Clarion Review

Humor

Constant Interruptions: A Collection of Chaos
M. Craig Williams
iUniverse
978-1-936236-22-0
Five Stars (out of Five)

Satire, the literary method that uses humor and sarcasm to criticize an individual or society, is an art form with a long and distinguished history. Aristophanes, Chaucer, Jonathan Swift, Mark Twain, and George Orwell are just a few of the important writers who were known for their satire. Modern examples are numerous. The cartoon *Southpark*, Stephen Colbert and the popular newspaper *The Onion* are well known examples. With *Constant Interruptions: A Collection of Chaos*, M. Craig Williams adds unique wit and perspective to this respected tradition.

The book is set in the fictional city of Umbrage, Ontario, which "flows out of hardworking, blue-collar, lunch-bucket people who favor good ol' rock 'n' roll and easy listening tunes over the monotony of the local symphony. Folks eat with a fork and spoon, but masticate their peas without the aid of a knife because, simply put, aid is for welfare cases and their thumbs work just fine." Williams writes as the main character, bouncing from coffee shop to coffee shop, and wandering the streets watching the world go by around him. He brings life to some very colorful characters, all of whom contain a hint of desperation or despair as they search for happiness and meaning in their mundane lives. His own inner demons are on display when he reveals some deeply personal fears and memories. Otherwise, Williams waxes eloquent on a variety of topics, including environmentalism, materialism, family and politics. His offbeat and slightly nutty observations coupled with his outrageous irreverence will have many readers laughing out loud.

Few groups escape the sharp point of his pen. If the reader is a union supporter, has ever received government aid, has lived in the US or Canada or is either male or female, there is likely something in this book that will strike a nerve. His conservative ideology is most keenly visible when he addresses religion, taxation and government, and many readers will not agree with his viewpoint. Still, the mischievous glee with which he writes is contagious and his

informal style is highly readable. Surely, it is healthy to laugh at ourselves once in a while. *Constant Interruptions* will help the reader to do just that.

Catherine Thureson