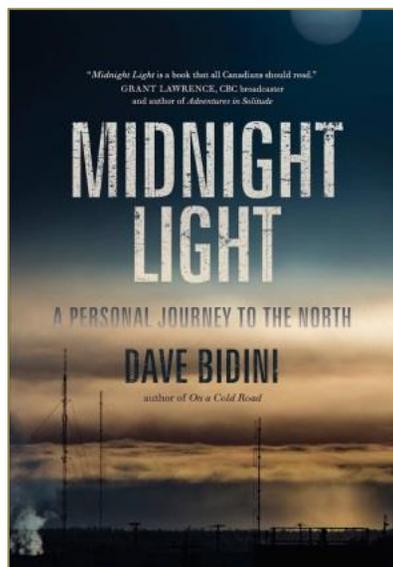


## SPOTLIGHT ON BOOKS



I hope this doesn't count as too spoilery, but at the end of Dave Bidini's *Midnight Light*, his memoir of a summer spent working for the *Yellowknifer*, he writes, "Yellowknifers were distinct and true in all of their imperfections, and they taught a lesson one can never be too smart to learn: it's okay to be yourself, whether anyone's noticing or not."

As themes or morals go, it's pretty great and, dare I say it, a pretty astute observation about Yellowknifers especially considering Bidini's relatively short time in the city. It's also explored and written about really well, especially in Bidini's use of former *Yellowknifer* reporter John McFadden as an illustrative example.

Still, I found myself hung up another theme, perhaps a more personal theme, defined a few chapters earlier in Bidini's description of a particular area of town known as the Woodyard, "The Woodyard was still hidden because of its location, visible only once you were in it."

This past Canada Day marked my 10th year in Yellowknife and I'm just now making my peace with one facet of Yellowknife life: there's always a lot happening behind the proverbial scenes. There's more than one might expect and it's happening fast. If you want to keep abreast of it all, you will need to work hard at it and work constantly. If you do not, you'll just have to accept and wait for the inevitable next thing.

Bidini writes about his time here in 2014 and his mere presence came as news to me these four years later. This is not to say he didn't make an impression on people in Yellowknife, just that I wasn't one of them. He seems, too, to have gotten to know certain local "celebrities" far more intimately than I ever have or likely ever will. To some extent, this is due to his role while he was here, acting as a reporter for the *Yellowknifer*. In essence, it was his job to "be in the know" and he had limited time to do so. I'll also give him credit for being good at what he does in terms of drawing astute, and arguably, shrewd conclusions about people in a short span of time. It certainly doesn't hurt that he was able to write about it all in a very conversational, often witty, tone.

There are, however, undercurrents of gossip that would likely go unnoticed for readers not from here, but that will likely ruffle a few feathers locally. While he sometimes uses aliases or states that particular sources didn't wish to be named, for the most part Bidini names names, shares some pretty personal stories, and even some rather unflattering opinions. Times like those I am thankful that I was caught up in my own world during Bidini's visit! Still, I am quite interested in how those mentioned receive the book.

Yellowknife Public Library will be co-sponsoring the book launch of *Midnight Light* with Dave Bidini at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre on Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup> from 2-4:00pm; hosted by the Yellowknife Book Cellar.

John Mutford, Library Manager

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