates this very novel that is in the process of gestation.

- 2 OR! A very different interpretation can point to the idea that the icon image of Marilyn Monroe, an image that carries with it all the dubious baggage just mentioned, has, through its mingling with Native culture, been transformed into a Nanabush character, a messenger of the Great Spirit. In this interpretation illusion also is dispelled. Marilyn becomes "real" in a positive sense.
- 3 Although one is aware of the Derridean traces of such early works as *Of Grammatology*, where his concern with language creates a linguistically dense atmosphere, the linguistic pre-occupation in *Cinders*, a poem, one of the latest works of Derrida, is superseded by a much more mystical orientation. Other very recent works of Derrida, such as *Memoirs of the Blind*, that was published in English in the summer of 1993, also bear the mark of this mysticism. It is as if the earlier influence of the French Jewish intellectual, Levinas, plus Derrida's emphasis upon the interrelationship between philosophy and literature, are the seeds that have brought forth this flowering. Since this play of Tomson Highway has such a strong component of the spirituality of Native People, the use of this recent work of Derrida seemed more fitting than did his earlier work.
- 4 The meaning of the trickster changes from tribe to tribe. But some fundamental characteristics of meaning can be gleaned among these differences. The trickster is a transformative element in the lives of the characters in the pieces of literature where he/she is operative. Kimberly M. Blaeser. "Transforming the Self with Trickster Humor: Vizenor's Autobiographical Vision." M.L.A. conference, 1993. Session called Crossing the Genres: Trickster, Tropes and Transformations in Native American Literature. Program arranged by the Division on Native American Literatures. The transformation is usually from pain and horror into humor, a healing process that is crucial for tenacious survival. The leading American Indian Literature scholar, A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, uses the word "trickster" only in hyphenation with the word "transformer" in her book *American Indian Literatures: An Introduction, Bibliographic Review, and Selected Bibliography*. New York: Modern Languages of America, 1990. Finally, the trickster exhibits a supernatural power, while simultaneously acting as the prototype of human possibilities.

WORKS CITED

- Cone, James H. *The Spirituals and the Blues: An Interpretation*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1991.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Cinders*, trans. Ned Lukacher. Lincoln, Nebraska: U. Nebraska P., 1989.
- Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy Of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 1971.
- Highway, Tomson. "Dry Lips Oughta Move To Kapuskasing." Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1989.
- Lenticchia, Frank and Thomas McLaughlin, eds. *Critical Terms for Literary Study*. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1990.
- Robbe-Grillet, Alain. *Recollections of the Golden Triangle*, trans. J.A. Underwood. New York: Grove, 1984.
- Oliver, Paul. *The Story of the Blues*. Philadelphia: Chilton, 1969.
- Sophocles. "Oedipus Rex." *The Theban Plays*, trans. E.F. Watling. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986.