

# Peter Gzowski

(1934-2002)

Writer, reporter, broadcaster



POLISH SPIRIT



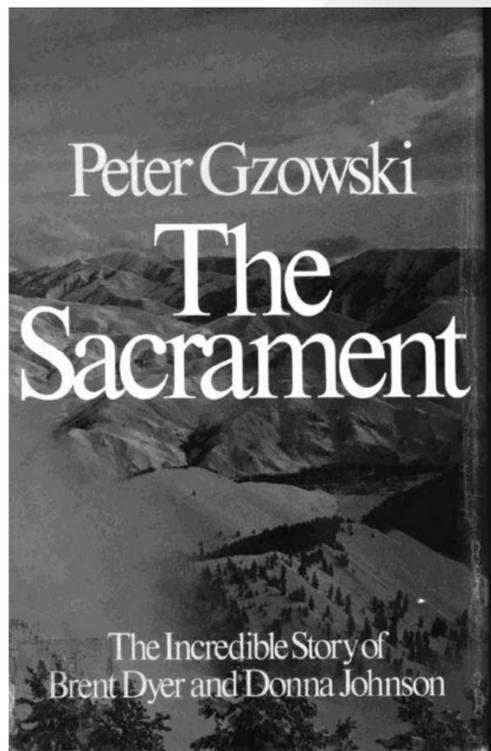
The thrice great-grandson of Polish nobleman and former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Sir Casimir Gzowski, Peter Gzowski was born in Toronto, attended Ridley College in St. Catharines, and the University of Toronto. Although he never graduated, he eventually accumulated twelve honorary degrees, wrote sixteen books and late in life was named chancellor of Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario.

After a meteoric rise in the world of journalism, he became the youngest-ever managing editor of *Maclean's* at twenty-eight. He left print journalism for radio in 1971 to become host of Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *This Country in the Morning*, but is best known for his three-hour daily radio programme *Morningside*, which ran from 1982 to 1997. At its peak, *Morningside* had one-and-a-half million listeners, and won the prestigious international Peabody award for excellence in electronic media. In 1996, Gzowski was further recognized with a personal Peabody award. The citation reads in part:

"As host of *Morningside*, Mr. Gzowski has presided over, in his words, 'a sort of village bulletin board for the nation.' He has forged an intimacy with listeners equal to any in the annals of broadcasting. Breakfast with Peter Gzowski has been a mainstay of much of the Canadian population, from political figures and celebrities to millions of ordinary citizens. Many Americans lucky enough to live in Canadian Border States have become acolytes as well."

Gzowski took a passionate interest in all things Canadian: he interviewed eight prime ministers, the queen, Inuit throat singers, Nobel-prize winners, gardeners, authors both well-known and undiscovered, an autistic woman, hockey stars, a victim of sexual abuse – twenty-seven thousand interviews in all. If Canada has often been called a country in search of an identity, Gzowski did as much as anyone could to create that identity. He introduced Canadians to themselves.

A lifelong heavy smoker, Peter Gzowski succumbed to emphysema at sixty-seven.



Photos from top left clockwise:  
• Peter Gzowski • Before going on air • In front of University Theatre • In his studio  
All photos – CBC archives