

David Lewis remembers
the two faces of



Alastair Sweeny tells
the inside story of



Richard Gwyn praises
with faint damns



THEATRE IN PRINT / BOOKSTORES KNOWN & LOVED

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MIS PRIVY PARTS

On perusing the diaries of Mackenzie King, self - annointed leader and most peculiar man

A Very Double Life: The Private World of Mackenzie King, by C. P. Stacey, Macmillan, 256 pages, \$10.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1390-5).

By DAVID LEWIS

IN THE 1930s and '40s one heard rumours about King's fascination with spiritualism and the occult and one shrugged. After all, his actions were so devious that Un-natural influences could not be discounted. His interest in and friendship with women, most of them married, was public knowledge, but even Ottawa's gossip mill did not question the purity of these associations. Thus there were polite whispers about the Liberal leader's unusual interests, but there was no excitement.

What we learn from Dr. Stacey's book, and from other

When one confronts King's consuming religiosity and protestations of democracy with his tinge, of anti-Semitism and loving "admiration for Hitler ... one begins to feel the complexity of the man.

sources, is that King laid out all in his diaries: his obsessive preoccupation with the spirits of the dead and his priggish struggles against his sexual impulses. It makes interesting but uncomfortable reading. The thought that such was the man who achieved unparalleled political success in Canada is unnerving. When, in addition, one remembers that he was excruciatingly dull as a speaker, that his statements were usually ambiguous and sometimes incomprehensible, that he seemed to have no sense of humour, and that his chubby figure was nondescript except for its sartorial correctness, one is ready to join King in his spiritualist explorations in search of the answer. Then one remembers his arresting blue eyes — restless, curious, and intense. They proclaimed that somewhere in this man's brain was lodged intelligence and strength.

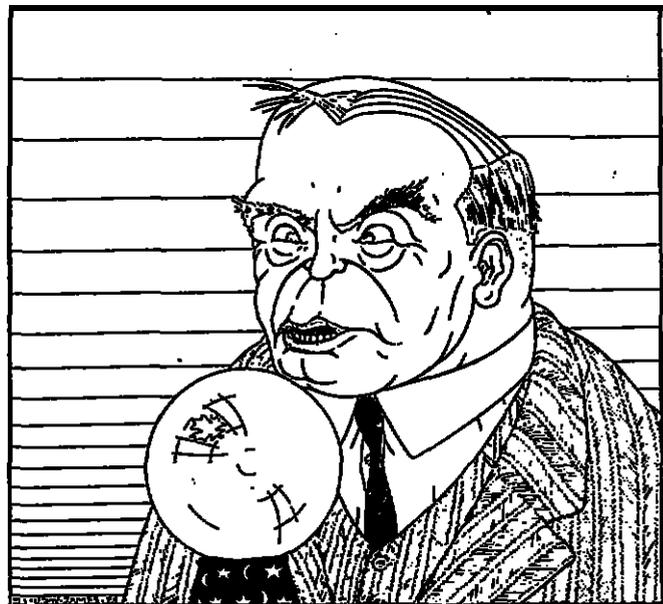
Dr. Stacey's description of the relevant entries in the diaries, and his quotations from them, are absorbing. However, his attempts at explaining the phenomenon are not convincing. The book gives us strange and bewildering insights into King the man, but they are scattered through the volume. The author fails to knit them into a pattern uniquely related to the dominating character that was King, to the incredibly successful politician and effective administrator. Indeed, the author emphasizes more than once that King did not allow "the spirits to influence him in matters of public affairs." If that is so, of what value is the book except as entertainment?

I kept asking myself this question as I read the book. I am not criticizing Dr. Stacey for having written it. I am not one of those who think it bad taste to expose the questionable behaviour of dead public figures. Having been in active politics for many years, I tend to join the company of the

irreverent, particularly where people like Mackenzie King are concerned. But Dr. Stacey's book falls short; it does not pose the questions that demand consideration, let alone answer them.

Perhaps the answers are out of reach; perhaps there are many and conflicting answers. Perhaps the mind and spirit of Mackenzie King were too complex to unravel; perhaps they were even tinged with a streak of madness. All of these are possible and no doubt more. But I would have found the book more satisfying had the author attempted some intellectual probing into the character that the diaries revealed. But then Dr. Stacey is a historian, not a psychiatrist or psychologist. He may well say to people like me, "I have collected the data for you, construct your own hypotheses."

There are excerpts from the diaries that shed an unpleasant light on much of King's behaviour. It is, for example, common for many of us to accuse Liberals of acting as if God had assigned them, and them alone, to rule Canada. King apparently believed it as far as he, himself, was concerned. When he was elected leader of the Liberal Party in August, 1919, he wrote in his diary, "I thought: it is right, it is the call of duty. I have sought nothing, it has come. It has come from God" (Stacey, page 157). The entry also contained the usual references to the presence at his triumph of his dead mother, father, and others, including, of course, his rebel grandfather and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. But what interested me particularly were the two short sentences just quoted. They reveal a great deal about Mr. King. They reveal his insecurity and consequent arrogance: his election to the leadership was "right", it was "the call of duty." They show his instinctive tendency to prevaricate: he sought nothing, the leadership just came. If ever there was a sanctimonious distortion, this is surely it. And, of course, it came from God. By the way, I do not believe that history repeats itself, but as one watches the present incumbent of King's office, one wonders.



Most people **who** watched King through the 1930s and '40s and knew him a little, found it hard to **like** the man, much as one may. have admired his political dexterity. We did not have the bewildering evidence of the diaries but there he was either disarmingly humble or irritatingly **arrogant** but seldom quite honest. I recall the almost universal **approval** of a description of King that was given a number of sources (I heard it as coming from Churchill): "Here comes King. oozing oil at every pore." Unkind perhaps, but right on, as they say nowadays. 1

When one **confronts** King's consuming religiosity and protestations of democracy with his tinge of anti-Semitism and loving admiration for Hitler (before the **war**, of course), one begins to feel the complexity of the man. Dr. **Stacey's** book increases our **bewilderment**. It is too bad that King kept the more **intriguing** aspects of his **personality** for the privacy of his diaries. If he hadn't, he might not **have** won, as many elections but how much more interesting it would have been for his **contemporaries**. □

CONVENTIONAL BIDDING

An insider assesses an outsider's report on how Camp and Clark made their contract

Winners, Losers: The 1976 Tory Leadership Convention, by Patrick Brown, Robert Chodos, and Rae **Murphy**, James **Lorimer and Company**, 152 pages, \$12, cloth (ISBN 0.88862-105-1) and \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0-88862-104-3).

By **ALASTAIR SWEENEY**

WHEN I HEARD that three investigative reporters from *Last Post* — a veritable troika of **Trotskyites** — were **going to** do an instant **book** on the Tory Leadership Convention, I was, to say the **least**, apprehensive. I had worked at the convention, and **wrote** press releases and **policy** statements for one of the candidates (Jim **Gillies**). I enjoyed the whole show immensely — the evolutionary cataclysm of it all — and didn't particularly relish the **thought** of **Brown**, **Chodos**, and **Murphy** pricking and deflating my blue balloon of happiness.

Marvellous to behold, the authors have produced a **fast-paced**, literate blow-by-blow account of the convention that is a **delight** to read. One can blame them for **sometimes** lapsing into condescension and sentimentality — and the requisite reference to blessed martyr Salvador Allende — but on the whole they write with wit and insight and eyes wide open, not only about the candidates and their patch-work policies, but more importantly about the voting delegates, those loose fish everyone was trying to catch.

Some of their vignettes are priceless — the **poor** print journalists huddled around television sets bleating "**Whaddya hear?**" to each other; the description of Flora MacDonald's camp as "the **Waffle** with its act together" — and their conclusions as to the wheeling and **dealing** that cent **on are** not too far off base. They acknowledge right **away** that "as outsiders we had many advantages. One was that we **were** not privy to **the** misinformation, baseless **rumours**, and outright lies that political insiders confide in each other." Unfortunately this stance sometimes leads them into trouble, as when they conclude: "**so** we didn't **have** the inside story of what was going on in Ottawa, but then neither did Brian **Mulroney**." **Balderdash!** **Mulroney** knew exactly what **was going on**, **from beginning to end**.

The authors' failure to pin down **Mulroney's** role is the chief **flaw** in the book. If they had concentrated on the tight between the two factions of the party, between the Big Blue

Machine (BBM), Dalton Camp, and **Mulroney's Laval Mafia** on one hand, and the old followers of Dief, the Chateau Cabinet and Claude Wagner on the **other**, they might have pulled it together. When they suggest that "Camp should be believed that he himself has very little influence on the Conservative **Party**," they **make their first** big mistake, even allowing for the fact that "Camp has now become a generic **term**," a symbol for moderate **Conservatism**. What the authors really needed **was** a "Deep Throat" to tell them what was going on. In fact, "Deep



Drawing by Aislin (Terry Mosher) from *Winners, Losers*.

Throat did surface in the months before the convention. His name is Peter White; although he had organized for Claude Wagner, he was 'one of Mulroney's pals, and the information he leaked regarding Wagner and the George-Etienne Cartier Fund effectively scuttled Claude Wagner's leadership chances, and allowed Joe Clark to squeak in with the narrowest of margins.

The authors do make a fair slab at deciphering the byzantine labyrinth of information that faced them. Consider the following little delight:

White alone was strange enough, but the Mulroney ranks were also swelled by Richard B. Holden and Robert Y. MacGregor. Holden, who prosecuted Consumer Affairs Minister André Ouellet for contempt of court, later launched what became 'the Affair of the Judges' by leaking letters written by his former law partner Judge Kenneth Mackay, who complained to Justice Minister Ron Basford that Holden hadn't been paid, and threw in a few allegations of ministerial hanky-panky:

Holden's client, MacGregor, owns a travel agency called MacGregor Travel, whose questionable dealing with Air Canada were exposed by Elmer MacKay, who nominated Wagner at the convention.

It was obvious a year ago that unless somebody cut into Wagner's unanimity in Quebec, he would enter the conven-

What the authors really needed was a "Deep Throat" to tell them what was going on. In fact, "Deep Throat" did surface in the months before the convention. His name is.. ..

lion with an unbeatable core of strength. Enter Brian Mulroney, his *raison d'être* to chop what could have been a first-ballot margin for Wagner of as many as 750 votes (about three-fifths of what was needed to win) into one of 531 votes.

As it was, the first ballot was incredibly close. The BBM/Camp/Laval Mafia side (Clark, Mulmney, MacDonald, Stevens, Fraser, Gillies, Graffey) totalled 1,277 votes; the Chief/Chateau cabinet/Claude side (Wagner, Homer, Hellyer, Nowlan) managed to gel 1,083, for a 194-vote difference, but a real spread of only 98 votes, which if they went to Wagner, would have given him the victory. Clark had the best potential for growth, and doubled his vote on the second ballot when Stevens, Gillies, and Grafhey went over to his side. The third ballot was a cliffhanger — 1,003 for Wagner, 969 for Clark, 369 for Mulmney. How many Mulmney supporters would go over to Wagner? Claude Dupras, president of the Quebec wing, did either that or be finished in the province—but only one third of the Mulroney supporters followed suit. If one half of them had gone over, Wagner would have won.

Winners, Losers fails in not recognizing, how Dalton Camp, master bridge player, just barely made his contract. If the authors had grasped Camp's brilliance in being able to catch a lot of different fish with variations of the same lure, or by casting the widest possible net, they would have seen

If the authors had grasped Camp's brilliance in being able to catch a lot of different fish with variations of the same lure... they would have seen that there was something for everyone in the team that coalesced around Joe Clark.

that there was something for everyone in the team that coalesced around Joe Clark. If you wanted a brilliant

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economist, you got Jim Gillies; a Bay Street hoc-shot, Sinclair Stevens: a bilingual Kennedy, Brian Mulroney; an earthy compassionate woman, Flora MacDonald; a law and order man, John Fraser. Put all those image-lures together and you catch a lot of fish; or, to mix metaphors, make a lot of tricks.

If Dalton Camp had been more visible, Wagner might have polled it off. But the Chief/Chateau cabinet/Claude side was seriously divided, poorly organized, and motivated chiefly by a desire to wreak vengeance on Camp. It wasn't enough, and the delegates recognized this. Another aspect of what should be called the Camp victory was the defection of a lot of Hellyer and Homer supporters to Clark, when they were supposed to go to Wagner.

The convention itself is the hero of Brown, Chodis and Murphy's story. Having feasted, like the authors, on Mulroney's chowder, Flora's pancakes, and Nowlan's apples, my brow under one of Hellyer's excellent-quality straw hats, I have to agree with the woman from Rimouski, quoted in *Winners. Losers*, that it was "un tabarnak de bon parry."

Although David Lloyd's photos and Terry Mosher's cartoons add greatly to the authors' perspective, I think I should object to Mosher's ugly portrait of Flora Macdonald, and his insulting cartoon of Jack Homer, who is portrayed wearing cowboy boots faintly emblazoned with the Nazi eagle and swastika. This is a pretty cheap shot and mars what is otherwise a fine book about a great political event. □

SMUG AS A BUG

If the truth can make us free, will exaggerated truth make us freer?

But Not in Canada, by Walter Stewart, Macmillan, 285 pages, \$10.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1386-7).

By RICHARD GWYN

THIS REVIEW comes in two parts. The bad news is that *But Not in Canada* is a bad book. Although lively and well-written, it is also Ilio and unconvincing. The good news is that Stewart is what he is, an insistent reminder of what good journalism is all about — caring, and the ability to communicate to others that sense of caring.

The problem with *But Not in Canada* is that it isn't really a book. Like Stewart's other books, *Shrug* (Trudeau as elitist), *Divide and Con* (national elections as an exercise in pandering to regionalism), and *Hard to Swallow* (the food industry as rip-off), his latest is a magazine article padded out so that it fills all the space in between hard covers. The process, and this is the pity, turns a fiat-rate magazine article into a second-rate book.

Although *But Not in Canada* almost reaches the magic mark of 300 pages, all you need to do to get its message is to read the first and last chapters (a total of just 10 pages), in which Stewart states his thesis ("Smugness has become a

Canadians are insufferably smug, but are still unsmug enough to know it. Also, because of luck, geography, history, and other accidents, we really do have something to be smug about.

national religion, a national disgrace") and re-states it ("It is a dangerous myth because it blinds us to the reality we face in the coming decade"). and then to pick any two or three of the chapters in between. In these chapters Stewart sets out his evidence that Canadians have nothing to be smug about. At times the writing sparkles: "We are smugger than a Baptist minister with his hands on the keys to every liquor closet and chastity belt in town." Stewart presents his evidence in persuasive, you-an-there detail: Canadian riots, from V-Day in Halifax to Maurice Richard

night in Montreal; a gang-rape of an Indian girl in Saskatchewan; a personal anecdote about the War Measures Act. The topics differ, but the texture is identical: we think we are a classless society but we are not (John Porter); we think we are non-colonialists, but we are not (Canadian banks in the West Indies); we think we are tolerant, but we are not (our attitudes toward Indians, ethnics, immigrants).

Okay, okay, okay. You have a point, Walter, but you have exaggerated it, and you haven't proved it. Canadians are insufferably smug, but are still unsmug enough to know it. Also, because of luck, geography, history, and other accidents we really do have some things to be smug about. Stewart provides no international comparisons and so escapes the need to admit that our home-made TV programs are almost innocent of violence; that the same government — where else would it happen? that imposed the War Measures Act provided a job for Pierre Vallières, the intellectual architect of the FLQ terrorists; that our foreign-aid program is applauded by just about everyone-except Canadians; that our immigration laws for all their flaws, are less discriminatory than anyone else's.

This lack of perspective makes it too easy to put down *But Not in Canada* in the middle, as I did until I forced myself to plough on to the end in order to be able to write a review that was "fair."

Stewart of course isn't fair. He combines two qualities that reinforce each other. First, he is a superb journalist. Everyone wants to be an "investigative reporter" these days, but the talents demanded are rare: energy, both explosive and long-winded; an ability to empathize with individuals so that they open up; but also the ability when necessary to bully information out of them; an absolute refusal to accept defeat; an understanding of how the system actually works and how, therefore, decisions actually are made; and an eye for the revealing detail amid a mass of information that's otherwise stodgy and innocent (most in-&e scoops start from published information that most reporters are too lazy to read). Good legs, in other words, and a keen, inquisitive mind. Also, an ability to write, not with literary grace but in short, declarative sentences that leave no doubt about their meaning: "While the Americans wal-

low in guilt and self-doubt, we bubble with joy and self-righteousness. Thank God, we say, for our British traditions and innate Canadian decency."

Stewart's other quality — one that has made him not a journalistic super-star like Peter Newman or Pierre Berton but a role-model in a profession permeated by superficiality, cynicism and, it hardly needs to be said, smugness — is that he is a believer. Belief these days is as out of fashion as early 1960s liberalism or late '60s radicalism. The Company of Young Canadians died the other day, and no one even noticed.

Stewart isn't so much the Last Angry Man (mostly, angry people are choleric that the world hasn't recognized their talents) as the Last Believer. He believes, if not in the perfectibility of man, in the perfectibility of man's institutions. He also believes that the truth shall set us free.

In the 19th century, Stewart would have been a pamphleteer. Today, he is in fact taming out political tracts, but he packages them with all the skills of a firm-rate journalist. Readable outrage is his formula.

To watch Stewart performing at the top of his form, you have to turn to the October 6, 1975, issue of *Macleans*. It contained two 3,000-word articles by him. One was on Vice-President Nelson Rockefeller, who earns, from the family fortune, "\$535.32 an hour for every hour of his life," who is a compulsive flesh-presser, ("The hands are pumping, to right and left, throwing off waves so hearty they ripple through the tables and carom off the diners"), and who is throwing his "liberal" image as far away as he can pitch it ("A few carping critics may complain that, within three miles of where we are sitting, stand over-

crowded, rat-infested shacks"). The other article was one of the finest pieces that Stewart has done. It analyzed, in the sort of detail that leaves no room for debate, the record of the Unity Bank, an institution that probably few people have heard of, but which got its charter, which is pretty much a charter to print money, on a promise to involve Canadians "of many ethnic origins in every facet of its affairs" and to have a "strong social commitment" to the country's underdeveloped regions.

Charter in hand, Unity Bank has done no such things. It has become just another bank, making a lot of money — at least for its founders, one-of whom put up \$50,000 in return

In the 19th century, Stewart would have been a pamphleteer. Today, he is in fact turning out political & acts, but he packages them with all the skills of a first-rate journalist.

for \$500,000 worth of shares, which is even better than Senator Guigere managed with Sky Shops. "Unity is not the bank that was described before Parliament," concludes Stewart, "and nobody in charge appears either to know or to care."

Stewart does care — about the Unity Bank, about Rockefeller, about food industry rip-offs, about our smugness. He wants us to know about them. He believes that if we do know we will do something. Maybe Stewart's expectations are too high, but thank God he is what he is — a believer who can write, and who can dig; □

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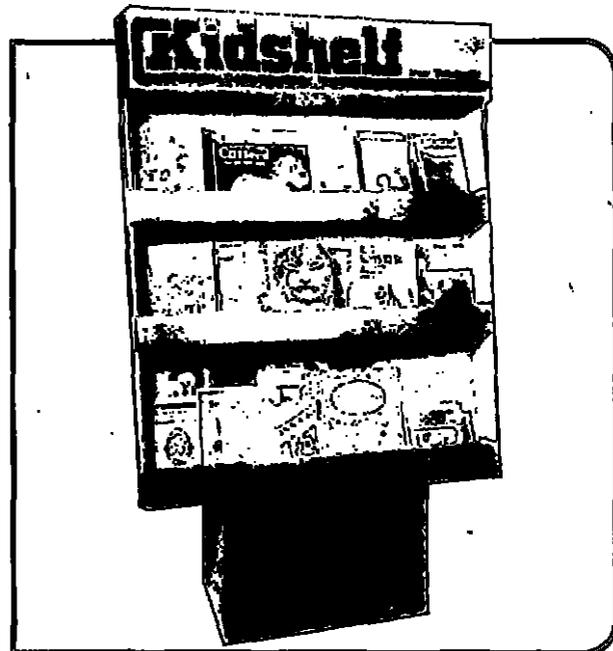
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THE JOYS OF SELLING

Want to run a book shop? Here's what's in store on the tundra, on the Prairies, and in the city core,

By BEVERLY SLOPEN

THERE ARE TWO proverbial sayings about bookstores as cultural barometers: you can judge a community by the quality of its bookstores; and a city usually gets the bookstores it deserves. In Canada the presence and health of book shops are especially telling. Given the vast distances, sparse population, and the hundreds of thousands of books in print in English every year. Canada has to be the toughest book market in the world — outside of Senegambia, which they say is tougher.

Yet Canada supports three major bookstore chains which are steadily adding posh-pins to their maps of store locations and a couple of hundred independent book shops. Once bookstores were almost exclusively adornments of Canada's major cities, but recently a few brave pioneers have been inching out to the settlements of the mountains, the Prairies, the wild coasts, and even the tundra.

Two years ago, Norm Lewis took over an ailing bookstore in Yellowknife, combined it with an ailing stationery business, called it Norm's Territorial Book and Stationery Limited, and is beginning to make a go of it. Stationery still outsells books two to one in his busy shop, where he employs two full-time and two part-time staff. When school is out and the library is closed, the store is crowded with kids thumbing the picture books — embryonic book-buyers at best.

Norm, 39, the son of a bookseller in Builth Wells, Wales, settled in Yellowknife in 1970. His training had been in business administration and his experience had been in the steel industry near Swansea. After his marriage broke up, he joined two friends, both engineers, in Yellowknife.



At first he worked for the Territorial government as a library clerk, then joined Manpower as a counsellor.

In April, 1974, he opened his book shop in the three-block strip on Franklin Avenue that serves as Yellowknife's downtown. Nearby is La Gondola Restaurant and Bar, across the street is the Yellowknife Inn, and up the block are the Kentucky-fried chicken and hamburger drive-ins of your average suburban plaza. On the horizon are the haunting silhouettes of the two gold mines, newly active in the 1970s version of the gold-rush.

At the outset, Norm ordered in a good supply of Penguin paperback classics and a nearly comprehensive list of northern books. He also made space for Canadian writing and children's literature.

Given the myths of the north, one would like to imagine colourful sourdoughs stocking up on the works of Proust to be read by the flicker of the oil lamp; but that is more fantasy than fact. Norm does a brisk mail-order business. However, his customers in the northern settlements tend to order instructional books, while his far-flung customers on the "outside" (that is, south of the 60th parallel) eagerly order from his catalogue of northern books. One might also imagine that the local citizens cherish Norm most during the black, icy winters, but that is the time business is slowest... The community is so relentlessly organized that people have no time for reading, what with curling, movies in the high-school gym, clubs such as the Daughters of the Midnight Sun, and a little theatre group. Norm himself has just finished playing a town crier in a Victor Herbert musical. It's during the summer, when visitors pass through town and the sun shines all night long, that Norm sells the most books.

Bookselling on the frontier presents practical problems, namely postal service and shipping. Both are expensive and, at times, impossible. Twice a year during the thaw and freeze-up, Yellowknife is cut off from overland routes and a postal strike can mean exorbitant air charges. Norm also has 20 to 50 special orders a day for customers wanting titles he doesn't have in stock, and the publishers' methods of filling them are intensely frustrating.

Commenting on the low turn-over in Canadian books and children's literature, Norm remarks with some bitterness: "Yellowknife really doesn't deserve a good bookstore."

But on a more positive note he adds that in two years business has tripled over the sales of the previous owners. And he is seeking ways to make the operation even more secure. As a sideline, he is supplying the racks at the airport and the Explorer Hotel, and he talks about a possible expansion to Calgary to help service Yellowknife more efficiently.

The permafrost is a tough terrain for the flowering of literature. It's the Barrens.

To expand sales and reduce costs proportionately, some Canadian entrepreneurs have preferred to string a bunch of stores together in a chain. The two big chiefs of the Canadian book-chain business are Jack Cole of Coles and Louis Melzack of Classic Book Shops. Both men started as-deal-

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Great craftsmanship and artistry have always been lavished on oriental rugs. They have, in other times and places, often achieved the grandeur and status of monumental art and were the prized possessions of bishops and kings. At the turn of the century they sold at a par with the finest paintings of the great masters with prices in excess of \$100,000. Since Black Friday, 1929, interest is only now returning and signs of a full rebirth are evident.

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ers in second-hand books and both are ardent bibliophiles who have assembled impressive collections of early Canadian books and manuscripts. Their style of bookselling has been divergent, but there are signs that they may be moving closer together. Jack Cole, who presides over a public company that operates more than 120 stores in Canada and the U.S., introduced the supermarket approach to bookselling. Melzack, whose company has 53 stores in Canada and two in New York, believes that "a bookstore should be more like a private library than a supermarket."

Yet chain stores and private libraries share few attributes. Melzack himself poses the question: "How can a chain store be a chain and still be a book shop? That's one of our problems. We have to impose certain disciplines and still try not to destroy the values of the personal bookshop."

However, to the Classic Book Shops, Melzack has added a separate "sale annex" featuring remaindered and reprinted books. The annex looks more like a supermarket than a private library.

In the Classic Book Shops, the guidelines are set at head office but much depends on the knowledge and style of the branch manager. In Winnipeg, Classic's Portage Avenue outlet in the busy six-block stretch between Eaton's and the Bay store is managed by David Judge who also oversees three other Classic stores in the city. Judge has been selling books since he was 15 years old, and has been, with the Classic chain since his arrival from England in 1959. He began in Montreal, refused several offers of a transfer to Toronto, and then in 1969 asked to be posted to Winnipeg where the company was opening the first of its branches in the city.

Centralization to a branch manager in a chain usually means that all the buying of new books is done elsewhere, in this case from Classic's Toronto warehouse. Publishers' salesmen come to call but the person fawned upon, courted, and sometimes harassed by the publisher's reps with the



bulging sample cases are the buyers at head office. Only a few publishers send branch staff personal "reading" copies of a book. But those publishers are the clever ones; they know that head office may buy but it's the branch staff who sell.

Chain stores are subject to the scrutiny of cost accountants who establish standards of sales performance per

square foot or who like to turn over inventory six times a year. But turn-over alone doesn't make a book shop. **Mel-zack** says he doesn't like to carry **Harlequin** romances or bloody murder stories, but has accepted compromise. "In airports! they want bloody murder stories," he says. "At the same time, we have a 'must carry' list that includes poetry, art books, certain basic books and a large Canadian section. If a book sells only one copy a year but I feel it should be there, it's there."

While head office determines the basic stock, Classic managers choose books of local interest and influence re-orders. Judge says his branch does a fair business in special orders and services institutional accounts. He also carries more technical and business books and a wider variety of fiction than the suburban branch in order to accommodate the customers in the downtown area. It is his policy to be helpful, even if it means letting parents and children use the washroom. "I'm not fond of the supermarket approach," says Judge. "Nothing gives me more satisfaction than putting the right book in the right hands."

His own interests include 17th-century naval history, gardening, carpentry, and camping books, and children's books, which he tries out on his two sons, ages 11 and 13.

Nothing irks booksellers more than the notion that they sit around all day reading books. Not a chance. But David Judge pays his job the highest tribute: "I am happy to go to work in the morning."

If Jack Cole were to have just one bookstore instead of 100 bookstores, he says that he would want one just like Britnell's. The family store was founded by **Albert Britnell** in 1893 near the midtown Toronto nexus of **Bloor** and **Yonge**. It was then passed to Albert's son **Roy** and now is owned by Roy's son **Barry**. It is a venerable Toronto institution that has grown comfortably old while the surrounding area has grown abrasively new, sprouting high-rise cliffs that emphasize Britnell's small-scale dignity.

Britnell's is a book person's book shop. It has worn wooden shelving, the smell of decades of paper, and a marvellous range of titles. Britnell's employs a dozen saleswomen full-time and five part-time, each of whom are assigned a special area. The staff lunch room is equipped with the "tools of the trade" — **Quill and Quire**, **Publishers Weekly** and the **New York Times Book Review**. Twelve of the employees are given a subscription of the **Times Book Review**, which is mailed to their home. "You can't read on the floor", explains **Barry Britnell**.

The hallmark of Britnell's is personal service and special ordering of books not carried in its extensive stock. The clientele such service attracts is varied. To be sure there are the tweedy, turtle-necked academics; but there are also the **Rosedale matrons** (a few of whom arrive in chauffeur-driven limousines) and the denim crowd, some with babies swapped to their backs. The Britnell salesladies have stood by mutely while mothers nursed infants or changed diapers on the counter.

Several bookstores can boast of the occasional celebrity who wanders id. Norm Lewis received **John Wayne**, just passing through, and **Mordecai Richler**. David Judge has served **José Ferrer** who was visiting **Winnipeg**. But at Britnell's some of the regular customers are **Nonhmp Frye**, **Marshall McLuhan**, **Irving Layton**, **Wayne & Shuster**, **Robertson Davies**, **Stephen Lewis**, and **Morton Shulman**.

The joy of running a personal book shop — and the reason lack Cole fantasizes about owning one — is contact with the customers and the chance to indulge in literary and trade gossip. Innically, **Barry Britnell** hasn't bad time in

years to work on the floor. **Britnell's** is a surprisingly large organization. In addition to the large sales staff, another dozen people work behind the scenes in a vast room with desks, typewriters, filing cabinets, and calculators. Even the ordering became too much for one person to handle and now is divided among four people; including **Barry**. He estimates that they send out 1,500 to 2,000 statements each month to charge-account customers and some days, especially in the frantic pre-Christmas period, they take in as many as 200 special orders.

Barry had not planned to go into the business of his father and grandfather. He was in second-year commerce and finance at the University of Toronto in 1956 and thinking of a teaching career when **Roy** suffered a heart attack. The choice was to liquidate or to join his father. Despite a recent stroke, **Roy** still works five or six hours a day.

"The greatest pleasure is feeling that you are in touch with so many things that are happening in the world of literature," says **Barry**. "But the problem is that it is superficial knowledge — more often from publishers blurbs, reviews, and hastily skimmed, partly read books."

Bookselling has given the world very few millionaires. At the same time, it has made many men paupers. Such is the fiscal image of bookselling that one man who went to the bank to borrow money to buy a book shop was advised by a friendly bank official to state that the loan was for a grand piano. In case of default, a grand piano was considered a much better risk; it could be easily repossessed. But there are few book-lovers who haven't flirted with the notion of owning a bookstore — one that somewhat resembles their idea of a private library, before the constraints of business and the necessity of cash-flow take over. □

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Down among the coffee-stain set

By PAUL STUEWE

THE MAN in the black raincoat hovers over the "Occult" section, moving his lips in time to some private communication from the rows of neatly shelved books. Gaunt hands emerge from crinkled pockets and take down a fat volume on werewolves, while an anticipatory but hardly reassuring smile provokes thoughts of madness and mayhem behind my flimsy barricade of desk and newspaper. No, that's really silly: if my customers were that susceptible to the books they peruse, browsers among the Elizabethan drama texts would have drawn and quartered me long ago. Still, his features are rather wolfish...aha, he's coming toward me. "May I help you?"

"Yes. I've discovered a book I *must* have, but, I'm afraid I didn't bring quite enough money with me. Would you be able to put it aside until tomorrow?"

Until tomorrow! My dear fellow, I once put aside a copy of *Political Life in Highland Burma* until an all-too-absent-minded professor remembered to call for it six months later. "Certainly, that will be fine. See you tomorrow." I do sincerely hope.

As Mr. Black Raincoat exits, he is nearly buried underneath a stack of boxes wielded by the Hippie Scavenger, an enterprising young street-person who discovers more books.

in a day's garbage than I find in a month of attending every church rummage sale within walking distance of public transit. The Scavenger is efficient, but indiscriminate: mildewed Harlequin Romances and battered Ontario school primers must be separated from the potentially saleable items, and these must then be examined closely for missing pages, split bindings, and the sorts of stains that even my hardened clientele will find off-putting. Coffee stains predominate, although you'd be surprised at the number of people, who seem to enjoy bleeding over their books — diehard romantics, perhaps.



After half an hour of tedious but necessary labour — today rewarded by the discovery that some degenerate has slit one small color plate out of an otherwise perfect copy of *The An of Pablo Picasso* — we agree on a price, and the Scavenger bids me a pleasant adieu. I keep telling him that he should open a book store; he keeps telling me that it looks like too much work.

Now for some fast pricing, sorting and shelving, and then maybe I can dash out for a coffee... nope, here comes the Eclectic Inquisitor. "Hi! (big smile) "Say, you wouldn't happen to have a copy of Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, would you?"

"No, but I just got in the first copy I've ever had of his *Nobody Writes To The Colonel*..."

"Yes, great book isn't it, just read it myself. Have, you got anything at all by Wilhelm Reich?"

Bingo! "Yes, at the moment I've got everything except *The Moss Psychology of Fascism*."

"Oh dear, that's too bad, that's just the one I was looking for. Well, I guess that's all — no, wait a minute, I don't suppose you'd have a copy of Peter Newman's *The Canadian Establishment*?"

Think you're smart, don't you? You know darn well it's only been out a few months, and that most of its purchasers probably haven't even finished it yet, let alone traded it in at their friendly second-hand store. But, wonder-of wonders, I do have a copy of it, and "Here you are."

"Oh." A hem, a haw. "Gee, it's \$7.50." Yes, that is indeed just about exactly half of its \$14.95 retail price. "Gosh." Some more hems, some more haws. "You know, I think I'll wait until it comes out in paperback. Well, I have to run. Nice talking to you - see you again soon."

Not if I, nope, must repress that, some day I'll have exactly what he wants at a price he can't refuse. Sure I will. The Yale Shakespeare all live cents a volume, say. Until then, I can always read a good book. And I think I will. □

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Up among the grease-paint set

By **BOYD NEIL**

AN UNOBTRUSIVE black-and-white sign is the only thing that distinguishes 659 Yonge Street from any other door on this notoriously pomy stretch of Toronto's soft core. The thin, steep staircase to the second floor is lined with entertainment announcements and brightly coloured posters. You make your way upstairs and soon you're in the main room, announced by a squeak from the floor. The attendants, John Harvey and Leonard McHardy, greet you in a warm and friendly fashion, eager to be of service. But — the only bodies in sight are those of book-buying customers or those portrayed on the front of dance books. Although it may not be as popular as the body rub parlours, the Theatrebooks bookstore is unique. It is the only bookstore in Canada specializing in books and related material on theatre and dance.

Now, however, the store's services and stock will be available all across Canada: it has just published a nationally distributed mail-order catalogue. This completely annotated catalogue lists the store's stock of general theatre books and technical guides as of December, 1975 (with the exception of published plays). Those who buy the catalogue will also receive quarterly supplements listing additions to its stock.

The 'compilation of the catalogue began well before the store opened in March, 1975. McHardy and Harvey saw from their own theatre experience that there was a need for a comprehensive collection of technical and historical materials to assist Canadian theatre in raising its standards to equal those of other English-speaking countries. Harvey's work with Theatre London and the Global Village's school program and McHardy's activity with Global Village's children's and mainstage productions brought them into contact with theatre professionals, drama teachers, and students whose work was often delayed by the lack of appropriate theatre materials. Haunting libraries and universities and harassing publishers has finally produced a stock of books that draws theatre people even from New York.

Publishing companies certainly didn't facilitate the great



Canadian theatre-book hoot. Instead of competing for this new market, most of the publishers initially didn't even send their salespeople out to case the possibilities. Within

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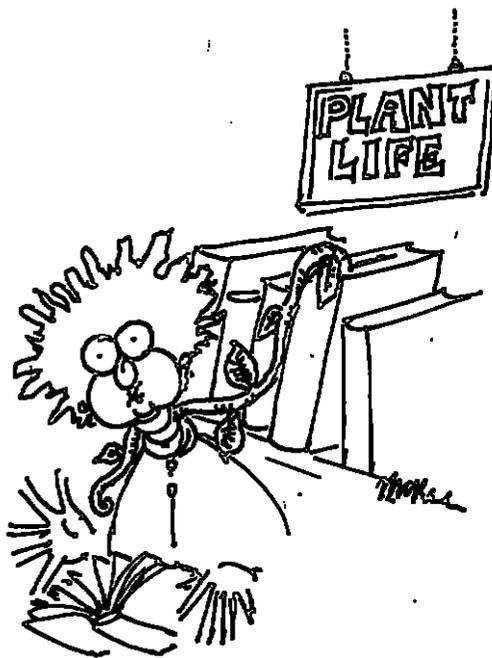
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the first nine months, only 10 out of 30 or so local offices of the publishing companies had bothered to call. And some of these salespeople admitted that they, had no idea of their own stock. As one of them candidly commented: "If I was in any other business, I would have been tired by now." Fortunately, now that the bookstore is established, McHardy and Harvey have far fewer problems.

Outside of the obvious financial possibilities, their main interest is in seeing Canadian theatre and dance develop to its fullest capacity. This means that they have set up no artificial barriers about carrying **only** Canadian plays from Canadian publishers, or only Canadian technical and critical materials. Besides, as Harvey has pointed out, "books on Canadian **theatre** would all fit on a small sidewalk stand."

Although they carry all available published **Canadian** plays, they are worried about **the** amount of mediocre Canadian writing now getting into print. Many **plays** are so obviously of poor quality that they will **inevitably** "fall by the wayside." And this, they feel, is beginning to damage respect for Canadian plays both in **print** and in **production**. The dwindling audiences for Canadian plays in the small **theatres** may be a direct result of this propagation of Canadianism before art.

Theatrebooks, nevertheless, has possibly the most **complete collection** of Canadian works of **theatre** and dance. Whatever books are not **part** of their current stock — Canadian or international — will be ordered on request. In fact, **McHardy** and Harvey feel that the only way their "bookstore **can** be successful in **specialization** is by people demanding books **we** don't yet know about."

Neither Harvey or **McHardy** are worried about doomsday announcements of faltering interest in Canadian theatre. Their customers are, by **and** large, people with a spirited love for theatre. As **McHardy** says: "As long as the people who come in here are still around, there will be **active** theatre **audiences**." And active theatre audiences mean **business** for Theatrebooks. □

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West Coast Plays, edited by **Copnie Brissenden**, Mew Play Centre (P.O. Box 46568, Vancouver), 160 pages, \$3.50 paper.

Preparing, by **Beverly Simons**, Talonbooks, 127 pages, \$3.00 paper (ISBN 0-88922-070-0).

Lulu Street, by **Ann Henry**, Talonbooks, 132 pages, \$3.50 paper (ISBN 0-88922-093-X).

Theatrical Exhibitions, by **Brian Sbein**, Pulp Press, 197 pages, \$3.50 paper.

By **BOYD NEIL**

THE THING THAT makes West Coast playwrights unique isn't what you might expect. They don't people their plays with **Indians** set on stages that resemble three-dimensional Emily Carr totem paintings. Nor do **potlatch ceremonies**, communing with nature, and **mountain climbing** define the scope of their dramatic subjects. **What** distinguishes them — in direct contrast to some of the self-indulgence of Ontario playwrights — is an incisive, yet intensely compassionate, perspective on human beings floundering in the midst of social disorder. They dissect, scrutinize, and transmit visions that are, in general, firmly rooted in **Canadian** history, Canadian tensions, or Canadian political structures. But some do it much better than **others**.

According to the introduction by Pamela Hawthorn to **West Coast Plays**, an anthology of one-act plays by **five** British **Columbian** writers, the book is meant to "reflect not only the excellence of B.C. writing, but a wide variation in style, content and approach." Although the volume does indeed give us a representative sample of both excellent and mediocre plays, it leaves no real impression of the essence of that nebulous species' — "the B.C. writer."

Cubistique, for instance, is a thorough psychological unmasking of two women nearing middle age. What is hidden to both of them, even though they shared it, is **the** past. Through a duet of mimicking, violent word assaults, and finally tenderness, they re-establish their past and thus their

relationship. **Cone** relies on poetic dialogue rather than logical language flow to produce emotional effect.

So direct opposition to **Cone's** originality is Tom Grainger's **The Helper**, which almost appears to be an adaptation of **Pinter's The Caretaker**. The protagonist, **Nimrod**, in **The Helper** is as **harried** and **malevolent** as **Davies** in **The Caretaker**, but here **Nimrod's** menacing character means that in the end he is victorious. The desperate **uncommunicativeness** of **ordinary** language is much like **Pinter's** but without his simple power. The result is a far less inspired play than **Pinter's**, with a few redeeming thematic features. Grainger's presentation of the corruption of **Timmy** (the other main character in **The Helper**) is a sad comment on a society where intrigue and brutality is the rule and truth the exception.

Between these two extremes are, **Margaret Hollingsworth's Operators**, **Sheldon Rosen's The Box**, and **Leonard Angel's Forthcoming Wedding**. **Hollingsworth** tries too hard to be theatrically distinctive. **She** draws her characters as recognizable **three-dimensional** people; then, for no apparent reason, the time sequence of their presentation is jumbled. The **compassionate** story of the loneliness of three Northern Ontario women would have come **across** much better with a realistic movement **from** incident to incident.

Not so for **Rosen**, however. His Beckett-like absurdist **form** is perfectly suited to the tragicomic image of two men trapped in their own games. In their mom, with the window being the only link to the outside world, their verbal relationship is not as important as **the** way they intuitively grasp the essence of each other's thoughts and actions! And with this form of communication, symbols like the box, roller-skates, and the window are **obviously** crucial.

Angel's Forthcoming Wedding has neither overt symbols **nor** a complicated time sequence, but it is still a strange comment on latent psychological violence. The absolutely honest way he has his characters deal with each other can only **be** described as super-realism. They admit all their jealousies, hatred, and hidden desires with a **candour** that would please the most cynical gestalt therapist. **Angel** claims in the production notes that he had no intention of implying an **incestuous** relationship between **Luns**, the father, and **Rose** his daughter. If this is the case, then **Angel's** conception is

dramatically weaker **than** his product, because the incest is pivotal to the action.

Some of the plays in **West Coast Plays** are perfectly suited to being part of a printed anthology because their drama is a direct product of the words. **Cubistique**, however, raises the **problem** that dramatic literature that is truly meant for the stage loses some of its power when seen only in a book. These plays demand a conscious and **active** imagination; the reader must create **images** of movement, gesture, light, and sound. This is as true for Shakespeare and Brecht as it is for **Cone**.

It is equally true for **Beverly Simons'** collection of one act plays, **Preparing**. This book is a **good** introduction to the visually evocative world of **Beverly Simons**. All the elements that make her longer plays (**Crabdance**, **Leela Means To Play**) so controversial can be found here. They are the **same** elements that make her one of the most exciting and innovative **theatre** artists in **Canada**. All verbal logic is pushed to the background to be replaced by symbolic gestures, mime, ephemeral musical rhythms, or masks. The way **Simons** describes what an actor does on stage creates a picture that surpasses the **limited** imaginative possibilities of words. For example, in **Green Lawn Rest Home**, we have the tune of "Three Blind Mice" accompanying an old man who is screaming "Lies. Lies. Lies." while **throwing stones** at the sign reading "Green Lawn Rest Home": **in Triangle** she has a **man** responding to demands that he **identify himself** by searching vainly for his "self" through the credit cards in his wallet.

Despite **the** obscurity of some of **her** images, the short plays in **Preparing** demonstrate the **characteristic** West Coast interest in individuals coming to grips with menacing social conditions, external definitions of themselves, or **implacable** movements of time. The **title** play, **Preparing**, is a painful **portrait of the** predictability of life and, especially, death. **Jeannie**, the sole character, is shown going through life physically and mentally preparing herself for others — parents, husband, children, social institutions, and finally, **Death**.

Simons' other plays demonstrate **stylized** human conflicts, not by **satirizing** human weaknesses but rather by satirizing the social forces that control "free will." She uses **imnny** freely, particularly when she speaks of herself, as in **the Prologue**, an **aplogetic** poem-drama. Her characters say:

Please understand.
 Whatever happens.
 Her wit is not ours.
 Nor her excessive passions.
 Nor her insolence.
 We are at her mercy.

Simons sometimes treads a fine line between theatrical art and self-indulgence. In *The Crusader*, the communication with the audience or reader breaks down when she becomes preoccupied with exposing her own fears of social brutality. But the desire to transmit a vision to the audience is what separates Simons from the sort of work that Brian Shein presents in his plays in *Theatrical Exhibitions*. Both more or less use as their guide Antonin Artaud's metaphysical "Theatre of Cruelty." Shein, however, seems to be more interested in testing a theoretical tradition than investigating social or psychological problems.

Spiritually, at least, his work is closer to that of the intellectually abstract elements of Toronto writers who like to investigate the boundaries of theatrical experience than to the socially responsible West Coast writers. An autobiographical sketch at the back of *Theatrical Exhibitions* makes clear that theatre to Shein is either an exer-

cise in personal exorcism or playing with dramatic forms. The results are plays demonstrating the formal lessons of Artaud without his deep perceptions of "the collapse of life."

Some, like *Kafka*, Rex Morgan M.D., and *Cowboy Island*, are just incomprehensible word games. *Ground Zero* is an interesting look at a machine world that offers everything but gives nothing. Yet reading it gives a feeling of déjà-vu; didn't we see it in the *Twilight-Zone*? An *Entertainment at the Cafe Terminus* has Shein's typical theatrical self-consciousness — the actors laugh at themselves playing a play — but it has far deeper character development and conflict than the others. Finally we see a suggestion of Shein's poetic potential in the speeches of the anarchist Emile Henry in *Cafe Terminus*.

Ann Henry's play, *Lulu Street*, presented on CBC-TV last fall, combines poetic characterization with the harsh realities of the Winnipeg general strike of 1919. A political activist and his daughter have opened their house to a motley collection of society's outcasts. They share the energy of the strike, its humour and its heartaches, only to be separated when political rep-

ression causes Matthew, the father, to flee. The subject of the play is the love-hate relationship between Matthew and his daughter Elly. Matthew's political philosophy is too determinist to allow Elly any spiritual freedom. Just as Elly's mother had to be put in an asylum, Elly wanders off into dreams and religion to escape Matthew's proselytizing. Unfortunately, Henry has missed the opportunity for a powerfully emotional dramatic conflict. Elly never fights back against Matthew's spiritual control nor do we see much conflict between her dreams and her reality. We can be sympathetic with Matthew and Elly's difficulties but we cannot identify with their struggles. What Ann Henry, does so well, however, is create a vibrant portrait of the racial and political tensions of an important Canadian political event.

The common element of these four books isn't so much their subject matter, form, or regional roots; rather it is the one essential missing from all of them — critical introductions. There was a time when just printing Canadian plays — in the hope, perhaps, that quantity would produce quality — was a crucial step in developing Canadian

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dramatic literature. The **result**, however, was simply a lot of both good and bad plays. It would be a major step forward in establishing standards for **Canadian** plays if companies such as **Talonbooks** and Pulp Press would exercise their editorial abilities and include comments on the strengths and weaknesses or limitations of **the** works they print. To be critical may well put Canadian plays on the level of world literature: not to be is to institutionalize mediocrity. □

Stage Two: myths macro and micro

Bethune, by **Rod Langley**, Talonbooks, 153 pages, \$3.50 paper (ISBN 0.88922 -088-3).

En **Pièces Détachées**, by **Michel Tremblay**, translated by **Allan Van Meer**, Talonbooks, 110 pages, \$3.50 paper (ISBN 0-88922 -092.1).

By **KEITH GAREBIAN**

IS CANADIAN drama anything more than generally mediocre or fitfully interesting? An answer would depend, no doubt, on one's expectations of a genre that has only recently begun to develop a **bicultural** mythology for this country. An answer would also be **qualified** by an acute problem: the paucity of published scripts. Now this second qualification in itself is not **necessar-**ily a negative one (because theatre is essentially for the stage and not for the library or salon), but it does point to a general lack of serious interest by Canadians in the whole business of **dramaturgy**. Apart from Quebec, which is a different country to itself in many ways. Canada appears to lack a great audience — that condition so fundamental to the development of great theatre. And yet, the small miracle is that we do have **our** share of interesting playwrights from both English and French Canada, and these writers, unlike most of their fellow-artists in fiction, **are** not one-shot successes. James **Reaney** and George Ryga have a rich spectrum; Henry **Beissel**, already **an** international **success** with **Inook** **And The Sun**, is attempting to expand his virtuosity with a play about Goya:

and **Michel Tremblay** has made, of **joual** theatre more than an ephemeral or nugatory phenomenon.

There should be no question that we are ready for a theatrical mythology. We have our national heroes — whether by popular acclaim or by ironic **discovery** — and there **are** many corners in **our** sociology that need to be probed and translated into cathartic epiphanies. But when we do scrutinize our plays, what mythology is exposed?

We cannot, of course, expect a definitive answer from a review of two very different plays, but in Rod Langley's **Bethune** and Michel Tremblay's **En Pièces Détachées** we do have a **partial** view, subject to various qualifications and possible **revisions**.

Bethune is an **explicit essay** on a legend while **Tremblay's piece** is an exposure of a subculture. However, the **irony** is that Langley, in choosing to deal with a **radical** hem, uses a conservative dramatic mode and subverts the revolutionary possibility of **mythopoeic** theatre, whereas Tremblay, in **dealing** with a small corner of the world — Montreal's East End tenements — manages to sharpen the power of his type of theatre of liberation.

Bethune exemplifies the general Canadian penchant for bland, **conservative theatre**. Langley **knows** that in Norman **Bethune** he has several **magnified** personae rolled into a single hem but the play is a mosaic of various phases in **Bethune's** life and fails to convince us that its subject **could** ever have been a **Byronic figure** or a swashbuckling adventurer in quest of new worlds. What we see in place of a lonely, **tragic** individual is simply an energetic egotist whose outrageous bawdiness, deliberate rudeness, and political idealism are **counterpointed** by ingenious creativity in surgery and an erratic **course** in love.

The play tries to **provide** a synopsis of **Bethune's** life as it shows him seeking his fortune in Detroit, stirring scandals in Canada, and then carving his destiny in Spain and China. But the play is old wine in **old** bottles, and it **turns** into vinegar quickly. There is far too much description of Off-Stage action — a **technique** that appears, unfortunately, to have **survived** from **Gorboduc** — and some of the most **dramatic** incidents in **Bethune's** life are either severely **summarized** or omitted altogether. We never hear of that **fascinating** honeymoon episode in the Channel Islands when Bethune — after forcing his **wife** to jump across a deep

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ravine-tells her to always look at him through half-closed eyes. Nor do we witness the fateful accident when Bethune contracts **septicaemia** during an operation on a Chinese soldier. **Bethune dies quietly** — like some of the political issues in the play-but with **all** the impact of a foam-rubber missile. After lifting quotations out of Bethune biographies: **and** organizing events chronologically, Langley ends with a spare epilogue that is totally inadequate to seal the legend of **Bethune's** ex-**travagance**. A radical hero is tamed for domestic consumption, and Langley offers no original interpretation or **unified** view of the subject.

We are left with throbbing **mysteries** — **all** from Bethune's life and only barely glimpsed in the play. The **relationship** between Bethune and Frances, his prissy wife, is never explored beyond the surface. It is **presented** in fragments and does not suggest **whether** Bethune was masochistic **or** immature in love. Emotions become the stuff of civil, melodrama, and Langley's play never convinces us that it is dealing with a **tragic** artist of poetic imagination for whom the world was something that never stopped turning with mysteries.

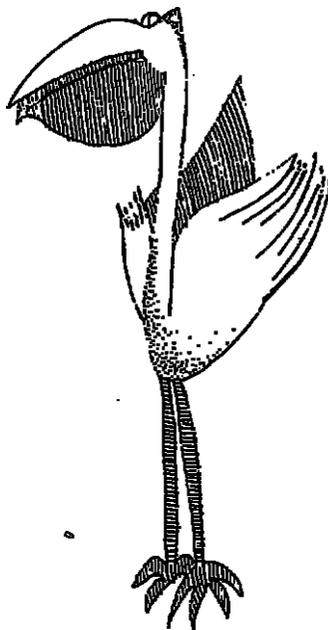
Michel Tremblay's play creates myth of a different order. **It** doesn't have a national legend, but it does have its own convictions that are neither bland nor eclectic. Unlike Langley's play, **where** the subject's intrinsic energy is never put to much fruitful use.. **En Pièces Détachées** thrives on its raucousness, which later softens into poignant introspection. Tremblay deals with little figures — chiefly women — who lead lives of mean pleasures and cheap diversions. His main **characters** are embattled failures, **trying** desperately to hold their **own** among fellow denizens. They speak a raw, scabrous language that is as much an **expression** of vicious **rage** as it is of the sociological condition that generates its cheap **vulgarity**.

The main figure is **Hélène**, a waitress in a sleazy restaurant. She has a **waster**, for a husband who sinks deep into a vegetative existence with his beer and TV **cartoons**. **Hélène** has a **self-pitying**, withdrawn mother, and a daughter, **Francine**, who is distracted, nervous, and **subject** to an inferiority **complex**. **Hélène** battles her way at work and at home — **challenging** her sottish husband to an arm-wrestling match and giving the snooping **neighbours** much scandalous material **for** loud choric gossip.

But it isn't all her **story**, for we meet Claude, her mad brother, who seeks **revenge** for his **incarceration** in a mental hospital. He suffers from a paranoia about being poisoned, and the only **advantage** in his congenital **looniness** is that he doesn't have to be **driven** mad. But his **appearance**, while **generating** **pathos**, is an **ostensible** manipulation of our sympathy and it **disturbs** the play's structure. Tremblay doesn't seem to be **in full** control of his story, although he does succeed in building a mood of cumulative and comprehensive help **lessness** as each member of **Hélène's** family becomes an alienated **creature** in an increasingly tainted half-world.

Though Tremblay's characters never **achieve** **cathartic** tragedy, they do afford us perceptions of a subculture that exists in a corner of Canada. Technically, **Tremblay's** play does not make an innovative advance over the plays of **Gélinas**, **Gurik**, and **Dubé**, but it does force French-speaking **Quebeckers** to an awareness of their contemporary **de-culturation**.

Bethune and **En Pièces Détachées** show in a small way what ails and profits Canadian drama. Langley's play, almost as if it were an extension of general Canadian **blandness**, is content **to** play it safe with a **larger-than-life** legend, whereas **Tremblay's** play, narrow **as** it is, refuses to evade a nasty,



brutish issue of **cultural** identity. Langley, accordingly, succeeds in **colonizing** **myth** so that it isn't much of an **embarrassment** or challenge **to** our national smugness, whereas **Tremblay** courageously insists on the relevance and dilemma of neo-colonial French Canada. □

Stage Three: family titters and real terror

Sqrieux-de-Dieu, by Betty Lambert, Playwrights Co-op, 58 pages, \$2.25 playscript.

Leave It To Beaver Is Dead, by Des McNuff, Playwrights Co-op, 82 pages, \$3 playscript.

The Night No One Yelled, by Peter Madden, Playwrights Co-op, 42 pages, \$2 playscript.

By JANIS RAPOPORT

THE LEADING publisher of Canadian plays, quantitatively speaking, is the Playwrights Co-op. As its title implies, this organization is a non-profit cooperative with the general aim of **serv-**ing the Canadian **"theatrical community"** as well as the country's playwrights. The most publicly prominent of **the co-op's** many services is its publication of Canadian scripts—more than 200 since the co-op's inception in 1972. The co-op's list shows a wide variety both in subject matter and in style, as the three scripts **reviewed** here prove.

Betty Lambert's **Sqrieux-de-Dieu** (pronounce the title **l'anglais** to **discover** its real intent) is credited on the cover with 'being **"a nasty play about nice people."** The major **"nice people"** include Professor George **Partington**, his corporation-lawyer mistress **Gracie**, his slightly kinky wife Brenda, and his slightly dotty mother-in-law, who is **known** simply as **Gramma**.

By means of various rites; such as **Gracie's** mock murdering of George's children ("Born in deception, they have died in truth") and Brenda's bizarre group exercises in consciousness raising (through "Tactile Discovery" and **"Tai Chi Chuan"**), the protagonists explore their individual and collective fantasies. **Ultimately**, mainly through direct confrontation, Brenda, **Gracie**, and George (to a lesser extent) resolve to rearrange their social **roles**. **Will** they live happily **ever after**? By virtue of its subject **matter** and somewhat laconic **grace Sqrieux-de-Dieu** is, deliberately or not, vaguely reminiscent of Edward Albee's **Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?** (first published 14 years ago). And **that's** a nasty

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play. By comparison *Sgrieux-de-Dieu* is but a pale reflection of nastiness.

An entirely different world to *Sgrieux-de-Dieu's* is explored in a sometimes fragmented but often powerful manner by playwright Des McAnuff in *Leave It To Beaver Is Dead*. Savarin, Lizzard, and Luke, the hosts of "the Show" might have been the product of a couple like Brenda and George Partington, or even Gracie and George for that matter. They are the young adults who matured during the late 1960s and who were nurtured on the pap of the family serials such as *Leave It To Beaver* that were so popular in the 1950s. (Reruns, for those who want to know what this play, is not about, ate still being televised today!)

McAnuff's play reaches far beyond the innocence and the norm espoused by any *Leave It To Beaver* sensibility. In a remark typical of the middle-class parent of middle-class sons, the father in the original TV show has been heard to say: "When you're raising a family there's always something to worry about." These worries, to a large extent, demarcate the area of McAnuff's concern. *Leave It To Beaver Is Dead* is *Leave It To Beaver* gone as awry as it could possibly go, and further.

Although the characters in McAnuff's subculture have grown into a perverted fantasy of the *Leave It To Beaver* clan, they nevertheless retain a childlike, idealistic attitude through drug-induced "mind changing" and, though to a lesser degree, even through horrific violence.

McAnuff's writing, rife as it is with patchiness, symbolism, tawdriness, sensationalism, incoherence, and (necessarily) dated jargon, still constitutes a compelling evocation of a modern sociological phenomenon.

A little surprisingly, perhaps, Peter Madden's realistic prison drama *The Night No One Yelled* contains much less physical violence than the McAnuff fantasy. Overt violence, emerging only at the end of the play yet always threatening to surface, is, generally speaking, replaced by the tensions of the cell-block inmates. Although the threats and insults are skillfully intertwined to reveal a gamut of the characters' defeat, fear, or frustrations, the action of the play remains static: each prisoner is confined to his own cell space. The physical separation of the prisoners does emphasize their essential isolation but the consequences of this technique results in visual

monotony. However, such stasis contrasts brilliantly with the terrifying climax of the play, which involves the recapturing of two young prisoners who have not been successful in an attempted escape.

Primarily because of its subject matter, *The Night No One Yelled* invites comparison with John Herbert's classic prison drama *Fortune and Men's Eyes*. The points of view are entirely different, of course, but Herbert's play has a sense of dramatic urgency that is not matched by Madden's. □

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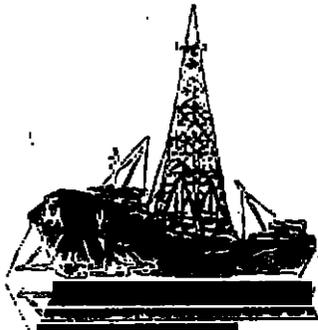
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The Running Man, by **Jon Ruddy**, **TrendSetter** series, General Publishing, 184 pages, \$6.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7736-0047-7).

By MARGARET WENTE

JON RUDDY'S first novel is a nice, nasty little horror story about a man who doesn't believe in ghosts and about the trouble he gets himself into after he sees one in his own cellar. The reader does not have to be a believer either to appreciate his fate.

Jake Willoughby, a former police reporter turned magazine writer, has temporarily retired to an old farmhouse in rural Ontario with an advanced case of world-weariness. A typical product of the times, he is detached, disengaged, and, at the age of 30, profoundly bored. He shares his retreat with an undemanding woman who eventually leaves him for a more fervent lover. Indeed, the only creature who can arouse his sentiment is his big mongrel dog, who is even less demanding than the sad women who drift through his life.

Jake sees himself as the ultimate modern realist, which means that he believes in nothing, certainly not in supernatural apparitions. The difficulty is that the ghost he encounters in the cellar one spring night is no gauzy phantom, no drink- or dope-induced hallucination, but an all-too-tangible, ail-too-lively putrescent corpse. In the light of day, Jake's reason tells him to forget the whole thing, but soon the old investigative instinct gets the better of him and he sets out to learn if the local folks know anything about his haunted house. Naturally, they know a good bit more than they are willing to tell, and some of them have seen more in that cellar than they care to remember. Piecing together some local history and an obscure folksong called "The Running Man," Jake discovers that a century earlier the farmhouse had been the residence of a bizarre religious sect of young people, whose unorthodox beliefs embraced animism and dualism and whose practices had included flagellation with live snakes and other exotic forms of exorcism. Months after

the group disbanded the badly decomposed corpse of their charismatic leader. John Smith, was found in the farmhouse cellar.

Surely it's only amusing coincidence that the long-dead leader of that odd religious mutation bore the same name as Jake's peculiar neighbour down the road, a taciturn and hostile clergyman who runs a therapeutic religious community for mixed-up urban teenagers, and who shoots buckshot into nosy strangers like Jake. Surely not. The more Jake snoops around, the more resemblance he finds between the dead and the living. Although it becomes clearer and clearer that the second Reverend Smith is the spiritual incarnation of the first, Jake's journalistic literalness and lack of imagination prevent him from realizing until it is almost too late that the hunter has become the hunted, that he himself is intended as the latest ritualistic victim.

The creaky old family manse and windswept moor are no longer necessary props for a good ghost story. In some of the most popular recent books about the weird, the supernatural, and the downright demonic, the villains turn out to be those nice people next door. Ruddy takes this naturalistic counterpoint a step further by refusing us the simple satisfaction of a climactic battle against the forces of darkness. In a world that gave us Charles Manson, John Smith and his fanatic followers can be explained as adequately by psychopathology as by belief in the devil's work on earth. And when Jake has, the chance to make his heroic gesture, to rid the world once and for all of the sinister Reverend Smith, he instead chooses the course of prudence and pragmatism — opting out once again. He runs. We have the triumph neither of good nor of evil, but of unreason, a denouement all the more guaranteed to spook literal-minded readers who, like Jake, believe in neither God nor the devil.

Ruddy's sure, ironic style overcomes the occasional lags and bumps in his story line. *The Running Man* is a worthy addition to General Publishing's **TrendSetter** series, which promises us hardcover fiction in paperback size at a price somewhere between the two. Although they're not as cheap as they were originally intended to be, it's good to know that the \$6.95 novel has not quite gasped its last. □



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Diary of a mod housewife

Small C&monies, by Carol Shields, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 179 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0-07-082340-5).

By **DuBARRY CAMPAU**

UNHAPPILY, this is the sort of book that will have housewives all over Canada darting to their typewriters.

"If she could write a novel about all of those day-to-day things," they will say to their neighbours, "just think what I could do with the stuff that has actually happened to me! Like how Bob and I met in school but didn't even know we were in love until five years later when I went to work at his insurance company — and then that time I almost left him For Ian. Well, of course, I didn't really consider it because of the kids, and anyway Bob's basically a great guy and Ian never seemed very interested unless he was drinking. But in a book I think I might actually go off with Ian, For a bit maybe. I'd have to

change all of our names, naturally. I'd call myself Lillith."

Some of these women may actually finish their novels, re-creating themselves as they would like to be — and never understanding the coolness of publishers toward their Fantasies. They will comfort themselves, bitterly: "She must have had pull to get hers printed. The editor is probably her uncle or something."

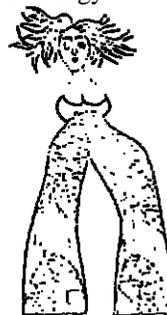
For all I know, Carol Shields may be the niece of every one of the McGraws, Hills, and Ryersons, but it wouldn't have been nepotism that caused them to accept *Small Ceremonies*.

To say that it is a pleasant, unpretentious book is not a put-down. So arc lane Austen's Emma and Nancy Mitford's *Love in a Cold Climate*. And while Ms. Shields is not yet, at least, in the same league as those women, she does share their gift of creating a social ambience and involving a reader's interest in a series of piquant, if petty, plots.

Both the narrator, of the book and Ms. Shields herself arc biographers and wives of professors, so it is evident that Ms. Shields has Followed the fist precept For novelists: write about what you know. And she not only knows her set-

ting — and the kinds of characters who are at home in it — but she is able to view it objectively.

She writes tautly and pungently. She can, describe a dingy Birmingham flat,



which Judith, the narrator, and her husband once rented from another professor, so precisely one cringes with her at discovering the detritus that had been left behind by the owners and agree with her concepts of the personalities she builds up from these clues.

I was right by her side when, on finding a drawer of her husband's desk packed with skeins of bright-coloured wool, she was so appalled and amazed by this evidence of something utterly off-beat about him she couldn't bring herself to ask what it was For.

It is easy to sympathize with her Fascination with her 12-year-old son's correspondence with a girl he has never met — and applaud her discipline in trying not to pry into it.

And I cheered her on as she diligently researched the early life of an acclaimed Canadian novelist whom she suspects of being bogus. This is Judith, describing his books to her daughter:

He opens to waving wheat . Saskatchewan in powder form. Mix with honest rain water for native genre. Then you move into his storm chapter. Rain, snow, hail, locusts maybe. It doesn't matter as long as k's devastating. Then we're into the wife. There's nothing more to say about her except that she endures. But her husband, rampant with lust, keep your eye on him, a limb frozen in the storm and requiring a tense kitchen table amputation. And we close wkh more waving wheat.

I do so hope that her capsule description of the cliché Canadian novel will put an end to them — and that in their place will come more like Ms. Shields' that reflect the urban domesticities and intellectual stimulations that arc at least as much of our culture as the problems of ham-fisted men and withered women on the wind-swept Prairies.

If there are no tragedies and traumas, conflicts and confrontations in *Small Ceremonies*, there are instead wit, delicacy, and deft, realistic perceptions. □

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Christmas in Africa, by **Jeni Couzyn**, J. J. Douglas (Heinemann), 83 pages. \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0-88894-096-3).

By **GWENDOLYN MacEWEN**

THIS BOOK of poems is a delight to discover. Although I haven't read any of Couzyn's previous poems in her books *Flying* and *Monkey's Wedding*, I am convinced of her powerful talent, which is so evident here. First, here is a poet who knows how to handle The Long Line, allowing words to roll and tumble until the reader who tends to read aloud in his head, is literally breathless: "My first leap of the day / carried me over, and beyond him as I turned mid air in my flight I to greet him. . ."

She sings and curses, applauds and deplores the conditions of humanity in these wonderfully moving poems, which include memories of Africa, personal and symbolical extensions of themes in contemporary science-fiction writing, and finally, her own intensely human reactions to everyday things. In the last group of poems, entitled "Graces," she celebrates a potato, a tomato, snow, sex, death, love, with an exuberance and a passion that is deplorably lacking in most modern writing. An excellent knowledge and control of the language allows her the special privilege of letting go and bursting with lines like:

*You were silky as the slime of a snail
your body translucent and smelling of
flowers
your seaweed hands and your laughter
an orchestra of flutes in the muscles
of my groin*

It is rare to find a poet who writes with this kind of skill in terms of marrying intellect with passion. Too often, it seems, the tendency is to favour one over the other and so we read a lot of books that totally let us down, either in the head or in the guts. We think that is so or we feel that is so; but only good art can help us see why thinking and feeling are utterly interdependent.

In "The Birth," a long poem in three parts, Couzyn expertly explores the trauma of the unborn child trapped in the "tomb" of the mother, and the eventual ecstasy when expulsion from that tomb/womb is realized:

*I shall scream your body down
I shall scream the world down
in the seed in the seed
I am dying I am dying
I shall scream down the sun and the stars
I shrivel out of the universe
in a screaming dark*

This awful cry, this defiance in the face of birth and death, reminds us that the word "hysteria" is derived from the Greek word for "uterus." But the poet doesn't leave the reader stranded on these bleak beaches; she continues: "Out of the silence her voice comes ringing. / Out of the shrivelled universe I she takes my hand. / Mother. / It will begin."

For anyone who wants to read poems that courageously explore our human predicaments, our fears and shortcomings, I would suggest they read *Christmas in Africa*. Jeni Couzyn's voice is very much her own; she speaks with a surety (but never with a dogmatic tone) about things we all know to be true and vital. Things that we must feel and go on feeling, accepting ecstasy together with pain. Home truths, and beautiful poetry. □

Old Boys 'tecwork

Ghost of the Hardy Boys, by Leslie McFarlane, Methuen, 208 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0-468-91410-X).

By **ROGER HALL**

A FEW WEEKS ago critic Vincent Canby reviewed the film *Robin and Marion* in the *New York Times*. The movie gracefully portrays the sylvan lovers some two decades after Sherwood's heyday. Canby set himself to projecting the fates of other "literary" figures after the legends ran out; among them were that impressive duo of boy-detectives, Frank and Joe Hardy, survivors of SO-odd juvenile adventures with every type of dastardly law-breaker. The Hardy Boys, he demythologized, went on to become joint-holders of the Pontiac franchise in Southport, Corm., until Joe's fatal coronary forced Frank to retire to Phoenix. My God, I thought, what would Franklin W. Dixon think of that! I scrambled back to my boyhood image of a venerable author — settled into a leather chair at a huge oak desk, a slightly balding, waist-coated, watch-chained, pipe fetishist — and raged at

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Canby's insensitivity. Surely Dixon must be jamming a scrap of paper into a battered Remington and firing off a denial to the editor insisting that the Hardys had gone from boyhood bravado to assume the worthy mantle of father Fenton Hardy's highly respectable investigation practice.

No such luck. It is my sad duty to report that Franklin W. Dixon does not, and never did, exist. In fact he was the product of a massive literary syndicate operating (appropriately) out of New Jersey and run by an ambitious, clever German-American named Edward Stratemeyer. Further, if Stratemeyer had wanted the Hardys to end their days pushing Pontiacs, and he just might have if the series hadn't made money, then he could have asked any one of his several ghostwriters to effect it. And for as little as \$100 a crack, Joe and Frank would be shown the door as had Dave Fearless, the Dana Girls, and many others before them.

Leslie McFarlane's *Ghost of the Hardy Boys* is an entertainment in nostalgia. It is partly an account of the writing of their first epic adventures, partly a chronicle of juvenile publishing in North America, and mostly a gently rambling autobiography of McFarlane, the first in a chain of Franklin W. Dixons.

McFarlane has been a successful journalist, playwright, and documentary film director. No one cares, he laments. It is only the Hardy boys that bear interest — especially as a money-maker (they have sold more than 26 million copies). For McFarlane people exhibit only sorrow or contempt; after all, he pulled in a meagre 55,000 as the Hardys' ghost. But, he argues, he did what he wanted to do, and has no regrets. In 1926, something a shade past a cub reporter, but still cranking out rewrites for the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*, McFarlane carefully nursed an ambition to become a writer. Certainly he had written: Ontario-born, he had served the *Cobalt Daily Nugget*, the *Sudbury Star*, graduated to the *Ottawa Journal* and the *Montreal Herald*. En route he had sold the occasional adventure story. Then he answered an ad for an author to work from publisher's outlines. Soon he became, at first in his spare time and then full freelance, Roy Rockwood, author of the Dave Fearless series of fiction for boys. A weird comer of the publishing world was revealed to him.

The Stratemeyer syndicate, for whom he toiled, was a fiction factory of juvenile publications. Stratemeyer

himself had inherited the mantle of Horatio Alger. Unlike Alger who wrote single, self-contained volumes, Stratemeyer launched whole series; his fortunes were secured when he discovered that he could successfully farm out the writing to freelancers and market the results to publishers. So he quickly gave the world the 'Old Glory Series' and its flagship *With Dewey at Manila*, and went on to the universally successful Rover Boys, Tom Swift, 'Dave Fearless, and dozens of others. The Hardy boys were contrived in the mid-1920s to capitalize in the juvenile market on the growing popularity of adult detective stories.

Stratemeyer sent an outline of the Hardys' first adventure, titled *The Tower Treasure*, to McFarlane, whom he christened Franklin W. Dixon. McFarlane explains that he never learned what the W. stood for but concluded that it was not "wealthy." Still, the Hardys carried him through the 1920s and into the 1930s starting at \$125 a book and creeping upwards. By 1945, when he quit, McFarlane had manipulated a tight cast of characters through 25 books. The principals were constant-Frank and Joe, sons of Fenton Hardy, detective, students at Bayport High in the town of the same name on Barnet Bay, led perilous lives through *The House on the Cliff*, *Hunting for Hidden Gold*, *While the Clock Ticked*, and so forth. They were accompanied usually by three "chums" — jovial and chubby Chet Morgan, tough, two-fisted Biff Hooper, and Tony Frito-devised doubtless to represent all the unmelted parts of American society. Occasionally Chet's sister Lola Morton would be seen with Frank, as would Callie Shaw with Joe. Cops and robbers shifted in and out of the series; later, for comic value, the boys' meddling Aunt Gertrude arrived to frustrate all. Everything was clean and above-board: only a "gosh" or a "golly," as McFarlane puts it; no booze and no tobacco; and as far as sex was concerned, it would have seemed un-American for the Hardys to get hard.

During the Second World War, McFarlane became enmeshed in government public relations work in Ottawa and went on to the National Film Board, where he stayed for 15 years before hearing again the call to freelance. All this time the Hardy Boys soldiered on. The books are still selling at a rate of one million a year.

The difficulty is that, while the titles are identical, the books have all been gutted. The changes are much more

than a matter of updating the text, turning "roadster" into "convertible." McFarlane's work has been banished, to be replaced by a slick, juiceless version without candour or honesty. That is a shame.

The Hardy Boys actually nudged some towards literacy. I remember them being read in school as a special treat, and I treasured my copies particularly; proud that they looked like "real books" rather than the multi-coloured children's efforts I was frequently given. Besides, although not great literature, they were literate-Frank and Joe, Chet and Biff underwent some rudimentary character development. God knows the plots were tight enough, and McFarlane's style, while not exactly masterful, was competent, always lean, and occasionally forceful.

And this book is written in the same fashion; occasionally it is a trifle self-indulgent, but what memories are not? The glimpse he provides into the world of the fiction factory is authoritative and enlightening, the nostalgia of Frank and Joe is comfoning and frequently hilarious, and his own sketch of survival enjoyable and entertaining. Of course, Edward Stratemeyer would never have touched the manuscript; he might have done an Alger with it but it is much too unique for a series. □

Diplomatic hot flushes"

Canada: A Middle-Aged Power, by John W. Holmes, Carleton Library series, McClelland & Stewart, 293 pages, \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0-7710-97980).

By NEVILLE THOMPSON

THIS VOLUME by the Director of Research for the Canadian Institute of International Affairs is a continuation of the commentary on Canada's involvement in the world community published in 1970 in *The Better Part of Valour*. Like any collection of topical essays and addresses written for a variety of audiences over a five-year period, it contains repetitious material and details that could have been edited out to advantage. And although it has a short general introduction and brief comments at the beginning of each section, a longer essay drawing out the main themes of the collection and the years under review and indicating

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where further elaboration was to be found would have been most useful. By indirection to find direction **out** is all **very** well for those who follow diplomatic events closely, but more guidance would have given the book a wider appeal. As the early 1970s recede in time, many of these essays will be difficult to **understand** without academic exegesis. This will be unfortunate since **there** is much here that should be **considered** by anyone concerned about Canada's position in the world.

The basic contention, running through the book is that the present mood in the country about international affairs is menopausal: "There is a feeling of impotence **measured** by illusions of fantastic potency: **The** disposition is bitchy. Agonizing is **preferred** to deliberation. Everyone is wrong-headed, including ourselves. Woe is us." In this scheme of things; the glad confident morning was the end of the Second World War, when Canada emerged as a middle power, seemingly capable of **playing** a major part as mediator in solving the world's problems. Disillusionment with this thankless **role**, together **with** our relative decline in some respects as a world power with the **recovery** and assertion of other countries, led to an ostentatious **reconsideration** of Canada's foreign policy. There has been a growing conviction that the country should draw back from international involvement and a **concern** for posture that Holmes **characterizes** as a weakness of middle age. Perhaps it is, but it is also a weakness of youth; and **often** of old age too. Diplomacy and diplomatic writing seem **particularly** afflicted with dubious analogies, and misleading **metaphors** (Invocations of appeasement by Anthony Eden at the time of Suez and by Lyndon Johnson over Vietnam, and the fatuous "**dumbell**" concept of a united North America balancing off a united Western Europe spring **all** too **readily** to mind.) And Holmes, perhaps as a result of having been **a** diplomat, has not escaped this impulse to poetic fancy. His use of biological analogies to human beings and other species (the European Community, for example is described as "neither fish, flesh nor fowl and therefore very hard to waltz with") **are** not very helpful in combatting the illusions of others. But these overworked metaphors should not be allowed to detract from his basic message, which is well worth listening to.

Out of disappointment with the romantic idea of foreign affairs as a

sphere for simple, **dramatic solutions**, the failure to find counterweights to the United States in the most **unlikely parts** of the globe, and the selfish instinct to turn **out** back on the world and enjoy our **natural** bounty, Holmes hopes will **come** a sober realization that **Canada** has a duty to play its part in ameliorating international **tensions** wherever it can, aresponsibility as **a rich country** in a poor world to share its resources (and a justification to keep them from exploitation by the U.S.) and an acceptance of diplomacy as a vital but unspectacular matter of **day-to-day negotiations from which** immediate results should not be expected. This is not a call to which anyone can respond with **wild** enthusiasm; but it is a decent; even a noble one, true to the best instincts by which this country has been known and should be known. **Let** us all hope that John Holmes long continues as the voiceofreason in **these matters**, **exhorting** us to the path or righteousness with his steady stream of comments and reflections. □

Wave review

Tumult in the Clouds: A Story of the Fleet Air Arm; by John Hoare, Thomas Nelson (Michael Joseph), 208 pages, \$11.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7181-1410-S).

By NEIL McARTHUR

JOHN HOARE'S title seems to imply a tale of fierce air battles and heroic sorties against the enemy, but he really **deals** only **casually** with such events. The sub-title, *A Story of the Fleet Air Arm*, is **more realistic**, and **this he tells very well**, basing it on his own career and the events that touched **him** and his air-observer classmates throughout the Second **World** War.

Perhaps **his** greatest adventure took place during the frantic search for *Bismark* following the sinking of the **Hood** in May, 1941. **He even** forgives the navy for the failure of a beacon aboard *Victorious* which resulted in his ditching in the North Atlantic. The account of several desperate days in a dinghy, and a miraculous rescue by a lone merchant ship is told **in the** same dispassionate style/that he employs throughout.

The nearest approach to "tumult" is the controversy that prevailed throughout the war between those who put their faith mainly in a big-gun navy and those who saw naval air as a major weapons-carrying medium for the fleet. Britain had committed substantial funds for carrier construction in the 1930s, but the real role of naval aviation had still not been defined when the war began. The aircraft were slow, their range and load-carrying capabilities limited, and there was no effective carrier-borne fighter. The main role of the few carriers performed in the early years was that of transporting land-based fighters for service in Malta and the Middle East. Subsequent events proved the need for fleet protection, but only after such tragedies as the loss of *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* to enemy air attack, something that might have been averted if there had been defensive air cover. Hoare describes the frustration of those who saw the needs and capabilities of naval aviation, but who had to perform compromise roles with compromise equipment. He was one of those who helped develop a night-fighter role; he says very little about it, however, perhaps because his

unit was shore-based and hence not uniquely maritime. I

One gets the impression that Hoare suffered from a problem of identity in his role as a Canadian Volunteer Reserve Observer in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. He gloried in the pre-war splendour of the formal *Rodney* wardroom when he served aboard, but rarely could fly in the catapult-launched Walrus that was the reason for his being there. He mentions the "feeling of family" among Fleet Air Arm personnel and the fact that "they were glad to be in the navy, but gladder still to be flying in the navy." As an innovative group within the most traditional of services identity must have been a serious problem indeed.

This book is both a narrative of one man's wartime career, and also a critical description of a controversial branch of the service. The author intends it to be a serious work built around his own experiences and associations. It will be of greatest interest to wartime aviation buffs, but useful for historians as well. Others may find it tedious, particularly the substantial portion devoted to training for Hoare's ultimate role as an air observer. □

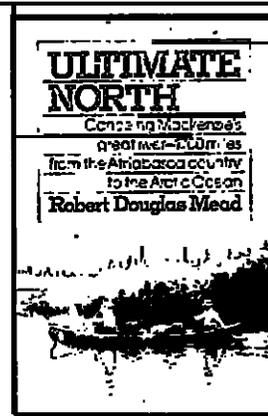
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Cover to Cover, by Michael Snow, The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (5163 Duke Street, Halifax), 332 pages, \$20 cloth (ISBN 0-919616-054) and \$12.50 paper (ISBN 0-919616-06-2).

By WALTER KLEPAC

MICHAEL SNOW'S *Cover to Cover* is easily one of the most absorbing, sophisticated, and essential photographic art books produced in Canada to date. While the book basically consolidates and refines the radical formal developments and the thematic preoccupations of Snow's previous work, it does present an innovative point of departure for the Canadian art book in general.

Snow departs from the traditional conventions of the genre by adopting what is essentially a cinematic approach derived from his own seminal, internationally acclaimed contribution to the *avant-garde* cinema. That is, he



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arranges the **photographic** images in *Cover to Cover* in a way that recreates in book format both film's unrelenting forward movement through real time and its illusion of constantly being in the present tense.

He recreates the uniform sequential flow so characteristic of film by a simple yet resourceful adaptation of a basic feature exclusive to the book form — namely the principle of **recto-verso**, which in the present case refers to both the two sides of a single page and to the right and left sides of following pages. Snow makes exhaustive use of both aspects. The very fact that we **are** shown opposite views (sides) of the same **object** on either side of a single page seems to imply that we are being offered a **flat**, black-and-white surrogate for the formerly solid, **three-dimensional original**.

As for the facing pages, it turns out that we read **them** more or less together, as they lie, so that we see opposite views of the same object or event, which are in reality moments apart in time, almost simultaneously. This depiction of even the most commonplace **sort** of action (such as Snow opening the door of his studio or placing a **record** on a turntable) shown first **from**

one side and then, seconds later, **from** the opposite side, both juxtaposed on facing pages, makes us almost "feel" the movement of a body through space. There is something sculptural, **something** intangibly sensuous about it, as if we were being presented with a **two-dimensional "objectified!"** correlative for the sensation of actual lived experience. Old Muybridge and Duchamp seem **bested at last**.

This **constant** play back and forth between the facing pages also tends to lull the reader hypnotically into the distinctive mood, protracted sense of time, and narrow perceptual range of each individual sequence in the book. The overall impression created by each of the **sequences** is somewhat akin to **that of being stoned — our perceptions** seeming to **pass** before us of their own volition:

Bit by bit, Snow steadily undermines our habitual **assumption** of the photograph's status as "unprejudiced" factual description by exposing the inherent "natural lies" of **the camera: the inevitable flattening** out of its images; its framing off of discrete sections of the scene being photographed; and its static, fixed point of view. In the end, however, it is the implicit analogy **be-**

tween the camera and the eye — both instruments of observation and perception — that gives *Cover to Cover* its larger philosophic dimensions. The stark, "dumb," empty look of most of Snow's photographic images may be, when one thinks of it, an accurate **representation** of the retinal **impressions** of the eye before they **have been processed** by the mind. The images remind us that even the most elementary kind of **observation** (a close-up of the back of a man's shirt or the side of a passing car) takes on an abstract and unfamiliar **appearance** in isolation and requires a host of information about the **context** of the image and about viewing conditions for us to understand that is. **see — it at all**.

The overall framework for these perceptual, time-motion studies that make up the **various** sequences of *Cover to Cover* is the simple story of how the book was made. **However**, at the same time as he relates this obsessively detailed history of events, Snow also makes us **aware**, through the use of unexpected sight gags, of the book itself as a palpable, physical object and **of its** images as photographs. One **of his** most frequent ploys is to have an image of an incident become, by the very next page, a photograph of that image. Because of such abrupt and, at first, **barely** detectable transitions, the reader often finds himself suddenly in the middle of a new sequence before he knows what has happened. In one **sequence** a photograph is progressively **rotated** in a circular motion so that in **following** it we end up turning the entire book upside down. By **interspersing** such ironic devices throughout the book, Snow brings into play several distinct levels of consciousness at **once**. While these levels exist anytime we read or look at **any** book, especially when our mind wanders, Snow has deliberately built them all into the structure and substance of **his** extraordinary little book. □

IN BRIEF

MY **GENERAL** animadversion on gift books notwithstanding ("On Books As Things," December issue), it has to be admitted that once in a while a book from within that numbing genre, while it begins with coffee-table qualities — workaday lavishness, the world in a Kodachrome nutshell, and a randomly swatted-up text — nevertheless hauls itself up by its own biking boots into **something** better. So it is

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with *Superior: The Haunted Shore* (Gage, 176 pages, \$35.00, ISBN 0-7715-9310-11. Expansively designed by Vernon Mould and Dorothy Mould, with colour photographs by Bruce Littlejohn and an intelligent, well-written text by Wayland Drew, the book guides the reader from Sault Ste. Marie along the North Shore to Grand Portage, stopping in 12 chapters to discuss beauty, history, myth, fauna, flora, local anecdotalage, and even (*mirabile dictu!*) meaning. Drew's text is a great pleasure. In what other photo gift book can you find chapters decorated with preliminaries from E. M. Cioran's *The Fall Into Time*, Agee's *Famous Men*, and John Fowles' *The Aristos*? The authors' introduction proclaims two themes for the book: the "co-existence of power and fragility"; and the "insignificance of the human record" set against "three billion somber years of endurance." The photographs, they say, attest to the natural beauty of the shore (and though, as photographs, they are of the illustrative, high-mimetic variety, they do), while the theme of the text is "human transience." Littlejohn and Drew ask that any necessary synthesis of the two occur in the reader's mind: "We are

content to leave the difference as it stands, feeling that it is appropriate to the generative tension of the wilderness out of which it grew." A gift book with ideas. And written in prose.,
GARY MICHAEL DAULT

IN 1932, most of Canada's unemployed young men made the rails across the country in a futile quest for work. Not A. L. Karras. Choosing to turn his back on both the Depression and civilization, he headed into the virgin north country of Saskatchewan to try his hand at trapping. In 1970, he published a memoir of his' experiences. *North to Cree Lake* has recently been reissued in paperback; (PaperJacks, 256 pages, \$1.95, ISBN 0-7737-7123-9). This reissue neatly coincides with the publication of Karras' sequel volume, *Face the North. Wind* (Burns & MacEachern, 191 pages, \$4.95, ISBN 0-88768-064-X). The first book deals with Karras' personal apprenticeship to the skills of trapping and wilderness survival; the second recounts the experiences and yams of his fellow trappers. The books have a methodical and understated style that becomes an appropriate comment on the common-

sense approach these trappers took toward the problems of coping with the winter wilderness. From this understatement, moreover, emerges a genuine impression of Karras' deep love for the north country and the trapper's way of life. Karras provides a fascinating counterpoint to the image of the Depression presented in, say, *Ten Lost Years*. He also sets down for posterity a unique and largely forgotten way of life. The books make abundantly clear that some people who went into the wilderness and confronted the basic issues of survival, thoroughly enjoyed the experience, grew from it, and were financially successful as well. Gloomy survivalist critics, take note!

RON WALDIE

A SATIRICAL novel that gleefully pillories scholars, editors, professors, and other assorted courtiers who profess allegiance to the "modern imagination," *The Imperial Wheelchair* (132 pages, \$3), is the first offering of Quebec-based (Ste. Anne de Bellevue) Deluge Press. John Henry ("Hippo") Crock, "liar, lecher, forger, teacher and hypocrite," persuades his punctilious neighbour (Columbus O'Sullivan, an economics professor and the author of

Turk et al, : ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

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this hook) to tidy up the rough draft of his proposed anthology of poems by expatriate writers (*Crock's Crackerjacks*), and prepare it for publication. Although the names of the poets are disconcertingly familiar (Rene Souse, Irven Lazoroviski, Earl Bowering, etc.) the main thrust of the satire is aimed at the academic community, not at the poets themselves. *The Imperial Wheelchair (an amalgam of The Imperial Theme and The Wheel of Fire?)* comes complete with an introduction, footnotes, classy little epigraphs (by everyone from Shakespeare to Simon and Garfunkel), and a note "for the scholar" explaining that *Wheelchair is "a masterpiece of juvenile obscurity . . . cunningly & signed . . . to provide subject matter for six thousand theses."* While the novel occasionally falters under the weight of its narrator's clumsy style and smug mediocrity, it is, on the whole, a cleverly conceived, thoroughly enjoyable, first publication of a new press..

MARILYN BAXTER

THE BLURB ON the dust-jacket makes it worth the reviewer's looking at Wilfred B. Martin's *The Negotiated Order Of the School* (Macmillan, 191 pages, \$12.95). It claims this technical sociological study will be of importance to sociologists of education and helpful to teachers themselves. And, surprisingly, Martin does almost succeed. If a teacher is not discouraged by the theoretical parts (which are fairly clearly explained) or by Martin's dry style, he will find much useful information. The book is a study of the various kinds of negotiations that teachers have with each other and with students. As one reads, one is amazed how many of them seem familiar, and realizes how important (and inescapable) the bargaining process is to the day-to-day life of the teacher. In setting up or applying any rule or teaching plan, about going to the washroom, a class project or using the gymnasium, the teacher is forced to bargain with students or other teachers. Martin further shows that these negotiations are much the same in open- and closed-plan schools, refuting the common belief that the architecture determines a school's social interactions. Accordingly, it becomes clear that teachers need to understand negotiation. Mind you, it would be bitter to use Martin's study as a foundation for appropriate courses of teacher-training than to hand such a technical book to a fledgling teacher.

H. A. BASSFORD

EVENTS LEADING to Confederation in Canada have been well chronicled. The better reports come alive when they examine in depth individuals and communities. Other writers have less successfully gilded the furniture of change, the conferences and intrigue, and called it "grand" or "exciting." Michael Bliss's *Confederation (Grolier Educational Associates, Toronto, 66 pages, \$4.95)* falls somewhere in between. Detail, colour, personality are not stressed here, though we are several times smirkingly informed that John Macdonald liked his drink, or that Joseph Howe rushed to London "like a jilted lover" to thwart the union. Rather Dr. Bliss has fashioned a concise account of the causes, setbacks, and eventual successes of Confederation. Juvenile readers (Grade 7 and up), for whom the hook is intended, may discover in our nation's birth all the dash and verve of a ham sandwich. perhaps they will wonder if Confederation was more than middle-aged burghers foxtrotting in gumboots. Canadian history need not be "dull," but even as the French Revolution can be rendered pedantic by a scholarly format, so do whiffs from the classroom stiffen this survey. The author has lost something in his attempt to be not only light and brief, but also accurate. Nevertheless, *Confederation* is carefully written, readable, and complemented by maps and illustrations; it will be widely used as a text. A thoughtful précis of Messrs. Morton, Waite, Creighton, et al., it may be the best short treatment of the union of the provinces yet to appear. As an introduction to the sort and style of Canadian historical writing encountered in schools and universities, Bliss will serve admirably. There is even the spectre of National Identity, roused and again abroad in the last chapter, to lay seeds for future essays from Sea to Sea.

GORD RIPLEY

AN UNUSUAL variety of poems, illustrations and essays by girls from all across Canada is attractively presented in *Girls Will Be Women I Femmes de Demain* (All About Us/ Nous Autres, 73 pages, \$2). Although the book was compiled as a salute to International Women's Year, it is not often overtly feminist in character. The ideas tend to express concern with social problems and the human experiences of those who are six to 18 years of age. The 12 illustrations reveal young women whose style ranges from the primitive to the surreal. My only quarrel is with the

editor, Betty Nickerson, who seemed determined to make the book as democratic as possible. The contributions are thoroughly mixed and one is sometimes confronted with a poem by a six-year-old juxtaposed against the more highly developed skills of a much older counterpart. The decision to include two members of the opposite sex is equally well-intentioned, but the deliberate pro-feminist nature of these particular selections, together with the editor's tokenism, is demeaning. This does nothing to enhance the integrity of a book that should, and could, stand on its own.

CAROLE SPRAY

NOTES & COMMENTS

WHEN THE WINNERS of the 1975 Governor General's Awards for English-language literature were announced a month ago, we were astonished and disturbed. Our reactions haven't changed much since. We were astonished in a positive way by the award for poetry, which Milton Acorn richly deserved. Our critic, Len Gasparini, had this to say of Acorn in his review of *The Island Means Minago*: "If he's not the best poet in this country right now, I'll break my typewriter." Somehow, we just didn't expect the GeeGee judges to agree with Gasparini.

We were astonished in a negative way by the award for non-fiction. *Hallowed Walls: Church Architecture of Upper Canada* by Marion MacRea and Anthony Adamson was, at best, a professional effort on a recondite subject. It was overshadowed by a number of other works, particularly in the fields of history, biography, and the social sciences, that spoke more eloquently about who we were and are.

We were disturbed rather than astonished by the award for fiction. To assert that Brian Moore's *The Great Victorian Collection* was the best novel published in Canada last year is merely to invite debate. It was a good novel; but as our April cover indicated, we think there were at least a dozen other novels that could give it a good run for its literary money.

However, to assert that Moore's book was the best Canadian novel published last year (a subtle distinction that the GeeGee judges in their multinational cultural wisdom probably

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- Scott Young

and many, many more

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don't appreciate) is to invite ridicule. Both Moore and *The Great Victorian Collection* are remote from contemporary Canadian life. In making the award, the judges chose to ignore the main thrust of CanLit in the past 10 exciting years. Next year, no doubt, they will give it to Saul Bellow.

* * *

ON THE OTHER hand, the City of Toronto Book Awards judges are to be congratulated on their 1975 selections. The \$3,000 prize was shared between *Immigrants* by Robert Harney and Harold Troper, reviewed in our February, 1976, issue, and Hugh Hood's *The Swing in the Garden* (December issue). They were excellent choices, picked from a strong short-list of contenders.

Nor can we fault the judges for the awards administered by the Canadian Booksellers Association. The winners will be announced at the CBA convention in Vancouver this month. We learn that the \$500 prize for the Book of the Year goes to Peter C. Newman's *The Canadian Establishment* (December issue). Mordecai Richler takes the \$200 Ruth Schwartz Foundation Award for children's literature with *Jamb Two-*

Two 'Meets. the Hooded Fang (June issue). And lack McClelland wins the, CBC plaque as Publisher of the Year. In other words, a clean sweep for M&S. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CANABEAR REALLY?

Sir:

I just read an advance copy of *Bear* [by Marian Engel] and have a question. . . .

CANABEAR?

*And the chorus was dumb,
naturally, reading
anthropomorphic cards in drugstores,
never
dreaming bear and woman dancing
bare
circles on a summer lawn, his warm
breath licking cobwebs grown in virgin
pores filled up with library
dust of dead city and sucking
honey out of laughing
ears.*

*Herbivore lunching on ladyflesh,
canabear
really?*

Linda Rogers
Cheminus, B. C.

NEVER EASY, NEVER OVER

Sir:

I was, to say the least, intrigued to read Karen Mulhellen's review of my poetry in your April, 1976, issue. I might say that to my mind she's misread the poems rather badly (she finds the poetry influenced, for example, by things I've never read), but really that's her problem, not mine.

It occurred to me, though, that a personal message from the backwater of Londonont might not do any harm:

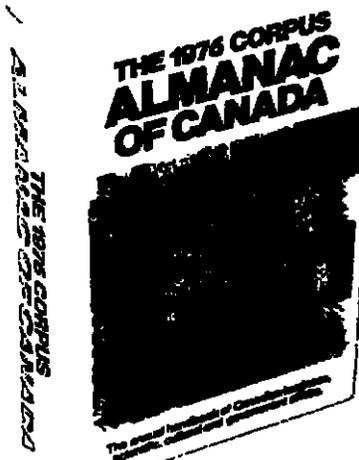
pre/tensjons
(for karen, with love)

*you think i walk into my
self and lock the door, firmly, (but with
warmth and humour); you
think that close inside my tiny room
i am pretentious, pre
tending, eating my guts from the in
side out; you think i have nothing,
to say to you, or
anyone; i suspect you think every
thing dies when you
touch it
touch
this page: it is a key, with
fingers. it opens
storms, fears, the blank faces of
darkness, limb by
limb*

never
easy, never
over

Warmly and humorously yours,

Marg. Yeo
London, Ont.



TRY THIS QUIZ

WHO are the 1975 Canadian champions in sky diving, wristwrestling, ball hockey, Judo?

WHAT are the terms of the Indian treaties?

HOW many foreign language newspapers are published in Canada?

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YES AND NO

Sir:

Gordon Donaldson give an amusing summary of one of his recent works in the April issue of *Books in Canada*. Is this a spoof or has such a work been printed?

Mr. D. Lindsay
Glebe Collegiate Institute
Ottawa, On.,

POINT TAKEN

Sir:

I read with interest PS's review of John C. (or was it, John A. or John D.) Macdonald's *Just Keep Dancin'*. Or was it *Keep On Dancin'*? Or *Dancin' on the Roof*? The review appeared in the March issue, I think. The title has slipped my mind at the moment but that doesn't matter. What interests me is the reviewer's reference to Richard Farina's *So Far Down It Seems Like Up to Me*. I thoroughly enjoyed Farina's first novel *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me* and wasn't even aware he'd written a sequel. Please ask PS where I can buy a copy and tell him I'm looking forward to his review of Farley Mowat's *A Dead Whale*.

Dave Hutchison
Sudbury, On.,

TOO "POPULAR"

Sir:

My subject is the drawing on page 18 of the April issue of *Books in Canada*.

As a teacher and a parent, I find this drawing objectionable and unnecessary in this type of publication. I usually place your booklet on my desk beside other materials which are of interest to my students. This particular copy will no, be found on my desk.

This type of journalism sinks to the level of the "popular" male magazines which rely on sexual imagery for sales, and if this is to be a trend in your promotional practices, I certainly will no, use your publication as a reference for purchasing books for my department.

Donald Eddie
Saugeen District High School
Port Elgin, On.,

NOT PLAYBOY

Sir:

I received a free copy of your April *Books in Canada* from a local bookstore in Duncan, B.C.

I wish to express my disgust with your illustration on the centrefold on the book *Tuktoyaktuk 2-3*. If I had found that illustration in *Playboy* or my publication of that type that I had picked up for a price, I would have expected this sort of thing, but not in a booklet included in a package of other purchases. I could have been with children's books.

I think this was in very bad taste on the part of the publishers.

Mrs. Elizabeth Davies
Thetis Island, B.C.

DEGRADING US ALL

Sir:

Permit me to comment on your book review of *Tuktoyaktuk 2-J* (April). If the illustration shown in the centerfold is typical of the illustrations in this book, then surely the book reviewer has evaded a vital aspect of the book, namely that it is pornographic and exploits one of the most personal and private of human activities.

Such so-called Canadian literature degrades us all and makes light of personally important matters. Even the Eskimo appears to have lost his privacy and dignity completely at the hands of such illustrators, writers, and reviewers.

The teachers at our school who have received *Books in Canada* have expressed strong objection to this illustration as well as to the favourable reviewing of a book that would include such obscenity between its covers. As media director, I have been requested to convey their feelings to you as well.

Elizabeth Doktor
Media Director
Catholic Central High School
Lethbridge, Alta.

PORNOGRAPHIC PUKE

Sir:

I wish to protest the use of the picture or line drawing you printed on pages 18-19 of the April edition of *Books in Canada*. Of all the pictures in the book you had to select that one which is really pictorial garbage. I, does nothing but, degrade the life of the Eskimo and corrupt the minds of ordinary people. Are you sick? How did you get public money to print this kind of pornographic puke?

Louis Burke
Head, English Department
Catholic Central High School
Lethbridge, Alta.

ATTENTION GRABBER

Sir:

I am writing to object in the strongest terms possible to your printing of the drawing which, appears on pages 18-19 of the April, 1976, issue of *Books in Canada*. I cannot believe that the selection of this one of all possible pictures from the book serves your function of reviewer or the best interests of the Eskimo people. The incident of sexual intercourse depicted in the picture does no, in any way shock or distress me. On the contrary, it seems to me an entirely natural, even pleasurable, event. It is your use of the picture in your journal that I object to; I judge that you have used it, only to attract attention.

S. W. Sawicki
Principal
Catholic Central High School
Lethbridge, Alta.

DEFECATING HARPIES?

Sir:

I have been following with some interest, and a good deal of horror, the vicious exchanges of abuse and opinion between your reviewers and some authors and readers (January, February, March).

I think some of your reviewers are missing the whole point of a book review.

The reviewer should evaluate the book from the point of view of the segment of the reading public to which the book is directed, and judge whether it is a good read, a fair value, or no.. The book should no, be examined from the heights of an academic ivory tower, unless it is a book directed at the said ivory tower.

Some, many reviewers misuse the book review as a platform, upon which they themselves perform, demonstrating their own cleverness, wit, erudition, and ability to be cruel, destructive and sarcastic.

May we not have, for example, poets writing poems for the sheer love of creating, (they don't,

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THE BRAWL by Gerard Bessette, translated by Marc Lebel and Ronald Sutherland.

This novel foreshadowed the major themes and problems which were to preoccupy Quebec society and Quebec writers from the sixties onwards. It is almost uncannily prophetic with regard to labour problems, religion, education and sex, making it perhaps more meaningful today than it was when it appeared eighteen years ago.

by Ronald Sutherland



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make any money) and publishing their work to be read for those who love reading?

Must we have these critical vultures crouching in the trees, these academic harpies defecating over the banquet tables, these literary vivisectionists waiting to tear every new book to bits, to dissect it, and expose the flaws, real or imaginary? Flaws, like the poor, we shall always have with us.

Must the life of a writer be a continual battle, no, with the reading public, but with paid critical peers whose ambition seems to be to elevate themselves, by putting others down? Criticism, if we must have it, should be constructive, not destructive.

I read *Books in Canada* to find out what Canadians are writing, and to receive notice of books I may wish to read. I am getting too many negative vibrations.

W. L. Snowden
St. Catharines, Ont.

UNDEFUNCT PRESS

Sir:

We at General Publishing read with interest the letter to the editor from Rolf Kalman of *Simon & Pierre* which appeared in the January, 1976, issue of *Books in Canada*. In the course of his lengthy letter, Mr. Kalman made reference to the "now defunct New Press."

This came as quite a surprise to us, since we have expended a great deal of effort during the past two years toward the revitalizing of New Press and feel that our efforts are being rewarded.

Since acquiring New Press in August, 1975, General Publishing has reprinted and re-issued some solid titles from the New Press backlist. Some examples are *Women in Canada* by Marylee Stephenson, *Abortion in Canada* by Eleanor Pelrine, *The Only Good Indian* by Wau-

bageshig, *The Guide to Family Law* by Malcolm Kronby, and *Leaving Home* by David French.

As well, we ensured that a number of new titles, which seemed in danger of dying on the vine, were published. Some examples are *Prison of Grass* by Howard Adams, *Badlands* by Robert Kroetsch, *Of the Fields, Lately* by David French, and *About Schools: What Every Canadian Parent Should Know* by Robe, Stamp.

We are in the midst of an exciting period of growth and development for New Press. The Spring 1976 season is highlighted by the release of *One Crack Out* by David French, a new edition of *Beginnings: A Winnipeg Childhood* by Dorothy Livesay, and *The Canada Day Book* by the master of Canadian literature studies, Jim Foley. Our Fall 1976 list will add further sheen to the New Press list.

New Press defunct? Nonsense.

Marion E. Raycheba
Managing Editor
General Publishing
Toronto

CanWit No. 12

ONCE AGAIN our old friends at McClurkin & Newspider, the all-Canadian national publisher, are in a quandary. The firm would like to hold a promotional party to launch *Resurfacing in Sarnia*, the brilliant first novel by Joyce Castor. Unfortunately, however, there is an acute embarrassment of funds. How would readers word an invitation to ensure that the fewest possible guests actually bother to come? The winner will receive \$25. Address entries to: CanWit No. 12, *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is June 30. (Incidentally, readers are also invited to contribute suggestions for future CanWit contests. We will pay \$25 for every suggestion used.)

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 10

OUR MIXED-METAPHOR competition, to quote an entry submitted by Edward Dahl of Ottawa, "opened the door to a whole can' of worms, so to speak." Dahl found that gem in the newspaper; it was attributed to an RCMP corporal discussing the merits of fingerprinting. There were several other entries citing actual quotes. For instance F. J. Fletcher, review editor of the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, recently found his pencil hovering over this line from a contributor: "As it stands, this book falls between two stools." And the award for the thorniest mixed metaphor goes to Wendy Feldman of St. Catharines, Ont., who found "this comment on the Military Services Act of 1917 in the *Rowell Papers*: "Farmers have been toyed with, advised, and

hood-winked so often that the worm will turn some time and this new law is the last straw on the camel's back." The first prize of \$23 goes to John McCallum of Kitchener, Ont., for these all-too-probable inventions:

- He may be down for the count now, but don't forget it's always darkest before the dawn.
- It's a real plum of a business, and Joe here is its top banana.
- No use crying over spilt milk. R's ail water under the bridge now anyways.
- We are ships passing in the night, seldom meeting on the road of life.
- You're skating on pretty thin ice now, my boy. Keep on like this and you'll soon find yourself in hot water.
- Although the government was swamped by a" avalanche of slinging invective, what threatened to be an all out conflagration proved in the end to be a mere tempest in a tea-pot.
- It's the cat's meow, you know. I go, it from the horse's mouth.

Honourable mentions:

- There's no smoke without beating about the bush.
- Two's company, three makes strange bed-fellows.
- Bolting the stable door after the chickens have come home to roost.
- All work and no play makes Jack as good as his master.

--David W. Sneddon, Guelph, On.,

* * *

- The snowball of knowledge stamps relentlessly on.
- Life is a labyrinth of confusion so you'd better learn to sink or swim.
- His fiery temper cast a chili on the party.
- If you smell a rat, nip him in the bud.

—Keith Garebian
Dollard des Ormeaux, Que.

* * *

- An old cake" bucket of bolts from the blue.
- An ill wind that "eve, maker hay.

—Joan McGrath, Toronto

* * *

- Half a loaf is better than never having loafed a, nil.
- The grass is always greener on the other side, so put that in your pip and smoke it.

—Bruce Bailey, Montreal

* * *

- Out of the frying pan into the mire.
- Any more white elephants will just be icing on the cake.

—Judy Hurst, Toronto

* **

- His wild oats came home to roost.

—Heather Marshall, Montreal

* * *

- Talking to hi", is like beating your head against a dead horse.

—Chuck Davis, Vancouver

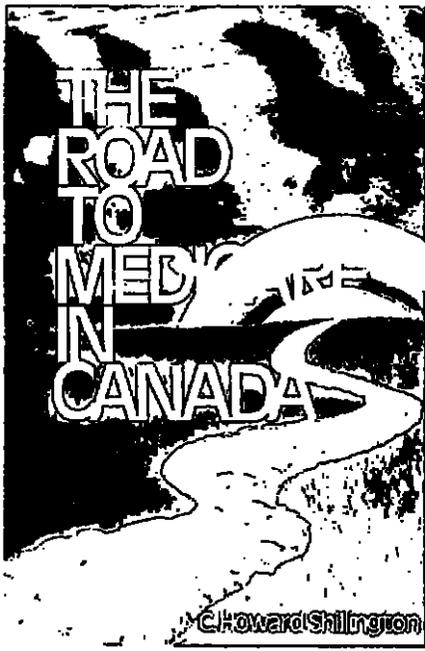
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C. Howard Shillington

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arrangements under their own direction, and finally their concern for the future nature of health insurance, as the spectre of a government plan hung over their heads, and eventually became a reality.

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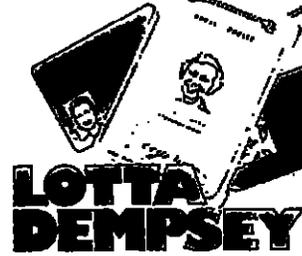


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