

# BOOKS *in* CANADA

a national review of books

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# MEDIUM TYPES

A host of dedicated middlemen are needed to work the miracle of books. Here are three of them.

by Michael Rygal

**IN ONE SENSE** books are the most intimate form of communication. They are **the** means by which **one** individual **mind** attempts to pour its thoughts and feelings into **another**, a silent miracle **that transcends** space and time. Yet in another sense this miracle is very much a collective effort. It wouldn't be possible without the small army of middlemen, **from printers** to booksellers, who service the machinery of publishing. Working as they do in an industry that is notoriously short on material rewards, these middlemen are a remarkably dedicated lot. Each June **two** key groups of them, the Canadian Booksellers Association and the Canadian Library Association, hold **conventions** at which members discuss new and better ways to forge the links between author and reader. This year the CBA. is meeting in **Toronto's Royal York Hotel June 12-14**. Meanwhile the CLA is gathering in Montreal's Queen **Elizabeth Hotel June 9-15**. (Both, unfortunately, are closed conventions.) As a salute to all the industry's middlemen, *Books in Canada*.

"I've always said they should **practise birth control** in the publishing industry; half the books out shouldn't be."



Fred Gundy

asked me to **interview** three individuals who not only love books but also live them—a publisher's salesman, a librarian, and a bookseller.

**FRED GUNDY** may or may not be the best publisher's salesman in Canada. That's **hard** to judge. But he is without doubt the most experienced. For 45 **uninterrupted** years he **flogged** books for **Oxford University Press**. Then when he retired from OUP a year ago last January, he refused to be put on the shelf. So he joined **Thomas Nelson & Sons**. Old **salesmen** never die; in good **backlist** items, they go on **forever**.

Gundy is a tall, round-shouldered fellow of 67, **conservatively** dressed in **grey flannels** and pale blue shirt and blue tie. Except for his **stiff-leggedness** (caused by bad feet, he tells me), he looks to be in good health, with a full head of **greying** hair. He doesn't **appear** to be **accustomed** to interviews and as we sat in the library of Thomas Nelson, Gundy kept lighting and **re-lighting** a cigar, finally giving up "Got this at a stag last night. Don't know why I kept it."

His story begins in 1931, **when** Gundy joined OUP to cover Eastern Ontario, then known as the graveyard of **the** province. He was in fact the son of Samuel Bradley Gundy, the **first** manager of OUP **when** the **firm** was founded here in 1904. He went to Upper Canada College and, **as he recalls**, "I **wasn't** what you called a **brilliant** scholar. The principal told my father **'Fred's** a boy of average ignorance.'" So it was straight to OUP, since "nobody else would **hire me**."

In the early days, when he got a salary of \$8 a week, Gundy **used** to hit the trains or buses with three **100-pound** cases full of books and stop off at every little town **or** village **along** Lake Ontario and north through the Ottawa Valley. The trip took two weeks. It was made twice a year, and the trade was mostly in **dictionaries, bibles, and** Presbyterian and Anglican hymn books. A \$30 order was something to be prized. By 1935, he "graduated" to **Western** Canada, **schlepping** those three **trunks** from town to town, **displaying** his wares in **hotel suites** and **sending** the **orders** home. There was the routine, too, of calling on his **customers**, checking their stock and inviting them to see Oxford's new **books**:

"Back then, they **used** to **wait for us** to show up. We'd come around twice a year and **they** were loyal to **us**. Today you've new publishers starting **every** day. And the **numbers** of books! The **stores** are inundated with them. I've always said they should **practise birth control** in the publishing industry; half **the** books out shouldn't be."

In any case, times **were** different then. **But** after the end of the Second World War (**Gundy** had volunteered for the navy, but was **turned** down) publishing started to pick up and so did Gundy's career. He was now sales manager: he **travelled** by **plane** with just a set of **catalogues**; the **backlist** was better than ever; and bibles, it **seems**, were on the **decline**. Until about 1970, Gundy made his twice-a-year

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sortie out West, as well as visits to Ottawa and Montreal several times a year.

I asked Gundy to define the secret of selling. "Hell, I don't know," he says, trying once again to light his cigar. "But if I read the books, I couldn't sell them. Seriously, though, I suppose the secret is not to oversell. The returns can be terrible: they'll kill you. And sometimes it's not so good to undersell. Take Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us*. Nobody expected it to be a hit and yet it sold 12,000 copies here. My advice to young salesmen is simply to play it straight."

Gundy has been following his own counsel for nearly 50 years. Although he finds it hard to articulate, he has a deep-rooted love for publishing: "For one thing, there's a greater spirit of camaraderie, than in any other business I know. For another, it's a fascinating game that is full of surprises. You are always trying to guess a book's potential and sell it accordingly."

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"I chose not to be a bibliophile. My concern is for people and books and bringing them together. And I happen to like politics."

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Madge Aalto

LIBRARIANS, I've found, are a curious species who tend to come in two categories. There is the non-careerist bibliophile and there is the upwardly mobile administrator. Madge Morton Aalto, now chief librarian for Metro Toronto's Borough of East York, is one of the latter breed. During her career she has concluded that people matter more than books. And if that attitude means wading into the sticky mess of office politics, so be it.

She is a tall, generously shaped woman of 36, dressed casually with a pair of chic flight-type glasses perched on her nose. Her casual appearance reflects the commune-like atmosphere of her "shop"; traditional hierarchies seem to have gone out the window. But that atmosphere is deceptive. Aalto efficiently presides over a full-time staff of 30 and a part-time staff of 120. The four-branch operation has an annual budget of \$1.2 million.

Aalto got her start in libraries as a 12-year-old part-time helper in Vancouver. She remembers she was a "fat and uncomfortable" teenager during the 1950s, the sort of girl who pretended she didn't care when the phone didn't ring. Partly as an escape she became an "omnivorous" reader of 4 Books in Canada, June-July, 1977

and developed a special interest in science fiction. "I'm still fat," she says today, patting her tummy. "But I'm comfortable with it."

She majored in geography, history, and English at Wellesley College, near Boston, and joined the Toronto Public Library system in 1964. For two years she worked in the system's children's branch, then took a degree in library science at the U of T. She was back working for the TPL when, in the summer of 1970, SF author Judith Merrill bequeathed a massive science-fiction collection to the city. Because of her special knowledge of the field, Aalto was given the task of setting up what was to become the system's famous Spaced-Out Library.

Her main problem was that she "didn't know a thing about specialized collections." However, she soon learned and happily began hunting down books to fill in the gaps in the collection. It was a hectic period, particularly since she was simultaneously teaching a course in science fiction at York University and often attending SF conferences and conventions: "I met some of the prime crazies in the world."

But after three years, the excitement waned. "It was too easy," she says. "I had mastered the techniques and I was growing tired of the same questions and the routine. Besides, I wasn't learning anything new about libraries and library management." So she transferred to a general public library and became a branch head for an enjoyable year "in the real world, rather than a little ghetto." Next she took the post as the TPL's head of adult services, a desk job the involved co-ordinating acquisitions. It also involved plenty of reports and learning the ins and outs of office politics. From there she moved on to her present position in East York, where she is fast acquiring expertise in general accounting, budget control, public tendering (for a new library roof), and the art of massaging aldermanic egos.

Where will Aalto be five years from now? Undoubtedly somewhere even higher up the library ladder. "I chose not to be a bibliophile," she says. "My concern is for people and books and bringing them together. And I happen to like politics."

"RIGHT DOWN stairs and mind your head," I'm instructed as I walk into Longhouse Bookshop in downtown Toronto. And so I march past the piles of current best sellers, the neatly arranged display of new art books, glancing up at the wall covered with newly framed photographs of our own literati and several clippings about this tiny shop, which opened just over five years ago and is devoted solely to Canadian books. Longhouse was the first of its kind in Toronto; others have since followed. None, however, is as comprehensive (17,500 titles) nor, I suspect as much a "home" for Canadian writers and their books -and their readers.

In any case, the stairs are steep and I almost collide with a beam that runs along the length of this store-room and office. There's hardly a bare space, with great piles of books, unopened boxes, posted memos, invoices, post-cards, photographs -everything looking as if it's in proper place and retrievable in an instant. Sitting in the middle of this impeccable order is Beth Appeldoorn, a tall, strapping woman of 38, dressed in a navy-blue longhouse T-shirt and beige cords. She lights up one of an endless stream of Peter Stuyvesants, dangles one long leg over the arm of her chair, and for the next couple of hours we talk about herself and how she — and her partner and long-time companion, Susan Sandler — got into the book business.

Beth Appeldoorn grew up in Arnhem, Holland, in a family of businessmen-engineer. She was studying to be a doctor ("Why medicine? I had to do something," she says in a soft staccato) and wandering around Europe when, in 1964, she pulled up roots and came to Canada. She'd intended to go to the U.S.; but in what she now considers her best piece of luck, she was turned down.

"I strongly believe you **should** have as many books as possible and not care about your sales per square foot. Your number-one reason for existence is your love of books."



Beth Appeldoorn

After **travelling** about the country, **touring** from coast to coast, she found herself out of money and in search of a job. One day, when **the** mammoth **Yorkdale Shopping Centre** in suburban Toronto had just opened, she **walked into** Cole's with **nary** a clue about books and landed an **85-cents-an-hour** job as a clerk. Within a month she was on staff and within two more months she **rose** to trade buyer. Eventually she moved to the main store at **Yonge** and **Charles Streets**, where she completed **her first** year in book-selling.

"I knew after one **year** this was my country," says Appeldoorn, in a slight **Dutch** accent. "I'd **developed** a love for this place. **I'm** not sure why; I **just** felt more at home here. **And**, at **the** same time, **I** was reading everything I could about Canada." And so, in an **almost** simultaneous move, she took a job as main buyer at the York University bookstore and became a landed immigrant. The move was made after **briefly** returning home ("So I could **return** all my overdue library books", she says, grinning).

A **diligent** careerist, she stayed at York seven years, enjoying **all** but the last **two years** at her work as manager. All the while, however, she was thinking of opening her own store. She thought **1969** would have been a good date to launch the first **all-Canadian** store. Everybody else, however, said no; it was still too early. So for three **years** she **and Sandler** saved furiously, collecting \$15,000, **and** with the blessings of Jack McClelland and **Dennis** Lee finally opened Longhouse in what she calls "the bookstore skip" in Toronto.

The **first two years** were difficult, so **tight**, in fact, that **Sandler** remained at her job at a **private** school to support them. **Despite the pressures**, Appeldoorn insisted on **honouring** what she sees as the responsibilities of a bookseller: "I strongly believe you should have as many books as possible and **not care about** your **sales** per square foot: your number-one reason for existence is your love of books." That philosophy eventually paid off. Today the

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shop does about \$200,000 worth of business a year, one third of which is in mail-order sales around the world. Apart from the commercial success, she also basks in the knowledge that Longhouse is a favorite hangout (and often a post office) for virtually every writer we've got. Last fall Margaret Atwood attracted more than 400 people to Longhouse for a book signing.

"My life is books," Appeldoorn says. "I'm here every day, receiving books, dusting five times a day, book keep

ing, everything — including mopping up after a rainstorm and cursing a leaky roof." Not surprisingly, she is a book collector (of books about books) and a voracious reader whose tastes range from Margaret Drabble to Tolstoy to Jack Hodgins. She's also mad about plants and when she thinks of her pleasures, she says: "A good meal, a bottle of wine and talking about books and the business. What else is there?" □

## SHIFT DISTURBER

Tempting gremlins, we present one man's hunt for the horrible typogaffe

by Michael Smith

ONE OF MY favourite newspaper bloopers is the small-town social notice that reported the return of a local couple from a ski vacation during which the unfortunate husband had broken his arm: "Mr. and Mrs. John Doe arrived back from their honeymoon last week, Mr. Doe carrying hi broken mm in a sling." I have to admit that I never saw the actual words in print, but by the time I started a brief fling in newspaper journalism they had acquired a legendary status that still seems difficult to deny.

The danger for newspaper editors, of course, is that they have to handle a glut of hastily written material — frequently more than a full-length book — sometimes in the time allowed by just a single day's shift. "Shift," as a result, is thought by some editors to be a word fraught with typographical peril, as are shot, suit, short, skit, and such potentially embarrassing names as Fuchs and Foch. On

large papers, news copy has to pass the way of dozens of reporters, copy readers, and occasionally, gremlins as well. Usually newspapermen have to operate without the generous deadlines that allow other writers to nurse the hangovers and related problems that tend to breed mistakes.

I'd like to offer the supposition, then, that the number of errors in a given publication ought to be inversely proportional to the number of hours that it can afford to produce a finished copy — so that, for instance, we expect fewer errors in magazines and almost none in books. Now that Canadian book-publishing has progressed well beyond the fly-by-night stage — we are all agreed on this, aren't we? — the product ends up looking as if it's been prepared with moderate care.

Are you ready for thii? From Ernest Buckler's otherwise fine novel, *The Mountain and the Valley* (New Canadian Library edition, page 56):

Later they'd all stroll to the barn to look at Joseph's (sic) stock. They'd slide their hands lazily over the cows' flanks or feel the oxen's cuds. They'd turn their backs to urinate against a manager, watching the operation meditatively and speaking over their shoulders..

Snort. Well, I'm willing to admit the argument that some managers do exist who deserve nothing less. And — what the hell — when it gets right down to spontaneous typographical quirks it's difficult to assign the blame. In some respects typos as a genre seem to belong to the same school of writing as found poetry. Found irony: the writer and the editor have very little (directly, at least) to do with its creation at all. Fortunately, I'm also able to report that our writers have managed to keep their creative output high.

Maybe it's not fair to take licence with Thomas P. Kelley, one of our so-called "commercial" writers, who nevertheless has taken considerable licence with the notorious Donnelly family, late of Lucan, Ont. Some of his work is, after all, studied — presumably as English — in Ontario secondary schools. But don't ask me why. The following passage from *Vengeance of the Black Donnellys* (Greywood, page 69) reflects his remarkable aptitude for the principles of mathematical semantics, not to mention punctuation and grammar (the italics are mine):





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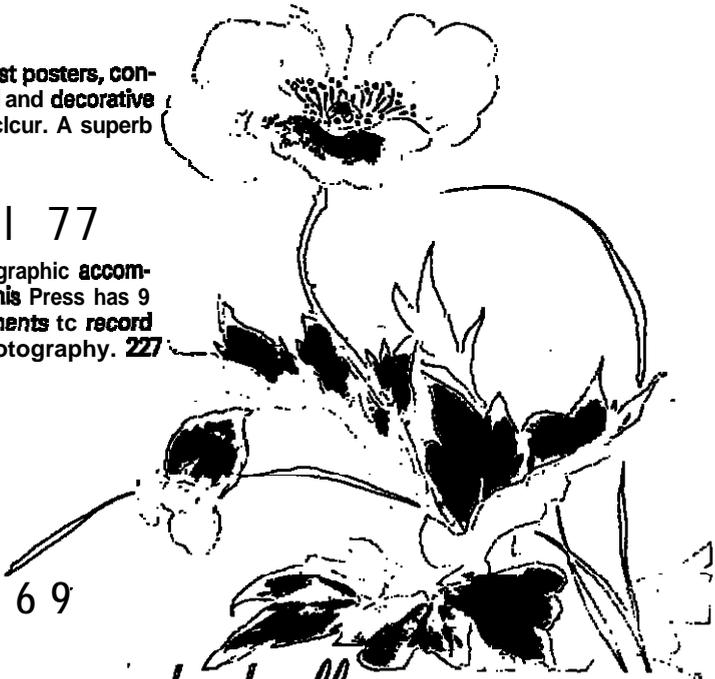
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There could be no possibility of it being but the figment of an overwrought imagination, a deliberate lie or a hoax. Oh no, it had to be true, for it was told by old Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ryan, who were — and had for a long time — been regarded as just about the most honest and truthful couple in the Lucan district. They lived in a small bow on a few acres, a mile or so from the village and had never missed a Sunday appearance in church in more than a century. Both in their late seventies and none too well fixed with this world's goods, perhaps, but their honesty was absolutely unquestioned.

I mean, we do have book editors in Canada, don't we? We must, because I once knew a man who claimed to have rented part of his house to one. (Though again, I have to admit, I never saw him.) Another friend, knowledgeable (he says) in book publishing, claims that Canadian publishers not only hire editors, but sometimes even train them by bidding them read la *merde de la merde* — the unsolicited manuscripts that reputedly fall like petals from a rose, through the office transom every day. After all that, who really wants to read through a genuine book hunting for nits to pick?

Not the writers, surely. For it seems that they often emerge from their meditative cocoon full-blown, and unable to squeeze back in. The brain rises out of the funk of creation and wagnalls slowly toward a lucid state. The hazard is an absence of mind that's occasionally endearing. Margaret Atwood, for instance, in *Lady Oracle*, writes of a part of London known as Earls Court (unlike the avenue in Toronto, it should be two words), and grandiosely refers to a building on the Exhibition grounds in Toronto as the Colosseum (it's *Coliseum* around here). Somebody named Eugene Benson — whose novel, *The Bulls of Ronda*, threatens to set you back \$8.95, all the same — writes that a girl's thigh is "unbared" (he means bared). And Hugh Garner, in *The Intruders*, has a character take off her slacks and sit down in her half-slip!

The more I think about it, the more I believe that Atwood

has some kind of problem when it comes to geography. In her story "Rape Fantasies" — published recently in the anthology, *Toronto Short Stories* — the narrator has supposedly gone to high school in Learnington, Ont. (which is down near Windsor), but regularly travelled to St. Catharines (which, I'll concede, at least is also near the U.S. border) to get treatment for her acne. That's a round trip by mad of about 400 miles — which may prove that a good skin man is hard to find. St. Catharines, alas, is incorrecly spelled.

W. O. Mitchell recalls in his novel, *The Rite*, a conversation in 1929 between a doctor and a carpenter named Hickory Bob Smith. Two years later, Mitchell goes on to say, Hickory Bob "had died with a liver like a granite curling rock." Imagine how the diagnosis palls when the same Hickory Bob is mysteriously resurrected in a chapter set in 1960. In the 1929 sequence Hickory Bob also remarks that he's 52 years old. When he reappears in 1960 he shows no apparent signs of his age, let alone his brush with death.

Then there's Gamer's novel, *A Nice Place to Visit*, in which the hem, a reporter named Ben Lawlor, twice encounters the facilities in his small-town hotel:

The closet was a huge walk-in, complete with clothes racks and wire hangers. Next to it was an equally huge bathroom, with a lion-claw tub, wash basin and toilet bowl. There was no shower fixture, but this was of small account. (Pocket Book edition, page 56.)

\* \* \*

He removed his clothes and stood under a ho, shower, removing no, only the grime from the cell floor but also that he'd picked up lying in the woods with young Cissy Gratton. (Page 240.)

In fact, Gamer is quite possibly our reigning king of gaffes. (Who else could have his hippies rolling "reefers" when they fix a slick of dope?) Given his vaunted battles with editors, maybe this isn't any surprise. More than anything else, Gamer has said, a writer needs "a shallow knowledge of a great many things." Unfortunately, when he writes about some of these things Gamer's not always, uh, accurate.

One embarrassing whopper happened way back in 1959 when he affixed what he considered to be an offbeat name to a middle-aged drunk in *Silence on the Shore*. When the hardcover edition was published in 1962, Gamer says in his autobiography, *One Damn Thing After Another!*, "no critic or book reviewer even mentioned it." But by the time the paperback came out in 1968 the name Gordon Lightfoot was somewhat better-known. In future editions Gamer changed the "Gordon" to "George."

Gamer sometimes has trouble remembering names-as, for example, when the manager of a Diana Sweets restaurant changes his identity from Mr. Corbett to Mr. Crawford between pages 95 and 196 of his 1975 novel, *Death in Don Mills* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson). The book is meant, I think, as a study in deductive method. It examines a police detective's investigation of a murder case, but this process also tends to betray some of Gamer's lapses. Consider the contradictions between pages 201 and 202 — the space of just two pages! — as Detective Inspector Walter McDumont questions a couple of shopping-centre punks:

"Where do you live, Clifford?" asked the inspector, sitting down beside him. He pointed to the opposite seat, which Sergeant Manders took.

"I asked you where you lived?" the inspector repeated.

Drakes looked over a Dreamer, who nodded. He answered. "Twenty-seven Tremont Crescent." (Page 201.)

\* \* \*

"Put this in your notebook," McDumont said when Zotas returned. He pulled out his book. "This young man's name is Clifford Drakes and he lives a, — what's the number?"

"Fifty-eight Southill Village," Drakes said. (Page 202.)

A few lines later McDumont says, "All right, Clifford, you can go now." and the cheap little liar is dismissed from the investigation. Either McDumont knows something we don't know — and at this point I don't think he does — or else he's one dumb cop. □

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## BILLY, BUDDY, AND MICHAEL

The collected writings of Michael Ondaatje are a, composite portrait of the artist as a private 'I'

by Mark Witten

**AFTER THE FACT**, fiction begins.

Michael Ondaatje can't conceal his contempt for facts. *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* is evidence enough of the slightly sinister delight he takes in toying with them. If he were an archaeologist, Ondaatje would be more mischievous sleuth than historian. Why hold facts sacred when they can be more valuable as clues, beginnings to truth? Ondaatje wrote his recent novel, *Coming Through Slaughter*, working only from the barest skeleton of facts. These come alive through images suggesting other possibilities, becoming artifacts that are the building blocks of one man's legend and a contemporary mythology. "The facts start suggesting things, almost breed," Ondaatje says. "The landscape of the book is a totally mental landscape. It really was a landscape of names and rumours. Somebody tells you a rumour and that becomes a truth."

Tracking down the gut experience of turn-of-the-century black musician Buddy Bolden became an obsession for the poet and novelist. He dug through archives, pored long hours over photographs from the period, memoirs, tape digests of interviews, and jazz histories. He listened to early jazz recordings, and even made a trip down to New Orleans,

coming through the hamlet of Slaughter, as Bolden did 70 years ago, to visit the East Louisiana State Hospital in Jackson, about 50 miles north of Baton Rouge. "The only place I was really interested in going to was the mental hospital," Ondaatje recalls. There Bolden passed the final 24 years of his life. The facts pertaining to that life are hardly enough to fill a single-page summary. Yet the book took more than five years to write.

Perhaps it was the mystery of Bolden's madness that first engaged Ondaatje's imagination. The idea took hold when he came across the cryptic news paper reference: "Buddy Bolden, who became a legend when he went berserk in a parade." By his own admission, *Coming Through Slaughter* became a very personal book: "I wanted everything about this person. I read that reference in the newspaper; I

"I'd always liked jazz, especially jazz from that early period. If I could play the piano, I wouldn't want to write."

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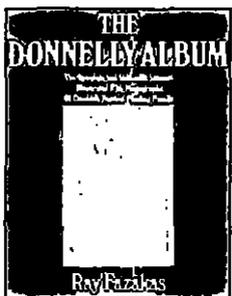
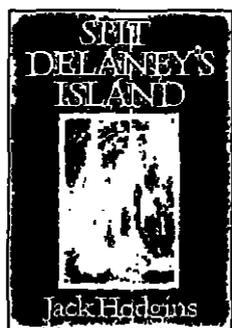
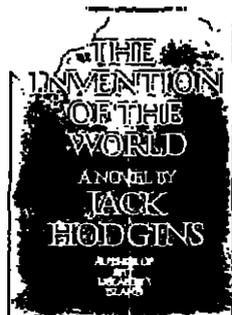
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became obsessed with him while I was working on another book. I realized that I was going to have to face this character. He took over and I started writing about him instead and left the other thing."

The writer sees himself as a private eye investigating something that matters. One of the great attractions of the project for Ondaatje was its open-endedness. "I knew very little about Bolden. I'm really drawn to unfinished stories. There's all those empty spaces you can put stuff in." Most of the pieces of the puzzle were either missing or didn't quite fit. The sleuth figure is cleverly personified in Webb (a former companion of Bolden's), an occasional protagonist whom the reader must follow as he tracks down the flighty cornetist after a mysterious, prolonged disappearance. It is an ironic search and discovery, because it results in the permanent loss of Bolden, then only 31, to the madhouse.

Why write about a relatively obscure black jazzman

"I can't tell you what I'm working on right now. It's a secret. I have an obsession about secrecy when I'm working on something."

whose music lives on more by legend than by disc? Ondaatje fixed on a revolutionary moment in the pioneering of a new art form, concentrating on the historical instant of creation, still in flux, before it was recorded. "History is not a dead thing," Ondaatje says. "It's always alive."

Many authors are reluctant to admit to identification with a character. Ondaatje plays no such games. "You don't choose who you fall in love with," he says. "I'd always liked jazz, especially jazz from that early period." He doesn't play a musical instrument but wishes he could: "If I could play the piano, I wouldn't want to write." The identification with Bolden is nicely completed towards the end of the book when the narrator makes special note of a curious fact: "When he [Bolden] went mad he was the same age as I am now. The photograph moves and becomes a mirror."

This identification, although necessary and perhaps inevitable, is doomed to frustration. "You never know what someone is thinking," Ondaatje says. "It's really horrifying for me, the ending. You know Bolden is completely sane and refuses to talk to ea." The artist flirts with madness as he explores the outer limits of Privacy. Ondaatje hints at this: "The whole book was really difficult for me to write. It was a very private book. The problems Bolden has are the problems any artist has at some time. It's almost like a parable of the 20th-century artist. Everybody at one point writes A Portrait of the Artist. Their version of it."

How do facts relate to form in Ondaatje's fictional universe? For convenience we may call Coming Through Slaughter a novel. But Ondaatje believes fiction can include within its scope other genres and media. "I feel about a book like this that you want to use everything, every kind of art form. Music, photographs... People don't think in terms of poetry or fiction. They think of everything. The way we think about someone else is in terms of everything we know about them."

Coming Through Slaughter has been chosen by Books in Canada, along with Ian McLachlan's The Seventh Hexagram, as the best first novel by a Canadian in 1976. But at 33, Ondaatje has already established himself as a leading Canadian poet with four volumes of poetry: The Dainty Monsters, The Man With Seven Toes, The Collected Works of Billy the Kid, which won the 1970 Governor General's Award for Poetry, and Rat Jelly. He has also ventured into film-making with The Sons of Captain Poetry, featuring poet bp Nichol; Carry on Crime and Punishment, a short, funny film about his singing dog Wallace; and The Clinton Special, a lively, 70-minute look at Theatre Passe Muraille's

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production of *The Farm Show* on location in the barns, farms, and kitchens of a rural community near Clinton. Oat.

On viewing *The Clinton Special*, it's obvious that Ondaatje has had a lot of fun making movies. ("I always loved movies," he says. "It's the main source of mythologies we have.") The film is an entertaining, sensitive look at the members of a farm community and a group of talented city actors getting to know one another. One of the highlights is a sequence showing the first performance of *The Farm Show* before the Clinton people who were the models for the characters in the play. The actors were nervous. Perhaps these people in the audience wouldn't be too pleased with what they would see of themselves on stage. But of course the audience loved it, laughing at each other, and immensely enjoying a form of theatre that provided instant recognition and amusement.

*The Clinton Special* was filmed in the spring and summer of 1973, and has been shown on OECA (the educational television network in Ontario) several times. That was a busy year for Ondaatje. *Billy* was produced as a play at Stratford. "Half the people hate it, half the people like it," he says. Theatregoers in London, Ont., were particularly outraged by a production at the Grand Theatre, which pleased Ondaatje in a perverse sort of way: "I think they lost about 5,000 subscribers. There were nasty letters saying things like, 'Why is this man allowed to exhibit this sickness on stage?'" A couple of years earlier he had been fired from his teaching post at London's University of Western Ontario, just two days before his Governor General's award was announced. Why? "I didn't want to do a Ph.D. and they wanted me to. It's as simple as that."

Why did the play provoke such strong reaction? "With a book you reach the audience you want to reach," Ondaatje says. "In theatre, sometimes you have the audience that doesn't know what to expect. If I'd written it originally as a play, it would have hurt more. It's like a mirror image, something separate from the book. Each production is very different. But the play continues to cause trouble wherever it goes. Recently, in a New York production of the play, the actor playing Chisum went berserk during a dress rehearsal and tried to kill someone on stage."

This year Ondaatje completed his lint feature-length screenplay, an adaptation of Robert Kroetsch's *Badlands*. "The reason I read it the first time is because somebody told me there was a character named Web." Ondaatje loved the book, met Kroetsch, and joined him on several canoe trips down the Red Deer River while writing the script. "It was great fun. I really enjoyed it. I'm hoping the film will happen next year."

Ondaatje is now working on another book, but he isn't saying much more: "I can't tell you what I'm working on right now. It's a secret. I have an obsession about secrecy while I'm working on something." He confesses, however, that the book is the same one he dropped for Bolden: "It's set in Canada. I'm working my way up through the 20th century."

Since leaving Western he has been teaching CanLit and English at York University's Glendon College. "I try to keep my teaching and my own writing separate. I don't think I could teach creative writing. I prefer to teach writers I really admire." Since 1967 he has also been involved with Coach House Press — editing, advising on manuscripts, and, in the case of his own books, helping to design them. "They've designed every book I've done," Ondaatje says. "We worked very closely together on design. That's very important to me. It's almost the last stage of writing the book."

His private life stays private, however. His brother Christopher, a stockbroker, is also publisher at Pagurian Press, but Michael has never been involved in the business. "We're close friends, but in very separate worlds," he says. His wife Kim is an artist and film-maker, but the

Ondaatjes prefer to keep **their** working **lives** separate. **He** has two children: **Quintin**, 11, and Griffin, 12. Wallace, the singing dog, is the one member of the family Ondaatje likes to talk about. Most weekends the family retreats to a farm near Kingston where Ondaatje **raises** pigs.

His **public** reticence has been noted by many **people**. Ann Wall, publisher at House of **Anansi**, says: "**Michael** doesn't like to chat. It's not really **relevant** to what **he's** doing." Perhaps like **Bolden**, Ondaatje needs **to remain as** anonymous as possible. Dennis Lee, who has worked closely with him for several years, sees **Bolden's** struggle—a pulling in

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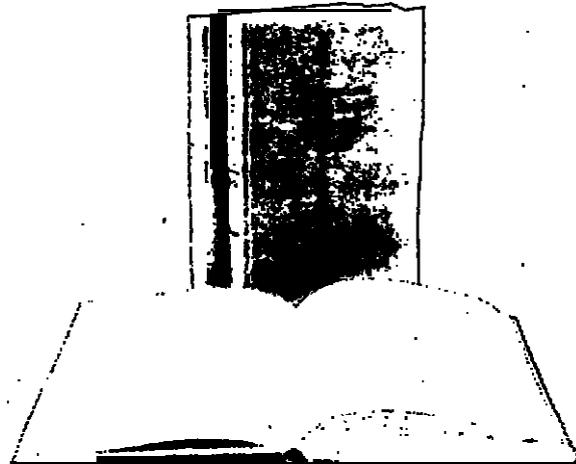
"In a way I'm a very displaced person. I really envy roots. In some writers, the **roots** become individuals."

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opposite directions towards public and private roles — mirrored in Ondaatje's **life**. "**He's** a very private man," Lee says. "He doesn't want to get **trapped**. **Michael's** response has been to **turn** himself away **from** the public. It matters enormously to Michael that he go on testing himself. The possibility that things would become **easy** scared him. I don't think bad reviews bother him. Sometimes he's delighted. He's **more** scared about the **possible** effect of a whole lot of good **reviews**. He really bends **over** backwards to celebrate other writers he likes who are invisible at the moment." (Lee is currently writing a book of criticism entitled *Savage Fields*, in which three of the nine chapters are devoted in a discussion of **Ondaatje's Billy**.)

Ondaatje was **born** in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in 1943, and **left** when **he** was 11. He has never been back. He finished his schooling in England, and came to Canada in 1962. Only then did he **begin** writing, and **only** in a few poems such as "Letters **& Others** Worlds" (a poem about his father that appeared in *Rat Jelly*) and "Light" (a poem about his mother that appeared in *The Canadian Forum*) is **there** a **return** to the early experiences in Ceylon. "That's a totally **different** world to what I'm living in," Ondaatje says. "In a way, I'm a very displaced person. I really envy roots. In some writers, the **roots** become individuals." Billy the Kid and Buddy **Bolden** are two such individuals, their **lives** set in other places. For Ondaatje, though, the places **are** in some sense irrelevant: "I got interested in the person. I don't care **where** the hell he's from. Maybe I've colonized them to Canada."

**Future** directions **are** far from mapped out. The mysterious Canada book is on the way, but it has been *gestating* for a long time now. "Next year I have a sabbatical and I may go to Ceylon," he says. The possibilities are intriguing. Will an exploration of those deep **roots** bring another kind of expression to the surface? With a long trip home on the agenda — or perhaps just a **year** away from teaching **with** more time to **write** — the result should be well worth waiting for. □



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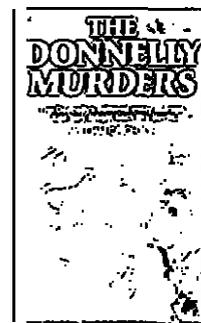
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# There's no doubting Thomas

by John Hofsess

**Ten Green Bottles**, by Audrey Thomas, Oberon Press, 177 pages, \$11.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 215 6) and \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 216 4).

**Ladies and Escorts**, by Audrey Thomas, Oberon Press, 159 pages, \$11.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 219 9) and \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 220 2).

"IN SPITE OF its space, Canada is a very constricting culture," Audrey Thomas has said (*The Capilano Review*, Spring, 1975). "It's like being in a large room with no windows." There are those who do not feel the pinch. Who do not notice the aridity. Who do not sense that anything is wrong. To them, presumably, Audrey Thomas' fiction will seem ... vulgar. Melodramatic. Bloody. An underground voice they'd rather not hear.

At each biological stage of one's life certain writers seem more important — and appropriate — than others. In the springtime of mental infirmity, there's Erica Jong or Henry Miller; in the winter of cantankerous dotage, there's Malcolm Muggeridge. And in between, whenever one's circumstances in life permit a lucid interval, there are good, serious writers — of which Audrey Thomas is one — who address us in our prime: middle age being the only time, for most human beings, where there is any chance of integration between intelligence and sex.

Thomas's acute sensibility to the limits of Canadian life — or, more precisely, to people whose personalities are formed by living in Canada, for she often writes about Canadians abroad, dragging their tight-ass psychic burdens around with them — may be owing to the fact that she is an "islander," with a home at the northern tip of Galiano, and islanders commonly get "bushed" — a feeling, frequently mentioned in British Columbia fiction, of being "walled-in." During the past 10 years, Thomas has spent almost as much time away, in Greece and Africa (and currently India), as she has in Canada, and her fiction is enriched by a complex double-vision, of multiple moral systems, so that if she knows the value of something Canadian she also knows its cost. She is one of very few subversive writers this country has produced.

14 Books in Canada, June-July, 1977

For Thomas, there is no sharp division between her work and her life; indeed, she would find such a dichotomy psychologically suspect, if not logically, absurd. Her work is the result of how she has lived, and in turn, it directs us back to living, not to some literary lotus-land. Her imagination is used not so much to invent characters as to examine the lives — and moral character — of everyone she has known.

The twin volumes of stories here published read more like an expanded novel than the usual collections of unrelated short pieces. Though *Ten Green Bottles* was published in 1967 (in the U.S., and out of print for most years since) and *Ladies and Escorts* is a new collection, characters that appear, sometimes peripherally, in one tale reappear years later in others, and most of the stories are thematically related in that they deal with the psychic underworld of people who are bedevilled by their own savage repressions.

In "Intram," for example, written



Audrey Thomas

at a time when Thomas's own marriage was breaking up, she describes a visit between one woman writer (obviously herself) and another (who it is easy to spot as Alice Munro). "Her stories ... were about life on the prairies — about farms and poverty (both spiritual and material) and, very often, a young girl's struggle against those things." But when she arrives in Southern Ontario to visit her friend and, she hopes, to find the conversation and human contact she needs, to explain that she had decided to leave her husband and go on to the next stretch of mad alone, she finds that "Lydia's" marriage has also ended,

(only in her case it's the husband who is leaving) and she is caught again "in the terrible gap between men, and women." After a long evening of poison-darted conversation between Lydi and her husband, and a younger couple, Thomas writes:

What had happened to us? What had happened to us all? I began to cry while Lydia made noisy love upstairs. I heard her — she wanted me to hear her. It was the last line in the last paragraph of the story she'd been writing all evening. I wondered if she'd come down the next morning with Tony's abdomen irrevocably stuck to her front.

In "A Monday Dream at Alameda Park," Thomas writes about a Canadian couple vacationing in Mexico:

For twenty years he had been a teacher — at first young and eager and with ideas as fluffy and tentative as the hat on a new-born chick. Student, graduate-student, lecturer, assistant professor and so on. His mind toughening, reaching out, he had chosen the Metaphysicals because of their intelligence and acrobatics. He loved teaching them — it still, after twenty years, amazed him that anyone should pay him for what he liked doing best. But where had his body been during all that time?

His second wife is many years younger than himself: "She was the first woman who had ever caressed his nipples: he loved it. And she loved him — in spite of the dysentery stains on his trousers."

One night they meet some people in a bar and are invited to a party. His wife leaves early, but the professor stays, gets stoned, and ends up in bed with a young, bisexual couple. He returns to his hotel in a state of woozy terror. A mind far adrift from its Canadian moorings. At 50, his life is coming apart. The safety and placidity of "control" are gone, perhaps forever, from his career, his marriage, and the unused portion of life still left to him.

Much of Thomas's fiction doesn't end in the usual sense — because her characters are still alive and stumbling around. Instead her stories taper off, tentatively, ambiguously, ready to roll with the next wave of pleasure or pain. Audrey Thomas writes with an eye that sees life steadily and sees it whole. Those with predominantly "rationalistic" minds may loathe her incantations to vitality, but in the long run she is one of those writers that will prevail over this pale culture. She can be out of fashion; but she can never be denied. □

## Helter pelter

**Venus in Furs**, by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, translated from the German by John Glassco, Blackfish Press, illustrated. \$9.95 cloth and \$4.95 paper.

By CHRIS SCOTT

LEOPOLD von Sacher-Masoch (1836-1895), the Austrian nobleman and author, among other things, of *Das Vermächtnis Kains* (*The Heritage of Cain*), is today remembered forensically, his name reified in *Krafft-Ebing's Psychopathia Sexualis* as the originator of literary masochism. Whips, furs, and uranism (Venus worship) form the subject of this book, which has practically no redeeming literary value, a fact readily admitted in John Glassco's introduction. Having praised it for "the greater professional competence," he allows: "Its faults, on the other hand, are glaring: an over-contrived plot, inflated sentiment

and epithet, the hollow, disguised and devious character of much of the dialogue, and a general air of being little more than a kind of sustained erotic reverie, sickly and insincere; the fetishism for furs — even for the very words *Pelz*, *Pelzjacke*, *Dunkelpelz* — is intolerably tedious." Nevertheless, we are told that *Venus in Furs* is "incontestably" von Sacher-Masoch's "masterpiece." Some master, some piece.

The plot, such as it is, comprises the journal of Severin Kusiemski, a Galician aristocrat. Entitled "Confessions of a Supersensual Man" (*Ubersinnlicher*), they describe his stay in a "little Carpathian resort," where he falls in love with a stone Venus. Severin spends his nights and passion draped over the statue's pedestal, until his nocturnal amours are observed by Wanda von Dunaiev — the Venus in furs of the title. She is tyrannical, "young, rich and beautiful," and lives "serenely for pleasure and enjoyment." No pallid virgin (her husband is dead), she speaks with her eyes, usually in a tremulous voice while the pelt-stricken Severin falls at her feet and she weaves a magic snare around him. When her eyes catch fire, as they often do, she rushes out bud the rain. Severin tells her that "Mount Olympus would be the place for you, madam," and in a moment of daring confesses to

a somewhat nasty pubertal encounter:

One day my parents had driven to the capital of the district. My aunt determined to profit by their absence and execute judgement on me. She entered suddenly in her fur-lined Russian jacket, followed by the cook, the kitchenmaid and the cat of a chambermaid whom I had scorned. Without any questions or parley they seized and stripped me, bound me hand and foot in spite of my violent resistance, and then my aunt, with an evil smile, rolled up her sleeve and began whipping my naked loins with a stout switch.

So much for Glassco von Sacher-Masoch's supersensual prose. If the cast and action are familiar, the flagellatory motif is of course the dominant theme of Glassco's *Harriet Marwood, Governess* (General Publishing, 1976), coyly referred to in a footnote to the introduction under its original title, *The English Governess* (Olympia Press, Paris, 1960), by the pseudonymous Miles Underwood.

"Ah, this will end badly, my friend," Wanda tells Severin, who in no time at all is subjugated to the lash of her whips. Several furry spankings later, the pair depart for Vienna, she in "a kind of Amazonian travelling costume of black cloth—the skirt cut like a riding habit, the short jacket edged with sable," and Severin, rechristened Gregor, in a third-class compartment as keeper of the venerable furs. Thence in Florence, where Severin attempts to

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drown himself in the **Arno** and is whipped by a Greek ("He is a man who is like a woman: he knows how beautiful he is. ..."). And so, under the lash of Apollo, Wanda's prophecy is fulfilled. The thing does indeed end badly, on a **sub-Nietzschean** moral with **Severin** declaring: "At present, we men have only the choice of being either hammer or anvil." Mothballs to that!

My copy of *Venus in Furs* was printed on Bymnic Text India paper, uncut with ragged edges, between khaki covers. It was perfect-bound, and the adhesive had spilled over the backs of the signatures to **form** a curious white blob at the top of the spine. The original illustrations by Franz **Buchholz** were quite hideous. De **gustibus non est disputandum.** □

**much** of the delight the poet has to offer. When Rosenblatt's really cooking, he can charm the bird **out** of the tree and down onto the page. He can descend into a maelstrom of **bestiary**, kid's book? passion play, and workshop in **sonics**, and come up smelling of poetic roses.

*In the greenhouse  
I'm staring down at pregnancies; tiny  
zeppelins-skins: leopard  
clotted  
-soul's orgasm-bal  
loon flowers....*

Balloon flowers are, of course, **Calceolaria**. Rosenblatt later refers to them as "air brothels." As "alien glands." Les **Fleurs du Mal**. Sometimes the forcing of the metaphor is hard and aggressive. The poet sets up a direct **transformer**, an act of poetic will, that refuses, right there in front of you, to function. "Sky is pigment" is **one** example. Or:

*The fingers of evening are snakes  
in the infinite fireplace of orfer.  
where an old woman crochets stars  
quivering like orphans in the dark. . .*

There are times when Rosenblatt's **extended** metaphors take on a sort of gothic **angularity** and become savage with sudden juxtapositions, with conceits worthy of **Donne**, with the improper horror of **Fuseli**, with the askew but **royal** paranoiac address of **Salvadore Dali**:

*The sun  
a peeping Tom  
got his eyelids  
thru the window  
and brushed my desert brow.*

*I leaped  
from the grave of a bed  
and bolted the venetian blinds down  
like a guillotine.  
Parts of his eyelids fell on the floor,  
I'll sweep them up soon.*

For Rosenblatt, a poem appears to be the record of an imaginative event. **In** that event's retelling, he eschews the simile -because of its structuring of the world into the statistics of weighted equivalences. For **Rosenblatt**, the world teems with the **Brownian** motion of constant and meaningful metamorphosis. Best presented by the poet's ark of alternative voices each declaring to the reader that things have **changed** and that the reader is being **admitted** to that change — now metaphorically **re-**created for him within the poet's lines:

*The oyster of the mind  
speaks of the dark creatures  
with sacks of nerves in the fog.*

A word about Rosenblatt's drawings (many of which appear as **tiny-drop-in-quanta** of graphic energy in these pages): the best of them are inked thickets depicting, like poems, a moment in **the** history of mental change. The continuing use of **the creature** helps to suggest that such changes of mind happen at a gamier level than is reachable by language alone

## Where the bee trucks, there trucks he

Top Soil, by Joe Rosenblatt, Press Porcépic, 272 pages, \$15.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88878 125 3) and \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0 88878 126 1).

By GARY MICHAEL DAULT

**THIS IS A** collection, almost 300 pages long, of three of Joe Rosenblatt's out-of-print books — *Bumblebee Dithyramb*, *Blind Photographer*, and *Dream Craters* -with additional bits and pieces (*More Of the Insane*) and a good hefty selection of his witty, congested, eminently **explorable** drawings.

At \$7.95 for the paperback and \$15.95 for the clothbound edition, **Top Soil** is obviously not for Rosenblatt first-timers. Nothing you'd pick up as an experiment. **Topsoil** is a Rosenblatt celebration. For fans.

Of which I am one. Mainly because of the intense pleasure I have always felt upon entering the Green World Rosenblatt has constructed over the last decade for the performance of **his** slightly scattered but always absorbing **mythopoeic** three-ring circus.

**This Rosenblattian** Green World is a cosmos adjacent to ours, conceived, quickened, and shaped in the forge of the **poet's** extraordinary animal imagination. It is a morally and **aesthetically** ruminative zoo where all sorts of unlikely things lumber and twitter and flit off into a night of previously unexplored **psychorama** and **come back** (onto the page) with the goods **about** the human condition. Usually presented in a spotlight of metaphor. Example (from "The Muse in Mid-Winter"):

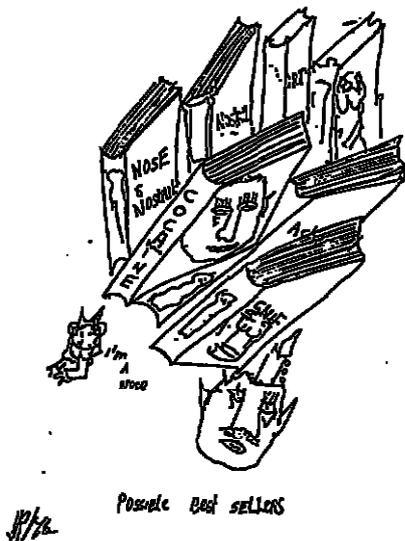
*Sometimes when the world is flat  
I dig up a monster of my potency  
who existed when I was invisible.  
On celluloid it made faces at the future.*

*In the genes of my poems  
in the body of the beast, the spirit  
moves on fours, thumps its barrelled chest,  
devours the black mud, snarls, growls. . .*

For Rosenblatt, metaphor (to shift the metaphor) is a kind of gateway of **transformation**, a wicket of admission within the poem by which the reader is ushered into Rosenblatt's Green World of febrile possibility. There is always payment exacted for this admitting. A sort of **toll**. And that is the wrestling you have to do with ingenious but sometimes ham-fisted marshaling of metaphorical language and ideas. **When** it works it works very well indeed

*Bees are truck drivers of the sky  
Who burrow into diners of flowers  
to be fed therein, and overhauled. . .*

Would it not be monstrous here, given Rosenblatt's poise and originality, to recoil in **Willean** alarm at his **proximity** to **bathos**? It's that very kind of danger that, safely averted, is the **source** of



(Rosenblatt's metaphorical **extravagance** and impropriety being perhaps the only way to try). See, for example, the poet's remarkable **series** of bathtub **drawings** for *Blind Photographer* in which the bathtub grows reptilian legs, hosts little undefined animal spectators on its rim, and begins to look like a swampy **theatre** in which primitive **rites** (see "The Boy Friend") are **carried** on ("The Bath Tub Piano" is the best, most easily detachable Rosenblattian visual equivalent I can find to his use of metaphorical energy in the poems). **Rosenblatt's** drawings are very much like the **poems** in their **transcendence** of mere expressiveness by the switching on within each one (as you move your eyes **over** it) of the machinery of change. The drawings are a shorthand for the poems, a kind of blocky, spatial, handwriting. □

**Editor's note:** As we were going to press, it was announced that *Top Soil* had won the Governor General's Award for **Poetry** for 1976.

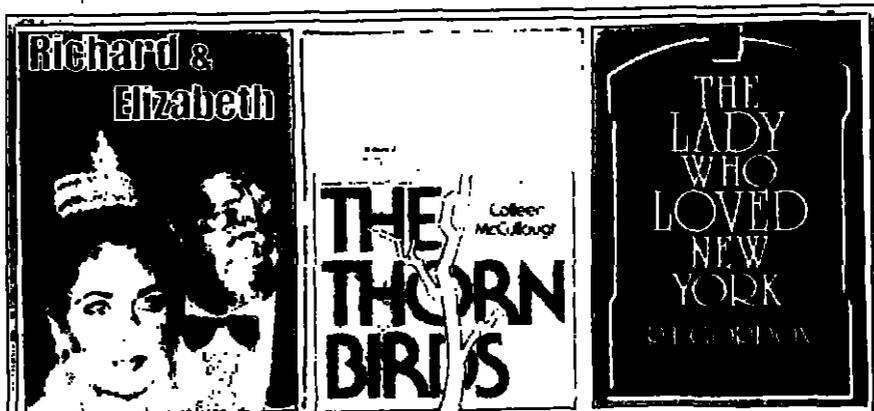
## Titter of tiny feet

**Her Majesty's Mice**, by Norman Ward. McClelland & Stewart, 159 pages, 58.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 8824 8).

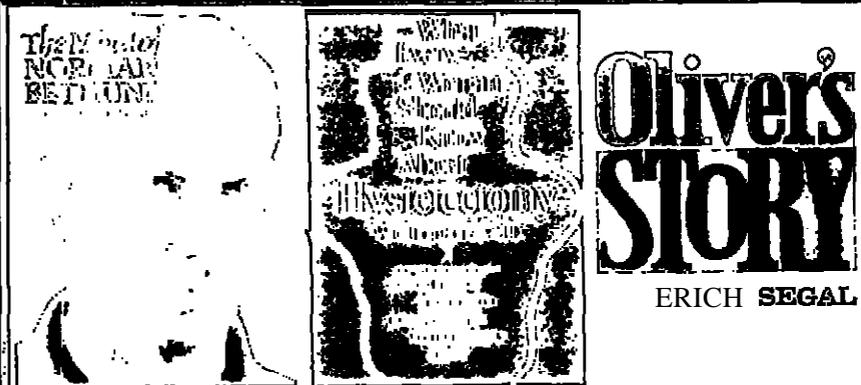
By **DONALD JACK**

**THE BOOK JACKET** of Norman Ward's latest collection of short pieces, *Her Majesty's Mice*, describes the author as the funniest Canadian since Stephen Leacock. Actually I thought that **honour** belonged to Joe Clark. However, Mr. Ward is undoubtedly high up among those who persist in writing comedy when there are openings available in more rewarding **professions**, like being a security guard at a sewage treatment plant.

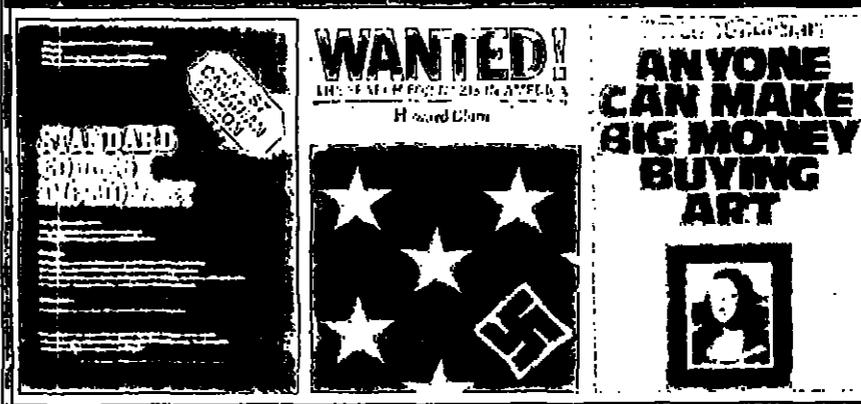
Mr. Ward is high up in another sense, for his perspective is **from** the upper stories of the Establishment. He writes about university regents, governors-general, classical music **lovers** and similar **toffs**, rather than the non-U types that **Leacock**, for instance, teased: though Mr. **Ward** can make a quick enough U-turn when nobody's looking. Searching his thesaurus for a suitable epithet for a credit-card **executive**, he **writes**: "You can imagine my chagrin when I discovered that all the really dirty words are **reserved** for women., which shows you who makes up **dictionaries**."



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It's a civilized book, and I particularly enjoyed the section on Coyote College, which begins: "It is well known among race-track touts, spivs and professors that an institution of higher learning can stagger along almost indefinitely under the most feckless leadership." And he plays some good tricks on the language: "Leaving city", the owner of one item wrote, clearly anxious to allay any apprehensions that he planned to take it with him."

Admirable. The book also reinforces a thought that first occurred to me a good many years ago, when I was adapting a Canadian novel for television. The descriptive passages in that novel were brilliant and heartfelt. But as soon as the author returned to his characters, the poetry and enthusiasm died down. So many Canadian writers seem to regard their characters without passionate concern, and this apathy is a reflection of a real-life element of the national character.

Even if romanticism were to come back, it is hard to imagine a Canadian writing a romantic symphony. In Canadian art, it is the landscape that is loved rather than the figure in it. Look around at your Canadian paintings. How many of them contain any figures at all?

Similarly, in *Her Majesty's Mice*, people, in all their singularity and absurdity, are drawn only faintly when they are drawn at all. Of the 29 pieces in the book, barely a dozen are concerned with people. The rest are about animals, prayers and politics, the language, rules and organization, putting out the garbage, and making speeches. There is a good example of what I mean in one of the essays, "A Weighted Average." It is about elevators, particularly the one in Mr. Ward's office building in Saskatoon. Elevators can be a splendid setting for comedy, and the author speculates entertainingly on how its maximum-load figure might have been arrived at, but there is no feeling of people in the elevator. And after all, that's what elevators are

about. And what the most satisfying comedy is about.

Still, when the author does turn to his churchmen, scholars, and Mr. and Mrs. Michell, the result is fine. The Michells (who have a maid, naturally), are used to receiving boxes of tea from Aunt Millicent in India. They prepare a

pot from the latest consignment, discovering just in time that the box contains her ashes: The ending, in its gentle restraint, is exactly right: "Mrs. Michell was silent for a long moment, and then looked briskly into the large teapot. 'She'll dry out nicely,' she said in a low voice." □

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## Wandering gentile, homebody Jew

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Return to Canada: Selected Poems, by Patrick Anderson, McClelland & Stewart, 110 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 7710 0705 1).

The Poems of Irving Layton, edited by Eli Mandel, McClelland & Stewart, 63 pages, \$1.95 paper (ISBN 0 7710 9516 3).

By A. J.M. SMITH

IT IS A special pleasure to be able to hail what amounts to a second coming of Patrick Anderson. He has been away too long, and though his poems cannot now stand out in Canada with the bright distinction they did in the middle 1940s and early 1950s in the pages of *Preview*, they contribute something original and still fresh to the poetic explosion of the 1970s. It is hard to believe that it is as long ago as 35 years that I wrote a letter to the editor of *The Canadian Forum* praising him for publishing Patrick Anderson's "Poem on Canada," a long politico-historical poem in six parts, and prophesying that the young author would become an important and influential Canadian poet. I am sure that he would have, had he not, in spite of taking out Canadian citizenship, returned to England in the early 1950s. He took up literary journalism back in London, did a bout of schoolmastering as he had done in Montreal, and then went for a couple of years to lecture at the University of

Singapore. He began to write books of autobiography and travel, keenly observant, witty, and charming, that no doubt kept him better off than sticking to poetry would have, either in Europe or Canada. It is good, however, to have him back to his old love and to know too that he would like to come back to Canada to live.

Indeed, I think it is his Canadian poems — his *old* Canadian poems — that are the best things in this collection. The section headed "Notes from an Old Montreal Wartime," consisting mostly of pieces that appeared in *Preview* when the other contributors included Frank Scott, P. K. Page, and A. M. Klein (but never, alas, myself), are, along with "Poem on Canada," the high-water mark of the book. These Montreal poems are introduced ironically by the remark of a historical critic that "the cold intellectual brilliance of their intellectual gymnastics and verbal legerdemain dazzle, awe, and exasperate." I don't know how long it has been considered right to think anything intellectual cold and therefore unpoetic, but that is certainly the common opinion. The *Preview* poetry did not awe or exasperate me (though much of *First Statement* did) for some of Anderson's most characteristic poems have stayed alive all these years in *The Book of Canadian Poetry* and *The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse* — "Desert," for example, "Mother's Boy," "Camp," "Winter in Montreal," and a long

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section of "Poem on Canada." But Anderson is too good to have to depend on anthologies. This very generous book should find a warm welcome from all Canadian poetry lovers — and poets.

If Patrick Anderson's poems have been more or less unavailable for so long that they can almost be thought of as new, Irving Layton's have never been anywhere but in the forefront of attention-deservedly. I hasten to add. Since 1945 he has continued topourout poetry "like water from a broken pump." Eli Mandel says somewhere he wrote to him. At least a book a year—and some years two, maybe three—for 30 years. His *Collected Poems of 1971*, his latest editor tells us, "consists of 589 pages and more than six hundred poems." It is prohibitively bulky and weighty, and prohibitively expensive. But there is no pleasing some people, and I can't help feeling that Mandel has gone too far, and that this book is too little. The introduction is neat, true, and sensible, but it is too short to be really useful, and while the choice of poems is fair enough it could have given a wider and more varied idea of the excellence of Layton's contribution. You will look in vain for "The Bull Calf," or "The Red Fox," while the wonderful poem on an elephant in India, which Layton contributed to

Columbo's anthology *How Do I Love Thee* is not here either. Only one more lament and I'll quit bitching. Instead of the marvellous "The Day Aviva Came to Paris" we have to put up with the very inferior bit of literary name-dropping "Seduction Of and By a Civilized Frenchwoman." But at least we have been spared most of Layton's horrors, and if we don't have all his great poems (how could we?) we have many. Let us be grateful to poet and editor too. □

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## A zoom of our own

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Movies and **Mythologies: Towards a National Cinema**, by Peter Harcourt, CBC Publications, 171 pages, \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0 88794080 3).

By PHIL SURGUY

**THIS WAS** originally a series of eight programs Mr. Harcourt delivered on CRC-Radio in the fall of 1975. The text presented here indicates that his survey of the early days of the movies, discussion of the national cinemas of several foreign countries, and examination of

the economic and cultural impediments — both alien and domestic — to the development of a national cinema in Canada must have been wonderfully effective broadcasts. The programs featured sound-tracks from the movies under discussion, the actual voices of the author's principal sources, and the voice of the author himself, shaping his material into an expression of personal concern for the condition of Canadian films. But all these are missing from the book, and what's left is revealed as a rather naked, sketchy argument.

The key problem is that Mr. Harcourt hasn't decided what **mythology** is or whether it's good or bad, whether it is a dramatic expression of a people's collective experience or a pack of lies in the service of special interests. He does, however, think that Canada should have a mythology of its own:

At times he hints that we already have one. The bulk of his evidence, though, is the great documentary work Canadians have done—which is to say he conveniently ignores for the moment the fact that mythology is essentially national or personal fiction. And, of the few fictional films he musters as evidence of a developing Canadian cinematic mythology, he says one of their primary concerns is "the failure of our society to provide meaningful roles for us. Hence the recurrence of films about

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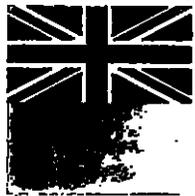
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adolescence. about drop-outs or criminals, or simply about wild and energetic characters like Pearson's *Paperback Hero* or Carter's *Rowdyman* — characters who end up acting destructively because there is nothing else to do."

However, the hard fact is a majority of Canadians feel they do have meaningful roles — mainly as American-style consumers. It's the film-makers (and Canadian artists in general) who feel they have nothing to do. And Mr. Harcourt's failure to explore the implications of this terrible contradiction is the central failure of his book. For, if a huge number of Canadian artists experience Canadian society, the society of their fellow Canadians, as stifling and often murderous, how are they ever going to provide it with a unifying mythology? Mr. Harcourt and most of the film-makers he cites here seem content simply to bitch about the way our people's imagination has been colonized as thoroughly as our economy. There is no sign here that he or they can yet tell the difference between an essay and a story, or that they have truly begun to imagine a cinema the whole nation can call its own, a cinema that is a genuine alternative to the foreign mythologies that now dominate us. □

## Cancel one Czech

**Report on the Death of Rosenkavalier**, by Jan Drabek, McClelland & Stewart, 224 pages. \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 2880 6).

By SHARON MARCUS

**THIS ROSENKAVALIER** is not the ambiguous 18th-century Viennese emissary of love, popularized by Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss, but a vicious 20th-century Czech civil servant and assassin. In my lingering expectation of the other more romantic associations—the ironic familiarity of that other Rosenkavalier persisted — I began to speculate that he is also the narrator, Ton Klima.

Three deaths, in fact, are reported here in some detail, against a background of countless others. Ton's death comes as the consequence of an emotional and political uncertainty, the rejection of both the seductive but imprisoned mistress, the homeland of Czechoslovakia, and the naive, but compelling bride, the adopted home Canada. Ton alternately offers and

withdraws his allegiance or opposition to a system, an idea. Ultimately, he offers himself, a half-crazy sacrifice, and finds his equilibrium somewhat restored in an act of political assassination. He becomes the assassin's assassin.

In a sense, Ton's uncle, the Colonel, whose murder Ton vindicates, is another Rosenkavalier, a model of individual heroism; control and dedication. His ghost haunts the migrained landscape of Ton's suffering during the years in North American comfort and inertia, continually confronting the quality of one illusion with another older one: family, country, and duty.

This novel, somewhat like Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, unfolds in a continuing interrogation — rather pleasant interviews actually — in which Ton and a benign Soviet official, Zolotenko, examine the narrator's motives by reconstructing his passions, his ideas, his attitudes. Zolotenko, a Russian expert highly placed in the Czech Ministry of the Interior, but mellowed by a tour of duty in Canada during the Gouzenko period, offers an increasingly sympathetic audience as Ton unravels his life, gaping clumsily through different periods in time, explaining why it all came to an abrupt end in an act of political murder. A detailed record of these sessions, compiled in secret by Ton and spirited from the jail by an attaché of the Canadian embassy in Prague, plus a few letters exchanged by Canadian External Affairs officials, give the novel its form — a nice, tight structure.

Around this frame the details of Ton's life are hung. The most convincing fictionally and emotionally are the early days, Czechoslovakia before and after Hitler. Then exile and espionage in Vienna during the late 1940s. These events, which seem to come from deep within Jan Drabek's childhood, are handled with much more passion and narrative skill than the later American and Canadian episode which are diminished by social and political rhetoric. Mr. Drabek finds North Americans so politically naive — we haven't lived through German and Russian occupation — that he feels obliged to lay out information and opinion in *prepare-us* for certain teachings, such as a quasi-exoneration of American intervention in Vietnam.

Now although I find some of Jan Drabek's political attitudes rather bizarre, I clearly hear where he is coming from. And he does accumulate enough passion, enough conviction, a strong enough sense of caring deeply, to make his novel rise above differences of opinion. (I wonder if Mr. Drabek would find this naive.) It is also this strong expression of personal urgency that overcomes limitations in style

("hungry as hell," "a hell of a figure," and "what the hell is that supposed to mean?") all **within** the first dozen pages), and weaknesses in **characterization**. Ton discusses his attachment to the women in his life at great length, but **they** remain undelineated **sexual-political** mysteries.

Perhaps. Ton. your **real** attachment is to an ideal homeland, a female to be loved and **protected**, or loved and betrayed. **But then**, of course, there is always the chance that she might **betray** you. **Rosenkavalier**. Did you really expect to find **truth** and **justice** in **sex** and **politics** and government? □

## Misfits unlimited

The **Spark Plug Thief**, by Marc Plourde. New Delta Press, 97 pages, \$2.95 paper (ISBN 0 919162 47 9).

**Dance Me Outside**, by W. P. Kinsella. Oberon press, 158 pages, \$11.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 223 7) and \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 2245).

Getting Here, edited by Rudy Wiebe. NeWest press (13024 — 109 Ave., Edmonton, Alta.), 119 pages, 32.95 paper (ISBN 0 920316 00 x).

By **MICHAEL SMITH**

**FRANCIS WIPER** suffers from a case of chronic inertia. His father has died "at just sixty" — burnt out, despite an early **retirement** spent mostly in snoozing — and, if anything, Francis seems even less energetic. By the time he quit university he had "decided that no **matter** what he did with his life he would fail at it." He gets a **job** in a bookstore, and the **owner** discovers that Francis is scarcely capable of answering the phone. On a hip to the **West Coast** he lacks the power to break a conversation with two bus-terminal philosophers. Finally, he even fails at, suicide.

Francis is a principal character (I can hardly call him a hero) in three of these 10 **stories** by Marc Plourde, though his doomed spirit lurks through most of **them**. As a group they tend to focus more on **character** than plot, and, more often than not, they lead toward breakdown. Usually they deal either with social **misfits** — a biker (in "General Dahl"), a beggar ("The Flies in the Glass"), a reformed junkie ("The Windmill") — or with the gulf between friends ("Freddy's Sister"), lovers ("Francis Wiper's Ailment"), and spouses and relatives ("The Bee-

keeper and Hi Wife"). Frequently with both.

In "The Bookworm," for instance, a brother and sister share little in common beyond their Swiss-German accent. In "Freddy's Sister," the **narrator** remarks of his friendship with Fred that "we did not really like each other . . . or understand." In "Tony B. in the Black Cat," a sometime pimp, **brawler**, and thii has no **inkling** of the hypocrisy he faces — except that he's noticed how people avoid **looking** at each other in the subway. **Unwittingly**, he's **discovered** the sad corollary to Plourde's stories: that even when others observe such **incidents** — which occasionally **end violently** — **nobody** seems to care.

The **outcasts** in W. P. Kinsella's stories are a band of Indians on a reserve near Hobbema, **Alta**. These are modern **Indians**, to whom **white** finance men are "like the cavalry must have been to the **old** time Indian." In order to defend themselves against invading feds, they regularly tear up the culvert on the **mad** into **their** settlement. They're unrepentant whores, drunks, moonshiners, and sneaks, full of the wily **humour** that seems to have become the vogue (in books such as W.O. Mitchell's *The Vanishing Point*) when characterizing Indians these days.

The 17 related **stories** all are **narrated** by Silas Ermineskin, an 18-year-old technical student whose English instructor has supposedly **corrected** the

spelling and inserted commas wherever **they're** needed. Several are comic set pieces, as when (in "Ups and Downs") Silas wins a trip to Las Vegas. **Others** range from **outright** slapstick — at times hilarious — to, sometimes, deadly violence.

**Kinsella**, a **freelance** writer and journalist, renders the stories in the sort of blackface ("Me and Frank is sit on the corner watch the guys play cards") that pushed William Henry **Drummond's** **habitant** imitations **somewhat** out of **favour**. (In fact, if his subject had been illiterate American blacks or **dialect-spouting** Jews, I'm sure there would be protests.) What saves **him**, I think, is that his sympathies lie wholly with the Indians, whose **piratical** activities he portrays as if **they'd** been **performed** by merry old Robin Hood.

**Getting Here** is a cheaply produced (a few typos, low-quality paper) collection of stories by seven Alberta women. They're not well known as short-story writers, though **Candas** Jane Dorsey has published three books of poetry and Myrna Kostash is an established magazine writer. Their **stories** vary in quality, though at least one — "Everlasting Life" by **Caterina** Edwards — is good enough for any collection. The encouraging thing, to my mind, is that a group of untried writers has been given the chance to get some stuff in a book. □



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# 'The evidence is flimsy'

by David C. Davies

IN 1966, ONE year after joining the FLQ, Pierre Vallières was arrested outside the United Nations building, held for four months in the Manhattan Rouse of Detention; and then deported to Canada. During the next three-year period he languished in the holding cells at the Quebec police headquarters while undergoing a series of highly publicized trials on serious charges, including murder, all of which culminated in acquittals or appeal victories on the main charges.

While in custody he wrote his first book, *White Niggers of America*, which established his reputation as one of the leading social thinkers in Quebec and, more notoriously, as the leading FLQ theorist. He was finally released on bail in May, 1970, but was one of the first of the approximately 500 prominent Québécois arrested when the War Measures Act was imposed on Oct. 16, 1970. He was one of the two people interned for an extended period of time and, after being acquitted on various charges under the War Measures Act, he was released in June, 1971.

In 1971 his second book *Choose!* appeared, in which he debated the choice between the FLQ and the Parti Québécois and publicly justified opting for democratic over revolutionary politics. The Parti Québécois, he argued, presented a real democratic possibility of attaining radical change. For the FLQ to continue its terrorist activities would be positively counter-productive because it would give the authorities an opportunity to use massive repression to smash the Parti Québécois, the unions, and the citizens' groups:

The October Crisis of 1970 was the dress-rehearsal for this classic scenario. . . . The FLQ would have acquired the odious historical importance of being responsible for supplying the exploiters of the Quebec people with a golden opportunity to strike a possibly fatal blow. Fortunately it didn't happen. The authorities were taken by surprise, took too long to react and never managed to resolve the contradictions that existed between their different levels of decision-making and within each of those levels.

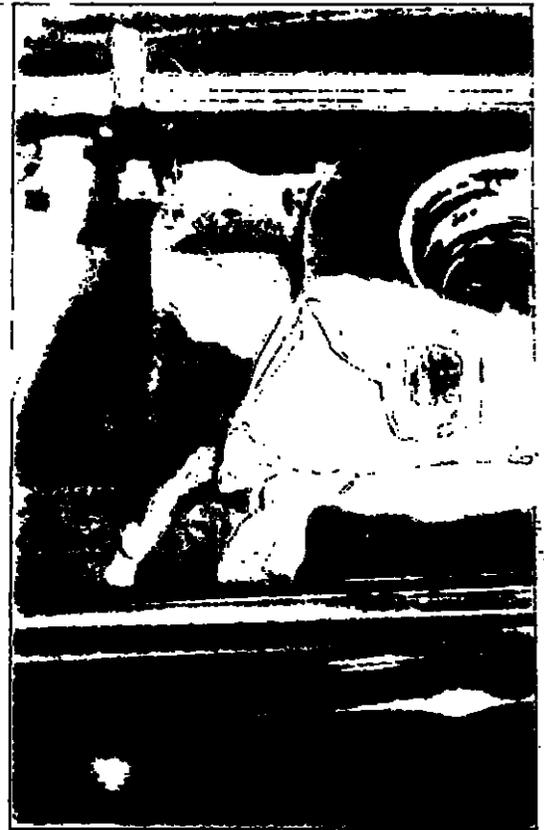
Since that evaluation Vallières has changed his mind in a fundamental way. Much of *The Assassination of Pierre Laporte* is dedicated to a constantly repeated argument that the October Crisis was a carefully planned and stage-managed scenario, created in advance by the federal authorities, the

armed forces, and the police and aimed at the destruction, not of the FLQ, but of the Parti Québécois. Far from being taken by surprise, Vallières claims, the federal government actually initiated the October Crisis live months earlier when, on May 7, 1970, the federal cabinet established a special committee to consider "steps to be taken in the event the War Measures Act comes into force by reason of insurrection." The significance of the date is that it came one week after the Parti Québécois had gained 23 per cent of the popular vote in the Quebec election. For the first time a political party dedicated to the independence of Quebec through separatism had made significant gains among the Québécois electorate: According to Vallières, the October Crisis was the response of the powers-that-be to the rise of a democratic political movement dedicated to the independence of Quebec.

Vallières' scenario calls for an extensive Machiavellianism that is hard to accept: "With cool audacity, both during and after the events of 1970, Trudeau and his team blamed the kidnappers (that is, a total of 10 persons) for the trap they had themselves set for the Québécois. They blamed the 'extremists' for what the government itself had decided to do." Vallières devotes a large chunk of the book to trying to establish that the October Crisis was deliberately pre-fabricated by the federal authorities. There is clearly a great deal that the public does not know about the circumstances leading up to the implementation of the War Measures Act but Vallières' theory of a massive conspiracy on the part of the federal and Quebec governments and the military, security, and police forces rests on flimsy and insubstantial evidence.

By contrast, the section of the book dealing with the kidnapping and murder of Pierre Laporte is devastating. The author's basic assertion that the FLQ's role in these events is shrouded in confusion and deliberate mystification is more than established by the detailed review of evidence that he undertakes:

The Rose trial . . . failed to shed my light on the real circumstances of Laporte's death. At the later trials, the other accused repudiated their alleged confessions and no new facts emerged. . . . A death did indeed occur; but the question that remains



## CONSPIRACY

Two views on Vallières' theory of the October Crisis: a conspiracy to manipulate the events.

**L'exécution de Pierre Laporte: les dessous de Québec/Amérique**, 223 pages, \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 88862 131 1)  
**The Assassination of Pierre Laporte: Behind the Scenes**, translated from the French by Ralph Wells, James Wells, and \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 88862 131 1).

unanswered is who is in fact responsible for it.

Pierre Vallières is clearly convinced that the FLQ was not responsible for the death of Pierre Laporte and that Paul and Jacques Rose, Bernard Lottie, and Francis Simard were convenient scapegoats (only Paul Rose and Simard were actually convicted of the murder). Although he canvasses the possibilities that the underworld, political opponents within the Liberal Party, or the police forces killed Laporte, Vallières'

## 'The evidence is sound'

by Nigel Spencer



## RACY '70

Vallières' thesis that  
was an imperialistic  
to manipulate the FLQ and us

de l'Opération Essai, by Pierre Vallières, Editions  
10 33552 (9 9).  
the October '70 Scenario, by Pierre Vallières,  
Lorimer & Co., \$15 cloth (ISBN 0 88862 137 x)

finger of suspicion inevitably swings back to the political authorities who, according to his conspiracy theory, planned the October Crisis from start to finish: "Neither the FLQ nor the people of Quebec had anything to gain from Laporte's assassination. The federal government, on the other hand, stood to benefit immensely from a murder occurring at such a psychologically favourable time."

continued on page 24

HARDLY ANYONE in Quebec who remembers October, 1970, has any doubt now as to the effects of the crisis on the people: a near paralysis of political activity for about 15 months and a re-instatement of the "guilt of the vanquished" complex used periodically since 1763 (through 1837) to "keep Quebec in line."

Whatever motivations underlay the actions of various individuals, the effects are plain and they are what count. At the time the media devoted considerable space and energy to the confusing slapstick of name-calling, hypothesis, panic, calm, optimism, and despair that united our political leaders, even when they contradicted one another and themselves. The important thing is to see the slapstick for what it is. Individual whim or neurosis is not the stuff of which history is made, and besides it is hard to pin down. It simply provides playthings for the shallow-minded and diversion for a people sadly lacking in information.

What was not apparent at the time was the existence of a politico-military government of "crisis management." Some of the details were revealed in a 1975 series of articles in *Le Jour* and in the heavily censored CBC-TV special on the fifth anniversary of the October Crisis. However, the most complete synthesis to date is presented in this book by Pierre Vallières, translated in the English version by Ralph Wells.

The large number of astonishing facts proved and essential questions raised need not be enumerated here; the book's research is painstaking and thorough. But there are a few points that will be of special interest to the non-Québécois. How many of us know that the army across Canada was engaged in a well-planned exercise five days before the War Measures Act and nearly six before Laporte died? How many know that a political purge of the army occurred in March, 1971, because of a near mutiny by officers and men who "knew too much"? Or that the police never believed the Chenier cell to be Laporte's murderers? Or that not only Parliament but also the federal cabinet was kept in the dark and away from any real decision-making? Finally, how many people know that we are still living under the War Measures Act and that even wider powers than those used in 1970 can be — and perhaps are being — used by

certain semi-official organizations without the knowledge of Parliament or the people?

Most of this information was already available. If we seem surprised, it is because our media served it to us piecemeal and without any desire to do more than keep us happily consuming and convinced that we live in a free country. We get the information eventually. But by then it is so late that it attracts only the purely academic interest of intellectuals, politicians, and journalists — an isolated minority whose reputation for aiding the people is anything but enviable.

In fact, as the CBC-TV special suggested and Vallières demonstrates, the mass media constituted one of the leading "controllable players" in the scenario. From the kidnapping of Cross to the invocation of the War Measures Act, we were psychologically "goosed" with rumours, gossip, hoaxes, and isolated facts in what might have been a first-class propaganda campaign. Then, between the War Measures Act and the death of Laporte, the "lid" was put on. FLQ communiqués (including one suggesting that Laporte should live) were suppressed and radio station CKAC apparently got "exclusive rights" to the dénouement, so that everything would be "perfectly clear" to the population. Laporte's body was commandeered from the protesting and suspicious widow and given a spectacular funeral, despite her wishes. Finally, coincidentally, one month after the crisis began, the third version of the long-overdue autopsy report was rendered, a coroner was named, Lortie was arrested, and the FLQ was pronounced dead — all on the same day! Who says it only happens on television?

Not everything is as neat and easy to spot, though, and it is to Vallières' credit that he has stuck close to facts, tamed them over carefully, left no witness ignored (although a number are sworn to secrecy), and even examined nuances of language. Unavoidably, he is at times working in a twilight zone of scanty information and is forced more than once to hypothesize (usually along several different lines) new links between existing or absent bits of evidence. This is a normal part of scientific inquiry, yet no doubt some purists will be tempted to quibble. This would be a serious error, for the basis of Vallières'

revelations and questions remains essentially sound.

He weakens the impact of his findings and his implicit thesis (of an imperialist conspiracy and its manipulation of the Chenier cell) in only two places. On pages 155-6 of the translation, instead of insisting on the fact that Laporte's letters and the communiqués from the Chenier cell show evidence of being dictated by an anglophone, he allows this to be eclipsed by a (perhaps valid, but vague) parallel between the kidnappers' "hard-line" attitude and that of the federal government. Again, on page 170, what begins as a warning to Québécois to remain cool-headed in the face of any attempt at Chile-style "destabilization tactics" turns into an impassioned plea for uncritical support of the PQ, a party in the difficult-if not impossible — position of trying to prove that capitalism is the key to liberation.

Apart from two flaws, one of them perhaps minor. Ralph Wells' translation serves Vallières faithfully and intelligently. At one point where nuance of language is significant, he gives two different translations for an important phrase in one of Laporte's letters indicating a "parallel" communication channel between Bourassa and the kidnappers: the "you are aware" quoted in the body of the text is much more accurate than the "you have already been informed" in the complete letter appended. Second, the author, translator, and editors have dropped from the English version the texts of the three autopsy reports, the transcript of the coroner's inquest, and half the photographs, while substituting Laporte's letters and a "Judicial Balance Sheet" for those not familiar with the final "score." On the whole, this is a practical decision, and Vallières himself claims that the changes do no harm. However, the absence of the medical evidence, testimony, and photos of Laporte's wounds tends to remove or minimize anomalies that should have been noted. As a rule, though, the translator has effectively and unobtrusively supplied background information to references that might escape a non-Québécois.

Beyond its immediate and obvious task, the book calls for a public inquiry into the October Crisis and warns us against the rising tide of Canadian fascism that has both sanctioned and been sanctioned by the War Measures Act. On the first point, one must suspect Vallières of a naivety that is perhaps assumed: Trudeau recently declared himself disposed to co-operate with any Quebec government inquiry, yet in the same week the RCMP refused to testify in a run-of-the-mill criminal case because certain information might be related to "national security." On the second count, the 94 Books in Canada, June-July, 1977

least one can do is take Vallières seriously.

Finally, there is a problem at which Vallières only hints but which perhaps is most important of all: the effects of "game" psychology on whole nations and classes of people. In a world of chaos, we have come to crave order and a "happy ending," whether in "fictional" or "documentary" media. If that is not subtle enough, then confusion will do. A population that can be artificially stimulated and calmed, that cannot tell reality from fantasy and, what is more, knows it cannot, is effectively lobotomized. □

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### EVIDENCE FLIMSY

continued from page 23

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For Vallières, the question of who gained politically by the death of Pierre Laporte is absolutely basic in his analysis. But he should be reminded that he himself was charged with murder and that the basic evidence on which the state sought to convict him was drawn from his political writings. Clearly he seeks to turn the tables and use the same tactics as his political adversaries.

The real importance of *The Assassination of Pierre Laporte* is the presentation of the results of investigative reporting by Vallières and others, particularly the research information compiled by CBC-TV for its documentary, *The October Crisis*, broadcast in October, 1975, into the events surrounding the death of Laporte and the implementation of the War Measures Act. The book clearly establishes a *prima facie* case for a new investigation by calling into question the official version and revealing dramatic new evidence, concerning almost every particular in the case against the Chenier cell of the FLQ. The house in St. Hubert where Laporte was supposed to have been held captive and killed was raided by the police three times during the week of Laporte's captivity. Evidence at the inquest placed all four suspects else where on the day of the murder. The hand-written communiqué that announced Laporte's death was signed by the Dieppe (Royal 22nd) cell. A group of Laporte's friends dismissed the coroner's inquest as a "complete farce" in a public letter and Vallières found no satisfactory answer in why it took the pathologists 20 days to complete the autopsy report or why the director of the Quebec Medical-Legal Institute refused to sign the report. Why did Warren Allmand indicate in the House of Commons in 1973 that Laporte died accidentally during a "scuffle" with his kidnappers? Why did the coroner accept the unsigned statement that police attributed to Simard without first hearing the evi-

dence about the manner in which the statement was obtained? The list of such questions is lengthy and the evidence of some kind of deliberate falsification and cover-up is impressive.

Now that the Parti Québécois controls the provincial machinery of justice and supervises some of the security and police forces involved in the October Crisis, it is well placed to investigate the conspiracy against the PQ that Vallières insists underlies the "scenario" he analyzes in this book. The new Justice Minister, Marc-André Bédard, after meeting with Pierre Vallières, has already indicated that his government is conducting an "internal investigation" into the events surrounding the October Crisis. Clearly if but a fraction of Vallières' suspicions are confirmed the information could have a bombshell effect if released prior to the referendum on the separation of Quebec. □

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## Renéissance One: message of inevitability

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**The Rise of the Parti Québécois**, by John Saywell, U of T Press, 174 pages, \$12.50 cloth (ISBN 0 8020 2275 8) and \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 8020 6317 9).

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By MARION McCORMICK

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NOW IT ALL comes back, the whole raucous, exhausting, disrupted decade. It's all here, condensed and documented, in a book that has accumulated over the crucial years in the form of reports published year by year in the *Canadian Annual Review*. These have been linked unaltered, according to the author, and rounded out with a short introduction and epilogue. It is a truly remarkable story of steadfastness in pursuit of a goal: independence for Quebec. By striving unswervingly toward it through thick and thin, René Lévesque has made the unthinkable almost the only thing anybody ever thinks about.

Professor Saywell's account reminds us that there have been thin periods in the PQ's fortunes; it has not been an undeviating rise to power. The thinnest time of all was endured around the time of the October Crisis, when the murder of Pierre Laporte traumatized the province. While people would grudgingly concede that not all Péquistes were terrorists, they nevertheless felt that all

terrorists were. **if not Péquistes** exactly, something so similar as to make no difference.

**Lévesque** labored to keep his unruly band in line **under his own** cool and disciplined leadership, exhorting them "to exclude ruthlessly all forms of violence and even vague **flirtations** with violence, not only because they are in fundamental opposition to our way of doing things, but also because they **are** immoral in human terms and futureless politically. **For heaven's sake, let us at the same time beware of the slippery** slope represented by a certain type of radical demagoguery, all slick with **clichés** and **slogans**, as inflammatory as they are **simplistic**, in which everything is totally black and white, and liable to **draw** a good many minds into the mesh that takes them unawares to violence."

The 1973 election **returned** the Liberals in almost embarrassing strength, a victory so **overwhelming** that it was easy to overlook the gains made by the PQ, gains too scattered to count for many seats, but gains nevertheless. The rest of the country seemed to feel that the question of **separatism** had been settled. **Quebecers** knew better. Nothing had been settled and push came to shove on a daily, if not hourly, basis, with the government improvising **clumsily** until the final, suicidal **improvisa-**

**tion**, the calling of the election for Nov. 15, 1976.

"By the **end** of 1976 Canadians had learned to live with the **Parti Québécois**," says **Saywell** in a final word. Obviously, he does not spare a thought for Anglophone Quebec in making **this** statement. The **English-speaking minority** can see **no** modus *vivendi*, **unless** acquiescence in its own obliteration can be so considered. A miasma of what the late Montreal **poet**, A.M. Klein called "the body **odour of race**" pollutes the atmosphere.

The young and the shallowly **rooted** flee. "For Sale" signs spring up **on**, Anglo lawns **like** crabgrass, and **random interviewing on campuses turns up** few students **who see their futures in** Quebec. **And** all the while, **the Premier and his ministers, attractive and plausible men**, energetically find opportunities to **carry** their message of the inevitability of Quebec independence to other **parts of the country**.

**Saywell's** final paragraph causes a chill: "The dialogue within Quebec and with Canadians had begun. The strategy of **René Lévesque** was clear. What was not **clear** was whether the **coalition of forces** and the leadership would be found in Quebec to advocate the federalist position. If not, independence and association, so gently **argued**, could easily win the day." □

## Renéissance Two: the emotional becomes rational

How **Lévesque Won**, by Pierre Dupont, James Lorimer & Co., 136 pages, \$13 cloth (ISBN 0 88862 131 0) and \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 88862 130 2).

**René Lévesque: Portrait of a Québécois**, by Jean Provencher, PaperJacks, 272 pages, \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0 77010020 1).

By W. H. ROCKETT

**PETER DESBARATS' René** was simply a matter of good timing: the book's release came **virtually** simultaneously with the electoral victory of the **Parti Québécois**, too late to append a chapter coveting that **event** but at the precise moment when English-speaking Canadians **were** beginning to take seriously "the idea of **René Lévesque** negotiating the future of Canada with Pierre Trudeau." **Dupont's** post-election **reportage** and the re-issue of



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Provencher's biography are altogether different books: they exist because of the Fifteenth of November.

The Toronto *Star* has seen fit to save the country in a half-dozen editorials. Peter Gzowski cannot seem to let a week pass without at least part of *90 Minutes Live* given over to Quebec writers and performers. Popular-press coverage of the internal affairs of Quebec has never been more extensive, rivalling — I venture to say — that accorded the province all along by Radio-Canada. Quite simply, there is a market for such stuff, and the market grows 'with the stuff produced to fill it as much as in response to the curiosity or outright fear on the part of *les Anglais*. Dupont purports to answer how it happened; Provencher seems to suggest why it was inevitable.

*How Lévesque Won* is as good a" explanation as any. It reads rather like a" extended *Maclean's* piece. Its author in fact is a contributor to the French-language version of that magazine. Dupont begins with Bourassa's initial idiocy in calling an election in the first place, a decision apparently based on the Premier's desire to maintain control of the helm even if the ship might founder under his less than deft hand. We then rapidly tour the shape the other parties found themselves in at election's call, pass through the Liberal garden of scandals, sniff at Bill 22 (which gets a chapter to itself as "Bourassa's Achilles Heel"), and enjoy some interesting observations by Dupont on where business and labour stood — or knelt — or hovered — and why. Finally, Lévesque's own "For a" Independent Quebec," published originally in the American journal *Foreign Affairs*, is printed as an appendix, together with sketches of the Parti Québécois cabinet.

It reads very quickly, and it's fun: rather like an articulate Hunter S. Thompson, or a genial Larry Zolf (if such beasts exist). Mind you, if you don't already understand the ramifications of Bill 22, Dupont isn't going to be much help. His book was written for a Quebec audience whose interest in such matters preceded the Fifteenth.

Still, there is one home truth Dupont takes note of which many, including men as diverse as Peter Desbarats and Pierre Trudeau, have missed: "Quebec nationalism started out as an emotional issue but it soon became a rational one." This is a major point for Jean Provencher's biography of Lévesque, first published in English in 1975.

PaperJacks has brought the book out again, using the cheap process of photographing the original pages and reducing the plates. I gave up reading their test after a chapter, and borrowed the original hardcover edition from my local library. It was worth the effort.

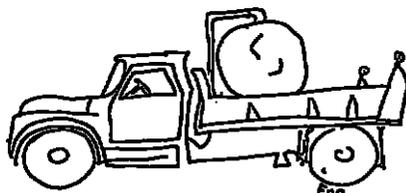
26 Books in Canada, June-July, 1977

J. L. Granatstein in reviewing Desbarats' work in these pages (January, 1977) has rightly criticized René for its rather sloppy' principles of organization. But what fascinated Desbarats — what fascinates many of us — is the yawning gap between Trudeau and Lévesque, men who at one time would meet round Gérard Pelletier's dining-room table and talk into the night, me" who at one time had been colleagues. Desbarats keeps returning to that table throughout his book, developing the hostility that grew between a coldly Cartesian Trudeau and a" allegedly emotional, almost romantic Lévesque. We are given to understand Trudeau distrusted any form of nationalism, especially the French Canadian variety, which he saw as emotionalism barring the rational progress of the state toward acceptance both of and by the 20th century.

Provencher's book, flawed as it is by its open admiration of and agreement with its subject, is a necessary antidote to Desbarats. We forget Lévesque has enjoyed the practice of power before, as a Liberal cabinet minister. And it is Provencher who emphasizes Lévesque's frustrations with the "jungles" of federalism through which he had to chop in order to put his plans into effect: He believed then, as he does now, in the necessity of government developing plans for society and forming in effect a social contract with the people, a contract binding the government to the fulfilment of its social plan. That is a rational, not emotional basis for nationalism: René Lévesque is simply not Henri Bourassa.

As Trudeau said in a recent speech: "Society in its totality must reflect a degree of symmetry or the inequalities and imbalances which have led so often in the past to social turmoil may visit us again and this time on a horrendous scale." Confederation as it stands, whatever else it may be, is asymmetric. Provencher is the most successful writer thus far in discovering for us both the symmetry Lévesque sees, and the fact that he is actually seeing it.

There will be two geométricians negotiating the future, and 'Prime Minister and public had better begin to understand that fact as well as does the Premier of Quebec. □



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## Political party-poopers

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**The New Society**, by Anthony Westell, McClelland & Stewart, 237 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 8945 7).

**Powertown: Democracy Discarded**, by Doris Shackleton, McClelland & Stewart, 221 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 8100 6).

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By GUS RICHARDSON

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ANTHONY WESTELL draws the title of his book from Pierre Trudeau's December, 1975, speech concerning "the new kind of society we will need to create in response to the new economic circumstances in which we are living." Westell argues that Canada, along with all industrial democracies, is evolving towards a collective society, defined by him as a society in which the state plays "the central role in planning the economy and setting social priorities." This evolution is integral to a developing industrial democracy, and he quite rightly points out that few politicians or businessmen would be willing — or able — to retreat from social welfare or to surrender the economy to the vagaries of the market. The demands of this new collective society, however, threaten to strain our democratic institutions; and Westell offers proposals to strengthen these institutions and to broaden "our concept of democracy to cover activities . . . now considered private."

The exercise of executive power is hampered in Canada not only by constitutional checks but also by factious party politics and by jurisdictional squabbles between federal and provincial governments. According to Westell, if we are to meet the problems posed by an increasingly complex society we must design a system to "ensure that [power] is used effectively in the public interest." He offers the reader a draft constitution of such a system that, among other changes, would allocate authority over the economy to the Senate, over external affairs and trade and commerce in the Commons, and over social welfare and local governments to the provinces. The system, one supposes, would allow the country to be run on sound managerial principles.

The new economy is marked by a conflict between the market, which "allocates resources according to strictly economic values," and the

public. which "demands that other goals .. be taken into account." The problem then is to reconcile the demands of the market with those of the public. and for Westell the solution lies in "democratizing the process by which economic decisions are made." He urges the creation of national assemblies representing the various interest groups-business, labour, agriculture, social resources-where economic priorities could be established in the light of reason. and he assumes that in such a system private-interest groups would "find it more difficult to justify ... an unreasonable claim for income or profit or social security benefit."

Westell concludes by arguing that the new society will be supranational and continental in scope. He points to the cultural, economic, and political linkages between Canada and the U.S. and suggests that because of these links nationalism is redundant and dangerous. The real choice for Canadians concerns the role they are to play in the new supranational society, and he urges that they take the lead in "promoting and designing [this] system."

Westell's understanding of power is informed by the boardroom and his notion of social change by pluralism. To argue, as he does, that we must expedite rather than limit the exercise of power is to jettison the teachings of Locke and Lord Acton with a frightening aplomb: it is also to accept the pluralist's assumption that society is composed of self-interested groups, not classes, and that social inequalities can be reasoned out around the bargaining table. It remains to be proved, however, that the chairman of Megacorp International would pay much attention to one of Westell's national assemblies if to do so would be to limit profits. Inequality is not a kink in the social mechanism: it is integral to the structure of capitalist society. Unless the poor are to be always with us, that structure must be tom down, not re-ramped.

Canadians have no role to play in Westell's book. *The New Society* is a manager's manual, not a populist tract. Westell frequently cites the reports and recommendations of government committees and industrial councils and expresses the hope for a political leader with the vision to usher in the new society. But these recommendations are most often advanced in an attempt to stave off social discontent by those who hold the reins of economic and social power in this country, and we would be well advised to view them with suspicion.

Doris Shackleton claims that her book is an analysis of the death of participatory democracy through the erosion of an efficient civil service devoted to serving the public. This

Jennifer Harper

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**CLARKE IRWIN**

28 Books in Canada, June-July, 1977

erosion is, she argues, the result of the development of **secretive inner bureaucracies**, such as the Rime Minister's Office, composed increasingly of former businessmen who seek to manage rather than serve the public, and who adopt an adversary **relationship** toward those they would **serve**. Ms. Shackleton blames much of this development on Prime Minister Trudeau's managerial and technocratic approach to politics, and she urges the return of open consultation between bureaucrats **and the public**.

However, Ms. **Shackleton's** analysis suffers from the **myopia** common to many **journalists**, that of a lack of historical **perspective**. It is **simplistic** to blame **Trudeau** when **politic&s** and civil servants have never solicited the advice of the public they purport to **serve**. Secrecy and arrogance **are** not the result of a style of **government** but are rather a function of the essential paradox of capitalist democracies: the combination of political equality and economic inequality. No amount of open consultation will **restore participatory democracy as long as this paradox** remains.

On a more mundane level, Ms. Shackleton's book suffers from a **surfeit** of bad grammar, of which the following is a typical and too frequent example: "Walter Rudnicki is a lean, Ukrainian-background Canadian, sharp **eyes**, **grey** hair, small moustache." □

## Closet realist in the dock

**The Liberal Idea of Canada: Pierre Trudeau and the Question of Canada's Survival**, by James and Robert Laxer. James **Lorimer & Co.**, 234 pages, \$15 cloth (ISBN 0 88862 123 x) and \$6.95 **paper** (ISBN 0 88862 124 8).

By DONALD SWAINSON

**EVEN THE MOST** optimistic **Canadians** must understand by now that Canada is in deep trouble. On April 25 the **Tomato Globe and Mail** reported a speech by D. K. **McIvor**, executive vice-president of Imperial Oil. Mr. **McIvor** suggested that without massive investment in his industry, we might well have to import one million barrels of oil a day by 1985. The **result** would be a net energy trade deficit of \$5 billion per **annum**. We should, of course, take the predictions of oil

company executives with a large grain of salt, but **it** is clear that our commodities sector no longer keeps our economy afloat. We are not about to be bailed out by vibrant and innovative manufacturing industries. They too (especially the crucial **auto** industry) tend towards a state of malaise. The resulting logic is inescapable. Our economy cannot match its past performance. Even if the unlikely happens and **long-term** strategies can be foimd that will solve **our** economic problems, there is no way that such strategies can **be** in place **quickly** enough to save us from painful **short-term distress**. At best, we face during the next few years a diminution of **our** high expectations and comfortable standard of **living**.

But an economic crisis is insufficient. We are also confronted with the major **recurring** theme of Canadian history, a crisis of national unity. The West, as **is pointed out in our press** daily, is "alienated." And, of course, the West, which has been more a **victim** of Confederation than a regional partner in a federal **structure**, should suffer from alienation and should strive to rectify economic wrongs. The **major** unity problem, **however**, resides in **Quebec City**. Since November, **1976**, we have had to try to come to terms with **René Lévesque's** strong and militant separatist regime. Canada is confronted **simultaneously** with a **profound** economic crisis and the most important threat to the **political-constitutional** integrity of the country since **1867**.

James Laxer and hi father Robert have set **out** to describe the full horrors of **our** dual crisis, and to explain how and why we arrived at the position we now occupy. Their descriptive job is fine, especially when the economy **is** the topic of discussion. No Canadian, English- or French-speaking, **can** read this book without becoming acutely squeamish about **our** economic **prospects**; only the most foolish can discount the profoundness of **our** unity crisis.

The authors **are** far less successful (or at least vastly more controversial) when they attempt to explain the causes of our predicament. The cause, in a nutshell, is the liberalism of the Liberal Party (which **is** Canada's dominant political ideology, party labels notwithstanding):

**Operating within the assumptions of the Canadian Liberal system. English Canadians have conceived of democracy in individualist terms, with no notion of the rights of national communities. Allied to this perspective has been the notion that in a liberal system, the essential shape of the economy is determined by private corporate forces even if the most important ones are foreign-based. The results of these two basic and shaping ideas are now upon us: the first idea has driven the Québécois to elect a government determined to seek**

political independence from Canada; the second has allowed the Canadian economy to become a truncated dependency of the American economy with increasingly bleak prospects. The two results are mutually reinforcing.

It was liberalism that presided over the creation of the branch-plant economy that has resulted in our inability to cope with current economic conditions. Similarly, it was liberalism that could not come to terms with the nationalist aspirations of French Canada.

This liberalism is not of course confined to English Canadians; our Prime Minister is the chief villain. He is held to be largely responsible for the destruction of the two-nations option during the 1960s. He also represented main-line economic liberalism during his early years in office. Trudeau, however, is worse than other Liberal leaders. The Laxers, in a fanciful melange of C. B. Macpherson, Louis Hartz, and Gad Horowitz, explain the dual nature of liberalism and the place of Canadian liberalism within that tradition. There is, it seems, a tension within liberalism: "The two tendencies can be characterized as realism and utopianism." The first is in the tradition of Thomas Hobbes, the second originated with John Locke. Utopianism in the form of populist liberalism has dominated 20th-century North America. Until the economic

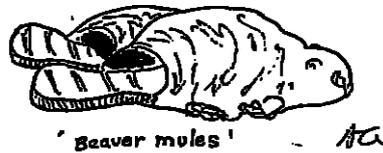
crisis of the 1970s, Trudeau wore, however uncomfortably, a utopian mask. He was really, however, a closet realist — anti-nationalist (which we had always known), distrustful of the masses, elitist, a believer in the politics of management. Trudeau, one might say, emerged as a sort of "hockey."

The mask came off in 1975 when he introduced wage and price controls. This represented a major shift within Canadian liberalism: "Trudeau's new liberalism is an ideology of restraint." Controls were designed to dampen consumer spending (in order to reduce the purchase of imports) and to inculcate into Canadians a new social morality, namely the "ideology of restraint." In this way, argue the Laxers, Trudeau might be able to save the branch-plant economy.

The arguments presented by James and Robert Laxer are complex and

occasionally difficult. Nonetheless they are well worth reading. We are in the midst of a set of major crises. We need all the discussion that can be generated.

From the perspective of the national debate, perhaps the most significant point about *The Liberal Idea Of Canada* is that it has little to say about how we should solve our problems. The Laxers are long on accusation and explanation; they are short on solutions. This is characteristic of the current debate. We are not being well served by our intellectuals. The Laxers argue that Trudeau has modified Canadian liberalism in a fundamental manner as a result of the economic crisis. If they are correct, the Prime Minister must be given credit for perceiving a problem and developing possible solutions. Our current debate on both the unity and economic crises sometimes seems barren because Trudeau's major policies are not often enough countered with articulate and intelligent alternatives. Much of the Laxers' commentary is trenchant and well-informed, but Trudeau still seems to dominate the debate (even if his government finds it difficult to run the country). The argument will continue and become more intense; Trudeau's domination of the debate will probably continue. For many Canadian federalists he will remain the only realistic alternative, both intellectually and politically. □



## Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland

### The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Volume One

In March 1974, the Government of Canada appointed Mr. Justice Thomas R. Berger to head an Inquiry to determine the impact of the proposed natural gas pipeline along the Mackenzie Valley, and to recommend the possible terms and conditions that should be imposed if a pipeline is built.

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## Daring to eat a peach

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The Stress of My **Life**, by Hans Selye, McClelland & Stewart, 272 pages. \$10 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 0050 6).

Let's Face It, by Gustav Morf with Lucjan Dobmowski. PaperJacks, 158 pages, \$1.95 paper (ISBN 0 7701 0002 3).

By **RICHARD LUBBOCK**

THE **INDOMITABLE** Dr. Selye (whom God preserve) of Montreal has done it again, this time, to **celebrate** his 70th **birthday**. Powered by his seemingly infinite fund of energy, the good doctor has gone **autobiographical**, as **befits** a man of his years, and offers us a book of reminiscences and advisements **developed** during *The Stress of My Life*.

*"You are old, father William," the young man said.*

Selye may **not** be aged by modern **standards**, yet he **was** born early enough in this century to have witnessed the epochal collapse of the **1,000-year-old** Austro-Hungarian Empire, and be therefore **retains** many of the **patrician** virtues of that noble **civilization**. The book shows **us** just so much of the workings of the **Selye** mind and personal life as **the writer thinks** proper. There are no unseemly **honesties** and confessions to be found here, but **there** are cheering **stories** aplenty of **achievement** in the face of daunting obstacles. This is the type of book that wise **parents** in our **culture** should give **their** growing children to read.

*"And your hair has become very white:*

The only time I ever **met** Selye was for a fleeting **moment** in a TV **studio**. He is a **frail** man and his hair is indeed very white. He introduced himself with a courtly nod and the one quiet word, **"Selye!"**. Somehow I seemed to hear the **steely** click and jangle of spurred heels. **Not** surprisingly, the final chapter of **this** wispy old gentleman's book is **entitled** "My long-term **projects** for the future."

*And yet you incessantly stand on your head —*

Since his natural hip joints **were** removed, Selye **notes** that he has had to **satisfy** much of his need for benign **cu-stress** by merely cycling, jogging or swimming daily, and by **jetting** around 30 **Books in Canada**, June-July, 1877

the world expounding the General Adaptation Syndrome to his fellow academicians, and selling his scientifically derived moral code to the lay public. To **avoid** the **dis-stress** of harassment **from** Importunate celebrity-hunters during his **travels**, he **chews** garlic and puffs it in **their** faces. Bravo!

*Do you think, at your age, it is right?"*

**Over and over again**, Selye returns to the problem of setting up a **workable** moral code, now that science has **destroyed** the **credibility** of the strongest **traditional** aims. He is convinced that a **scientifically** based **code** of **ethics** is possible and offers his own solution, "Altruistic Egoism," in several different perspectives, crystallizing it into the

**injunction**: "Be necessary." By the purest standards of **moral philosophy**, **this** commandment may be open to **question**; but as a **working rule** it seems to me **beyond reproach**.

In the midst of all his **other activities**, Dr. Selye somehow found time to **prepare** a glowing foreword for Let's Face It, a book by two **other septuagenarians**, Dr. **Gustav Morf** and Dr. **Lucjan Dobmowski**. If you **suspect** you might possibly become old **some**-time, *Let's Face It* covers virtually every **aspect** of aging, from **athero-sclerosis** to **zoodetrus**. I sincerely **pray** that the peachy blonde adorning the cover is in reality a **shrivelled crone** of 97 who has been **rejuvenated** by reading the advice inside. □

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## The eagle's guano get us

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As **They See Us**, by **Walter Stewart**, McClelland & Stewart, 159 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 7710 8354 8).

By **SCOTT YOUNG**

**WALTER STEWART**, the indefatigable journalist, **magazine** editor, and author, probably had a lot more fun gathering the **material** for his book than anybody is going to get out of reading it. Despite occasional thoughtful little gems that **state** we are a nation of **assholes**, or that we feel we have a God-given right to criticize the **United States** but can't take criticism from the U.S. without **reacting like ladies** whose pants have been set on **fire**, the book is largely an infernal putdown of **Americans not knowing** much about us. Or, to put it another way, knowing **only a little** more about us than we know, for instance, about Eskimos. Unless you are addicted to reading filler material out of *Reader's Digest* or *The New Yorker*, the **method** soon **palls**; this being **especially true** of the relentless **little captions** for each quotation, such as "Step **Outside** and Say That, Bye" as the heading for a quotation from Col. **Robert McCormick**, the Chicago publisher, to the effect that Newfoundlanders "are so **inbred** as to be half-witted."

Mr. **Stewart** tells us in an **introduction** that he gathered material throughout the U.S. by asking the question: What do you **think of when you think of** Canada or Canadians? He sometimes used a **tape-recorder**, more often a notebook, and told people their names would not be published. This was a

**good way to get some U.S. officials**, especially in Washington but also in unions and elsewhere, to do some **bitching** basically along the lines that tie **were** quick to ask for U.S. help when we **needed** it, but slow and even hostile when we were asked for help in **return** — for instance, with fresh water, natural gas and oil at a reasonable price (from oil fields mainly developed with U.S. capital).

This sort of **off-the-cuff** material makes up **about two thirds** of the book. The **rest** is the kind of stuff that is available in libraries with good subject-indexes. **It's in this** second line that I have the most serious **reservations**. The form of the book — the smart-crack **captions**, short quotations — has been allowed to rule out putting important **matters** in real context.

You **get** a few **pages** here and **there** of Americans talking **about** annexing Canada (in the last **century**) with only the most cursory fill-in, or none, on why they mentioned the **subject** at all. Or you get a compendium of **what** various presidents or high **state officials** thought of us; the more **recent** ones, at least, obviously being **more** the product of second-string **speech-writers** than of any meaningful conviction by the speakers.

In particular, U.S. **actions** have **twice** influenced **Canadian elections** (1911 and 1963) and the **lack** of context makes **the book unsatisfying for anyone** with an appetite for new insight or new information **about those periods**.

When Mr. **Stewart** uses quotations from 'around the time of the 1911 election, which **Laurier** lost to **Borden**

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mainly because of **Laurier's** proposed policy of trade reciprocity **with the U.S., a hot issue for most of a year prior** to the election, he doesn't **even** plumb the best of the available material. Champ **Clark's** well-known **line** about wanting to see the **American flag flaring** clear to the North Pole is in, but a comment by President Taft (more telling because he was president, while Clark was only a windbag representative from Missouri) is not.

The Taft view **was** written in a letter to former President Theodore Roosevelt on Jan. **11, 1911** (incidentally, John A. **Macdonald's** birthday). This was before the reciprocity **proposal** had even been introduced in the House of Commons. "It [reciprocity] might at first have a **tendency** to reduce the cost of food products somewhat; it would certainly make the **reservoir** much greater and prevent fluctuations," Resident Taft wrote. "Meantime the amount of Canadian products we take would produce a current of business between Western Canada and the United States that **would make Canada only an adjunct of the United States.** It would transfer all their important business to Chicago and New York, with **their bank credits and everything else."**

That letter was quoted endlessly in Borden's successful 1911 campaign (when the Tories won 72 seats in

Ontario, never since **equalled** by a political party) and would seem to be **essential to any** sloop, however **fragmentary**, at this book's subject. □

## Divide and prosper?

Canada and **the Burden of Unity**, edited by David **Jay Bercuson**, Macmillan. 191 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7705 1487 1) and \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 7705 1488 x).

By **NEVILLE THOMPSON**

**THE ARGUMENT OF** this collection of eight essays is that the time has come **for Canadians** to lay down the burden of national unity that has inhibited their development **since** Confederation and to realize their destiny by embracing the reality of regionalism. This may, as Bercuson maintains, **go** against the grain of Canadian history — both its **course** and the writing about it-but it is **perfectly** in tune with contemporary political discussion, and not just since the **Parti Québécois'** electoral victory last November. Indeed, Quebec's **grievances** against Confederation are conspicuously absent from this volume. This is the voice of the hinterland, the Maritimes **and** the **West**, **raised** in protest against the **populous and powerful centre**, and Quebec appears **as Ontario's junior partner** in crime.

A more curious omission is Newfoundland. Its integration into Canada in the last 30 years would seem to be the perfect, well-documented test case of the problems of centralization. The failure to examine the **proposition** that Confederation' **destroyed** the economy and society of the former **colony** raises doubts about the **general** theme of the **book**.

Most of the grievances of the Maritimes **and** the West **discussed** here are familiar enough — **discriminatory** freight rates that put the producers of the hinterland at a competitive disadvantage while forcing them to bear the costs of the National Policy that protected the industries of the St. Lawrence lowlands; the destruction of industry in the Maritimes by the businessmen of Central Canada; the political subordination of **the** whole country to the **interests** of Quebec and Ontario, which dominate the federal government through representation by population; and the **dependency on the centre** created by equalization **payments**. But the process of exploitation is explained in such detail and with

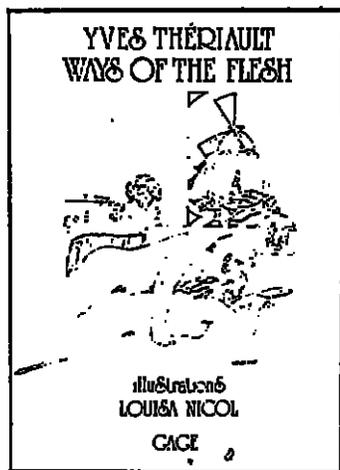
such authority that the essays should give anyone **concerned** with public **policy ample** material for serious **reflection**. Unfortunately, many of them are written in a style that makes them not easily accessible to the general reader. A variety of **styles** is to be expected in any collection of essays, but **more** rigorous editing might have made the book more appealing to a wider audience. The topical issues it raises are too important to be left to fellow historians, economists, political scientists, **and** their students, for whom **this** book seems primarily intended.

Apart from a general call for **more** regionalism, the proper direction for the country to take is more difficult to discuss precisely than the historical injustices of the Maritimes and the West. The ancient i&a of **restructuring** the Senate to act as the guardian of provincial interests is trotted out once more, but rightly dismissed as **impractical**. The proposal that institutions serving the whole country be **decentralized** with regional **head offices'** under the general supervision of Ottawa has **more** merit. The CBC, for example, undoubtedly had more regional vitality and **talent** 20 years ago before its operations became so centralized. But the fact is that the Canadian experience is simply a manifestation of the general phenomenon of **metropolitanism** evident in all industrial countries and the regions within them. **The** process is not easily halted, let alone reversed. All sorts of plans for political and **economic decentralization** have been devised since **the** end of the Second World War; but not much has **come of them**, except of course in areas **of new-found wealth**.

Still, with the **federal political parties** **falling** over each other with **vague promises** to meet the regional **aspirations** of the country, something will undoubtedly be done. But this raises serious questions, which are reflected in the optimistic tone of this **book**. Is there really a common hinterland of East and West with common interests? Would regional autonomy really produce a more prosperous and **happy** country? Perhaps it would work for the West, with its rich natural resources, but would the Maritimes be able to concentrate their energies and develop profitable specializations that would give them anything like the relative prosperity they enjoyed before Confederation? Centralization has undoubtedly served the interests of the rich and powerful in the past. Perhaps **regionalism** will do the same in **the** future. □



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## Menu One: heart burn in high places

The **Prime Minister's** Cook Book, by Susan Cartwright and Alan Edmonds, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 165 pages, \$7.95 cloth (ISBN 07 082465 7).

**Nutriscore**, by Ruth Fremes and Zak Sabry, Methuen, 261 pages, \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0 458 92050 9).

The **Complete Family Book of Nutrition and Meal Planning**, by W. Harding leRiche, Macmillan, 242 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88777 000 2).

**Sulphur and Molasses**, by Audrey Armstrong, Musson, 96 pages, \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0 7737 1013 2).

**Canadian Colonial Cooking**, by Joan Finnigan, NC Press, 48 pages, \$2.50 coil-bound paper (ISBN 0 91960062 x).

By KEN WYMAN

IF THE PRIME Ministers of Canada really have been eating the way Susan

Cartwright and Alan Edmonds say they have, it's no wonder the country is in such a mess. They'd have indigestion, heartburn, high **cholesterol**, even higher blood sugar, and vitamin deficiencies sufficient to impair their **judgement** and ruin their health. Hardly a **recipe** in the book misses a chance to add cream or sherry or both, piling riches on riches. Worse yet, the chapter on **vegetables** is the shortest in the book; there are only 10 recipes, several calling for canned or **frozen** vegetables instead of fresh ones, and most **producing** starchy or **over-cooked** dishes.

Mind you, in small doses, these dishes are exceedingly tasty. And so Canadian! There's moose, and Arctic char, and Bmme Lake duckling, and a **succulent paté de foie gras** that is, along with the **Munsinger** affair, one of Pierre **Sevigny's** best-remembered legacies to the nation. **No fiddlehead greens, though. Pity.**

If the lushness of the ingredients is not typically **Canadian**, in these days of AIB wages, the nutritional deficiencies are. In his days as head of Nutrition Canada, **Zak Sabry** detailed our dietary insufficiencies, and found **Canadians wanting** in the midst of plenty. Now in **Nutriscore**, he and Ruth **Fremes** are offering the **cure** in a catchy and highly readable format, apparently designed to make the stodgy old Canada Food Rules into the diet **craze** of tomorrow.

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Most of us are at least slightly overweight, they warn. An **extra** bottle of beer or a handful of potato chips can add up to an extra 20 pounds of lard in a year; an extra teaspoon of sugar here and there adds up to 80 pounds of sugar for the average Canadian in a year. So cut it out. Oral contraceptives deplete Vitamin B6, they point out, but an **extra** 50 milligrams of the vitamin a day can alleviate most of the widely touted side effects, including mental depression. Canadians tend to have **follic** acid and **calcium deficiencies**, so eat your greens and drink your milk, they nag. And through it all is a constant refrain: Don't be led astray by those health-food quacks; remember that supermarkets only sell junk foods in response to consumer demands; if in doubt, trust your doctor.

**Nutriscore** is an incredible **mélange** of useful information and patronizing half-truths, all dealt out with the arrogance and certitude that seem to saturate most books written on popular nutrition.

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Both the enthusiast and the interested will enjoy this excursion into the history, art, and science of white water canoeing, one of North America's fastest growing sports. Franks' interests range from the personal rights of modern canoeists to the eating habits of the voyageurs of old, and his book reflects insights gained during many summers of experience and many winters of research. The text is illustrated with modern photographs, instructive drawings of river situations, and numerous historical illustrations, many of them previously unpublished. This is a broad and penetrating review by a "expert." It is a book canoeists, wilderness as well as white water, have waited for—to read for pleasure and to keep for reference." *Eric Morse* \$15.00 cloth, \$7.95 paper

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Peter John Stokes

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This handsome guide to one of Ontario's oldest and most beautiful communities is now available to the visitor or the armchair traveller in a paperback edition. Organized into three tours, the book presents the historical background of each building within the context of the town's development, accompanied by fifty-eight original full-page drawings. Many drawings are worth framing; all are careful studies, restoring where practical the original lines of the structure. *London Free Press* "the whole volume is in itself a work of art." *St Catherine's Standard* \$7.95 (cloth \$15.00)

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though he too condemns megavitamin therapy out of hand, and questions Linus Pauling's evidence on Vitamin C and the common cold, leRiche is at least courteous enough to treat us as intelligent readers and admit that there might be two sides to the argument. Sadly, it's hard to imagine that his book will ever sell as well.

Dr. leRiche also seems to have a good deal more political savvy than Sabry and Fremes. In a chapter on food additives, for example, he points out that in addition to the problems of testing thousands of chemicals for safety, the scientists in Canada's Health Protection Branch "are exposed to political pressures by interests that place money and profit above the public weal. So consumer protection against harmful food additives is by no means complete."

It is frustrating that neither of these books is better than it is. Canada has a world-wide reputation for ground-breaking nutritional research. The Shute brothers in London, Ont., were pioneers in Vitamin E research. Doctors Hoffer and Osmond in their Saskatchewan clinic discovered megavitamin and orthomolecular therapy for schizophrenia. The recent saccharin ban, too, was a progressive step. These are all extremely controversial areas; they may even be wrong. But surely a climate that can produce that much should be able to produce books that do more than blandly reassure—and even condone—canned spaghetti and instant potatoes.

And yet, if our health is as bad as the statistics indicate (our life span is apparently growing shorter again), maybe we should all buy these books. They could be better, but they're good enough to help us substantially improve our diets.

Before we bewail modern food too much, we should look long and hard at what our ancestors had to put up with. *Sulphur and Molasses* is not only the tide of a pleasantly anecdotal collection of home remedies; it was also the vile spring tonic forced down the throats of generations of farm kids, along with skunk oil and, if you were unlucky enough to get the croup, "pee and goose grease" as an emetic.

The recipes in *Canadian Colonial Cooking*, however, are complete enough to let us get a taste of pioneer life... and the savour is sweet. The recipes, some of which have been slightly up-dated, are those used regularly in the kitchens of Ontario's historical sites under authentic conditions. It isn't a maudlin cry of "back to the land" to argue that we would all be a lot healthier if we ate like this. And maybe then the Trudeaus could cut their personal food budget to something less than the present \$14,000 a year. □

## Menu Two: glossy recipes and TV dinners

Margo Oliver's Weekend Magazine Cookbook, Totem Books, 268 pages, \$2.25 paper (ISBN 0 00 211632 4).

Pots & Pans with Ian and Judy Jamieson, Hancock House, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 919654 66 5).

By ADRIENNE STEINBERG-JONES

WHILE READING Ms. Oliver's cookbook, I began to wish she had used her *Weekend Magazine* format: a "introduction" to the kind of food she was presenting, some information on methods of preparation, and a paragraph or two on this history of the particular cuisine if that was called for. This book, however, is simply a compilation of 500 recipes selected from her column along with some personal favourites. It is straightforward and comprehensive, but uninspiring.

The recipes embrace a variety of cuisines with no special emphasis on any particular country or style of cooking. The book is loosely organized into the usual categories of soups, appetizers, vegetables, salads, main dishes, and deserts, but does not include any discussion of foods, cooking techniques, or kitchen equipment.

These gaps, which are clearly intentional, lead me to agree with Ms. Oliver's own description of her book as a reference for those who've enjoyed her column and are tired of endless clipping. It is not a book for people who wish to improve their techniques. Obviously, she assumes the reader will know what to do when the hollandaise curdles. This book is a decent collection from which to pluck the occasional item, but not an essential addition to your culinary library.

With a misnomer for a title and an even more laughable subtitle ("Your daily gourmet diet and exercise plan"), *Pots & Pans* looks like a blatant promotional gimmick to showcase a couple of CTV "stars" and their TV show. I can't imagine what bait the authors (or more likely, the network) used to induce the publishers to put out this book.

Nutrition, which would seem a prime consideration in any diet cookbook, is not even mentioned. Some of the recipes aren't bad; a few might be appealing additions to the dieter's menu. But the so-called exercise plan is a joke. It consists of a dozen or so dingy

instamatic snapshots of **Ian Jamieson** doing push-ups or waist bends, with nary a hint about what he's doing or the best way to do it. The **presentation**, while attractive, is evidently designed to disguise the fact that the book could have **been** done in half the **space**. The **rest** of the book deals with daily lists of your body's measurements in **18-point** type and white space. All yours in **sot?** cover for 84.95, a ripoff **at** half the price. □

## Menu Three: eel soup and plainer fare

**Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens**, by **Marie Nightingale**, **Pagurian Press**, 212 pages, \$5.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88932 044 6).

**The Old Ontario Cookbook**, by **Muriel Breckenridge**, **McGraw-Hill Ryerson**, 247 pages, \$14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 07 082422 3).

By **NANCY EAGLES**

**BY AND LARGE**, cookbooks don't make fascinating reading — even for cooks. But **Our of Old Now Scotia Kitchens** is

a **marvellous** exception. Much more than a **cookbook**, it gives an account of folk history by explaining what the **early inhabitants** of Nova Scotia ate and how they came by their foods. It pays homage to the various cultures that have settled in Nova Scotia — **Indian**, **French**, **English**, **German**, **Irish**, **Scottish**, and **Negro** — and explains a bit of each tradition.

The recipes are often preceded by amusing anecdotes **telling** how the dish got its **name** or the **occasion** on which it was traditionally **served**. For instance, before the **recipe** for dark fruit cake, Mrs. **Nightingale** tells the story of an old **gent attending a wedding feast**. "He was helping himself time and again to the **dark fruit** cake. For fear of running short, the hostess decided to offer him something else. 'No thank you,' he said. 'This **brown bread**'s good enough for me'." There are many delightful stories — and even a **sauerkraut song**.

Aside from the fun of reading it and the value of its history lessons. **Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens** also offers good recipes — and excellent variety, with such **unusual things** as eel soup, **skirl in the pm**, and **paté à la rapure**. One of the **recipes I tried and enjoyed** was for **calf's foot jelly**, which was **attributed to Lady Wentworth**, wife of the **Governor of Nova Scotia** from 1792 to 1808.

**The Old Ontario Cookbook** presents **traditional Canadian** cooking that's a **little on the** plain side, not too hard on **ulcers**, not too kind to dieters, and **very tasty** food. **Muriel Breckenridge's guide makes** use of some of the cheaper **cuts** of meat, readily available **vegetables**, and common canned goods. A quick reading of the **recipes** reminds one of high-school **home-economics** classes. Although some recipes are a bit boring, there are good ideas for **combining** foods that are frequently on hand. For instance, don't be fooled by the name: **sausage upside-down cake** is delicious.

Surprisingly, the book is rather heavy on sweets. Of **227 pages** of recipes, about **114 pages** are devoted to desserts, sweet rolls, or **candies**. That **seems disproportionate** to me, but I **appreciated** the variety of **recipes** for quickbreads and muffins.

**The Old Ontario Cookbook** merits a place on your kitchen shelf for a couple of **reasons**. First, it won't cause you to break your food budget; and second, it is **convenient** both in terms of availability of ingredients and time spent on preparation. It is the sort of cookbook one would **turn** to when dashing in the door wanting to prepare a pleasant family meal without a lot of flurry. The irony is that **this** basic, down-to-earth cookbook costs as **much** as it does. □

## Announcement CANADA COUNCIL GRANTS 1977-1978

Q. What line best describes the Canadian government's heavy subsidization of the arts?  
A. "While you're up, get me a grant."

\$15,000 — to **Andre LaSchmuck**, **Trois-Rivieres**, P.Q., for a feasibility study on Quebec Council Grants.

\$5,500 — to **Penticton**, B.C. cellist **Isaac Urns**, because his name sounded familiar.

\$300 — to "Occupant," **General Delivery**, N.W.T., for successfully filling out his initial form to the Council.

\$4,500 — to **Goon Lake**, B.C. poet **Althea Ifitsore**, for her volume, "Trilogy -Four Poems."

\$5.75 — to **Ottawa cabbie** **Max Hulk**, for his vocal presentation, "My Meter Is Still Running, Jerk."

\$10,000 — to **John Dunce**, **Toronto**, Ont., for his 16mm film, "Elwood Glover Remembers."

\$50 — to **Chuck U. Farley**, **Hamilton**, Ont. Jr. High, so that he may complete his essay entitled, "How I Spent My Summer."

\$450,000 — to the **St. Catharines**, Ont. Symphony, just for asking for it.

\$5,000 — to the **Kingston**, Ont. Penitentiary **Writer** **Coop** for a documentary on the last prison riot.

\$100,000 — in miscellaneous costs for the **Canada Council** booklet.

\$4,000 — to industrialist **Cyrus Eaton** for his book, "Quick Money-Making Ideas."

\$5,000 — to **Jake Yarmulke**, **Toronto**, Ont., for his study of the impact of **Canadian culture** on a typical U.S. community (**West Palm Beach**, Fla.).

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Who says fine words don't butter parsnips? Mme. Benoit knows better

FOR TEARS NOW, Madame Jehane Benoit has been one of Canada's best-selling authors. Some 200,000 copies of her cookbooks can be found on kitchen shelves from coast to coast. The latest batch of recipes from her hot typewriter is *Mme. Jehane Benoit's Complete Heritage of Canadian Cooking* (John Wiley & Sons, 125 pages. \$14.95). After savouring some of the contents, *Books in Canada* asked Toronto journalist and Food-lover DuBarry Campau to chat with the first lady of Canadian cooking.

*Books in Canada: In your recent book you have recipes from France and England and Canada.*

**Mme. Benoit:** And Roumania.

**BiC:** And Ireland and Greece and the Orient. Do you feel that these recipes are properly a Canadian heritage?

**Mme. Benoit:** They are because they are all made here, but they are not made

exactly as they are in those countries.

**BiC:** So you interpret them?

**Mme. Benoit:** I adapt them to Canada.

**BiC:** From your book, I notice that you don't scorn convenience foods.

**Mme. Benoit:** No I don't. The word "convenience" tells you that this is a Food you can use to make a shortcut in doing things, but it doesn't mean that you should just open the package, add water, shake and bake, or throw in the oven.

**BiC:** You use "convenience foods" as a basic form, then.

**Mme. Benoit:** As a base, yes, to save time and money and because today we cannot do everything. But I refuse to accept them as Food that you just open and 'put on the table, or warm up and serve. This I won't accept.

**BiC:** It's what you do with it that's interesting.

**Mme. Benoit:** That's it. For instance, often I take a commercial chocolate pudding and I use one cup of milk and one cup of cold, left-over coffee, and it makes a mocha cream that is just delicious.

**BiC:** Another thing that interested me about this book is what you do with vegetables. You say to use a bit of sugar in almost all of them.

**Mme. Benoit:** Well, that is because I am a food chemist by profession and I have learned that all vegetables — potatoes, green peas, or anything else — have an amount of natural sugar in their composition. But about 20 minutes after they leave the ground, they start to lose that natural sugar, which gives them their flavour. If you put sugar with them you give them back what they have lost: if you put salt in them you destroy their flavour and texture.

**BiC:** You also use lots of herbs and spices.

**Mme. Benoit:** Oh yes, that's my French background.

**BiC:** But you know something special worked out there, haven't you?

*Six Journeys: A Canadian Pattern*

*Charles Taylor*



Charles Taylor's *SIX JOURNEYS* explores the careers of six Canadians who went against the grain of their society and found a sustaining vision in other cultures. Taylor's subjects include:

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**BISHOP WILLIAM WHITE,** Anglican missionary, who assembled the Chinese collection for the Royal Ontario Museum.

**JAMES HOUSTON,** author of *The White Dawn* and *Ghost Fox*, and a central figure in the development of Eskimo art.

**HERBERT NORMAN,** diplomat, humanist and Japanese scholar, who committed suicide during the Communist witch hunts of the 1950's

**EMILY CARR,** the well-known painter of Indians and West Coast life.

**SCOTT SYMONS,** writer, traveller, historian of the Canadian heritage, social and sexual rebel.

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Ken Adachi. *Toronto Star*

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J.L. Granatstein, *Quill & Quire*



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Mme. Jehane Benoit

**Mme. Benoit:** Yes. I always ask myself: "What nationality is that vegetable?" If it's from India I'm sure it will take to cony. Or if it's from Turkey or Armenia, well then you want garlic. If it is Italian, you can use basil if it's delicate or oregano if it's strong. I use a lot of chives and loads of parsley because they are used in all countries. If you don't know where your vegetables come from, look in the dictionary and it will tell you.

**BiC:** What utensils do you consider essential in a kitchen?

**Mm. Benoit:** If you want the simplest things, you need two or three wooden spoons and three whisks — large, medium and small — good handles. You don't need a blender and all that stuff. Well, it's wonderful if you have it, but you don't need it.

**BiC:** What about knives?

**Mme. Benoit:** Those you can never spend enough money on. I find so many women, they go into a store and look at knives for 30 cents, 69 cents or \$4. They say, "I'll take the one at 69 cents. Four dollars is too much for a little knife." But they're buying trash, where if they spent \$4, they would have the knife for 10 or 15 years and it will always cut. It's one of the most important utensils in the kitchen.

**BiC:** I saw you teaching children, on television, how to chop and peel vegetables and you showed them how to hold their knives properly for each little thing they did. I was impressed by that because I think that many people who find cooking difficult have never learned the basic rituals.

**Mme. Benoit:** Cooking schools are apt to teach their students how to make steak Diane, which is very difficult, or filet mignon with Hollandaise sauce. A woman who hasn't already learned to cook well just can't do it. She needs the basics. I will tell her, "Find a good basic book." If she doesn't know one, I will, shy as I am to do so, tell her, "Take the *Encyclopaedia of Canadian Cooking* that I wrote and do one or two recipes a week. But don't just do the cooking, study the beginnings of each chapter because there you are going to find the techniques, the foundations of cooking." If you don't know the basics of cooking, you work too much at it and you get bored with the whole business. To enjoy cooking, you must be creative, but before you can be creative, you must know the basics. □

## the browser

by Morris Wolfe

### CanLit ramblings, historical slants, and a book that's proudly soporific

IT'S FIVE years now since Robert Fulford, David Godfrey, and Abraham Rotstein's *Read Canadian: A Book About Canadian Books* and Margaret Atwood's *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* were published. Both those books were aimed at the general reader. What's been needed since then is a more detailed guide to Canadian materials that would be useful in the classroom — particularly in the classrooms of those who had little exposure to things Canadian in their university and teacher-training programs. Unfortunately, Paul Robinson's *After Survival: A Teacher's Guide to Canadian Resources* (Peter Martin Associates, 329 pages, \$8.95) is not it.

*After Survival* is a rambling! preachy, sloppily written and organized book that would be half as long and twice as good had someone at PMA taken the trouble to edit it. I mean really edit it. There's no way, as Robinson, a research associate at the Atlantic Institute of Education, demonstrates over and over again, that any one person could know enough to do justice to the resource material in 25 different subject areas. The book begins with the sentence: "The acclamation which followed the publication of Margaret Atwood's *Survival*... is a devastating comment on the Canadian psyche." It doesn't get much better than that. I wish it were possible to convey the

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badness of this book in a brief review. But it isn't. All I can do is suggest you browse through it yourself in your local bookstore. In the long run, twaddle like *After Survival* does more harm cultural nationalism than to help it. As Douglas Bush wished half a century ago, may cultural nationalists such as these all become afflicted with writer's Cramp.

\* \* \*  
**Sandman's Land** by Keith Floyd (Tree Frog Press, \$4.95 cloth) is a children's bedtime story that actually puts children to sleep. Or so it claims. And in case we have any doubts, an appendix to the book informs us that "the sleep-inducing effectiveness of *Sandman's Land* has been established and documented in a doctoral research study... Pre-sleep times in response to the story were compared with those for *Dr. Scuss's Sleep Book*. . . . Involving thirty-six subjects listening to tape-recorded readings of both stories on alternate nights, the study clearly demonstrated the soporific superiority of *Sandman's Land*." The book is based on the principles of progressive relaxation. A five-inch-tall bulldozer driven by Mr. Sandman slowly moves over the body of a child covering it with sand until he or she drifts off to sleep. Whatever one thinks of the introductory materials and the appendices, the poem itself is rather nice:

*Now how many scoops  
 must he dump, at best,  
 to cover your tummy  
 and the rest of your chest?  
 Say he fills every scoop  
 and spills not a speck -  
 maybe ten,  
 to cover up to your neck?  
 We shall see:  
 one . . .*

*(Hey, this is fun!)  
 . . . two . . .  
 (Like counting sheep  
 to fall asleep)  
 . . . three . . . four . . .  
 (beicha snore  
 in six dumps more) . . .*

\* \* \*

I've BEEN going through some old Ontario public and high-school texts picked up in a junk store. The 1917 edition of *The Ontario High School Ancient History* by George Willis Botsford, Ph.D., begins by stating that "history is chiefly concerned with progress. It has to do, therefore, with those nations only which have outgrown their primitive savagery." In *A First Book of Canadian History* (1928) the distinguished historian W. Stewart Wallace informs students that "on the whole, it is clear that the

original inhabitants of Canada were savages of a very low order." The Ontario Public School History of Canada (1910) elaborates on that view:

All Indians were very superstitious, having strange ideas about nature. They thought that birds, beasts, and reptiles were like men. Thus an Indian has been known to make a long speech of apology to a wounded bear. They thought, too, that in lakes, rivers, and waterfalls dwell the spirits of living beings, and they strove to win the favour of these by means of gifts. Dreams played an important part in the life of the Indian. They told him the cure of diseases, taught him the position and plans of his enemy, or the haunts of his game. The Indian's idea of a Supreme Being was not a high one. When he tried to think of the One who made the world, he brought Him down to the level of a man. The Indian had no one word to express the idea of God: the word Manitou meant anything which he thought of as having more than human power. Such were the people whom the pioneers of our own race found lording it over the North American continent. . . . This untamed savage of the forest could not bring himself to submit to the restraints of European life.

I wonder what things in the history texts my kids are studying will seem as foolish to future browsers. □

## first impressions

by David Helwig

## Some reflection5 on book reviewing and remembrances of good times long past

Price, by Réshard Gool, Square Deal Press, 186 pages, \$9.95 cloth (ISBN 0 920078 09 5) and \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0 920078 08 7).

Sandbars, by Oonah McFee, Macmillan, 357 pages, \$11.95 cloth (ISBN 07705 1519 3).

I USUALLY manage to write this column without knowing too much about other opinions of the first novels that are in my hands. I skip newspaper reviews and don't usually run into people who have read the novels before I have. But this month I failed. During a couple of days in Toronto, I found myself with those who had read or were reading both Price by Réshard Gool and Sandbars by Oonah McFee.

The result is that I find myself confronting the opinions of others as I try to work out my own ideas, and even find I am speculating on the whole point of reviewing. Do all of us compulsive reviewers simply want to prove that we have opinions?

A review has as many purposes as conversation, and I suppose any reviewer assumes that whoever reads the piece is answering back from sentence

to sentence. I often imagine the voice of the writer talking back to me, especially since the writer of a first novel is less likely to be immune to reviewers than those who have been reviewed more often.

In the dedication to *Price*, Réshard Gool says that the book took a little more than 24 years to write. To echo Mary McCarthy, that's at least 20 years too long. Perhaps that much time is necessary to the creation of a masterpiece (though I doubt it) but *Price* is not a masterpiece.

It is a novel in the tradition of Conrad or Ford Madox Ford (not the most common of traditions these days) and presents itself in a way that is round-about and leisurely. The story of a Hindu lawyer in South Africa during the 1930s and 1940s, it is told by an unimportant minor character (Gool's Marlow) who has appointed himself as the biographer of his friend Henry Naidoo.

At its best, the book has descriptive power and some real dramatic richness; but for me it was more powerful in its individual moments than in its sum. Published by the author's own small



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press in Charlottetown, it is printed in a sans serif type that is hard to read and somehow it kept slipping away, like a wet bar of soap in a hot shower. Neither my eye nor my mind could really latch onto it.

It made me think about effect of publishing circumstances and accidents on a book's success. *Price*, published here by a writer trained outside Canada and telling a story about politics in a decaying bastion of the British Empire, invites comparison with Ian McLachlan's *The Seventh Hexagram*. To me it is as good a hook and politically it is much more serious. But published by the author, in Charlottetown, it has about as much chance of success as Hugh Gamer has in the Olympic marathon.

*Sandbars*, on the other hand, has been launched with the best that Macmillan can offer, including statements of praise from Margaret Laurence, Malcolm Ross, and Dennis Lee. While I didn't read much of William French's review in the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, the headline was laudatory. Yet a couple of people I met in Toronto who were reading it said at least slightly snippy things about it. Perhaps the function of a publicity campaign is to send you out to buy the book so you can disagree.

After all this, I should be able to say that it's a lousy book, fuss over no-

thing. But I can't. It's a very good book. Of a certain kind. It has little in the way of plot or breadth of social background or dramatic structure. It is an impassioned and Stylish attempt to get at the past, to grip it and understand it, and to understand the need to go back. What did it all mean? Where is it? How did I come to be where I am? Those are the questions asked by Hannah, the book's narrator and central character.

Hannah grew up in a pleasant and apparently happy family in Ottawa and at a cottage in the Gatineau hills during the 1920s and 1930s. The book opens with Hannah, alone after the end of her marriage: living in Toronto and remembering.

*Sandbars* reminds me of Hugh Hood's *The Swing in the Garden* in its intense desire to get at just how things were, to lay hands on the rich undercurrents within a family. It is more emotional than Hood's book, less of a detached documentary; but it shares a fascination with fact and the psychological and philosophical importance of the personal past. Both books are about lost innocence:

We had grown up in a quiet, merry, hopeful, at times precarious, but for the most part blissful culture that had not yet for the most part had time to go through transition, the Depression banding us all together.

That sort of thing was supposed to have been destroyed in 1914. It made me wonder if the innocence of the loved and protected middle-class child exists, only to be destroyed, in every generation of our society.

The later sections of *Sandbars*, those involving the narrator's brother and husband, did not always grip me, but the memories of Hannah's life with her parents and her hurtful love for them are real and poignant and wise. And that's enough. □

## Letters to the Editor

BECAUSE OF severe space limitations, correspondents are urged to be as brief as possible. The editors reserve the right to make abridgements where necessary. Omissions are indicated by ellipses.

### A LONG DOUBLE LIFE

Sir:

I found Phil Surguy's article "You're All Right, Jack" (May) interesting. Unfortunately, two statements regarding Macmillan of Canada were incorrect.

The first one concerns our decision to publish C. P. Stacey's *A Very Double Life* in our



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Mr. Sarguy also states that we are making no real effort to get our special edition of *Who Has Seen the Wind* more widely distributed to tie in with the forthcoming movie. I am happy to advise that this is not the case and that we are optimistic that our special edition intended to tie in with the movie will receive the widest possible distribution.

I would be grateful if you would bring these points to the attention of your readers. In spite of these two points of disagreement, I congratulate Phil Sarguy on the preparation of this informative article.

J. W. Baker  
Vice-President & General Manager  
Macmillan of Canada  
Toronto

## REBUTTING YOUNG

Sir:

Ian Young's article on censorship (April) deserves a rebuttal on the basis of its dishonesty alone. Mr. Young describes *High Times* as a magazine that "... reports on drug usage (marijuana, cocaine, and such)" and he quotes its editor's assertion that the magazine does not encourage drug use. This is nonsense and Young knows it! *High Times* is slick, glossy, and colourful. To argue that it, does not, encourage drug use is like arguing that *Vogue* magazine reports on fashion but does not, promote it.

Ian Young suggests that obscenity laws should no longer remain on the books. I am not arguing that, these laws have not been arbitrarily or improperly used, or that adults should not have the freedom to read what they wish. (I worked in a magazine shop that sold "adult" material as well as popular magazines.) However, when 12- and 13-year-old children have the opportunity to peruse *High Times*, I am concerned. Whether Mr. Young likes it, or not, children need direction and in our free and very complex society even good parents find it, difficult to control the kinds of attitudes their children are consistently exposed to. If obscenity laws are dropped from the books (as Mr. Young suggests), if we simply refuse to recognize potential harm in any printed material, then how can we possibly justify restricting certain books or magazines to adults?

Mr. Young insists on taking a very indignant attitude toward the recent prosecution of the book *Show Me*. He seems to feel that prosecution by the authorities is synonymous with "persecution." What he fails to mention is the fact that the publisher's victory in this case was also a victory for those of us who don't like censorship, and that includes some of the authorities.

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Ian Young's article is a throwback to the 1960s when authorities were "pigs" and individual freedom was "king." But this is 1977. Many of those people who fought for tolerance and freedom in the 1960s believe that the issues of the 1970s are not so clear-cut, so black and white. Mr. Young is no, a simple champion of freedom. He is saying, "My own freedom at any cost." That kind of self-indulgence went out with the sixties.

Anne Hicks  
Kitchener, Ont.

## OUR SPOTLIGHT MISSED

Sir:

I find it, passing strange that Ian Young's piece on censorship (April) should appear next to our id for the *Canadian Theatre Review*, particularly as the most recent issue of *CTR* focused on censorship in theatre and since my piece was an open letter to our Minister of Justice, to the provincial Attorney-General, and to the Law Reform Commission of Canada.

Perhaps we at *CTR* are merely part of the "handful" of which Mr. Young speaks in his final sentence. But devoting an entire issue to the topic he is rightly concerned about certainly deserves more than we go.

Joseph G. Green  
Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts  
York University  
Toronto

## EASY POT SHOT

Sir:

Such a pleasure, as always, to start catching up on my reading with Books in *Canada*. You are producing a journal that is thorough and serious, and a most accurate reflector of the character and life of this country.

I, was with enhanced pleasure, therefore, to discover in your April issue that *Books in Canada* shares the cultural attitudes of most of us while, born-in-Canada liberal intellectuals. The cartoon on page 10 reinforces the notion, if indeed it needs reinforcement, that us while folks are the civilized victims in a world increasingly dominated by other races (in this case Black Africans) who are inherently cruel, thick-lipped, and cannibalistic.

My congratulations on your taste and on your ability to gauge the mood of the country.

Roger Bird  
Associate Professor  
School of Journalism  
Carleton University  
Ottawa

Editor's note: We are suitably withered by Prof. Bird's sarcasm. He will be glad to know we now have thrown out all our "Take me to your leader" cartoons for fear of offending Marijans and a., our desert-island cartoons for fear of offending Newfoundlanders.

## RE: CONSIDERATIONS

Sir:

We want to thank you very much for Charlotte Sykes' review of Donald Keating's *The Power to Make it Happen* (February).

Any review is better than no review, and normally our policy is to let the views of the reviewer stand on their own merits.

However, in this case I think your readers should be given an opportunity to fully appreciate the bias of the reviewer and the position from which she speaks.

Sykes states, ha, a full third of the book is devoted to the author's salary problems. She errs. Keating was introducing a radical approach to community organizing and was working a, on a full-time basis. He had a contract with the community organization, but on numerous occasions the funds to pay him were not available. Keating drove a cab during the day to feed his family and worked for the community a, night. Does Ms. Sykes think that Mr. Keating should

have worked for nothing; does she, as a one-time assistant to an alderman who is criticized (fairly, we think) by Mr. Keating, believe that only an alderman and his staff should be paid?

Your readers should know that Ms. Sykes worked for John Sewell and was Paid (perhaps by Sewell, who is paid by taxpayers). All Keating was looking for was the same consideration.

We at Green Tree think it healthy for reviewers with various and divergent backgrounds to review good Canadian books. We do think, however, that they should identify their bins so that the reader can fully appreciate the perspective from which they comment.

W. H. P. Parr  
Green Tree Publishing  
Toronto

Editor's note: Fair enough, perhaps we should have mentioned that, besides being a Toronto housewife, Ms. Sykes is the co-ordinator of the York Women's Centre at York University, a former editor of *Toronto News*, and a former research assistant and organizer for John Sewell, a Toronto alderman. Meanwhile, since we're talking about people getting paid, Mr. Parr could phone our accounts-receivable department.

## GIVE AND TAKE

Sir:

In his March column, Len Gasparini allows the reader to infer that I am the author of *Lexington Hero* under the pseudonym of Tom Walmsley. Bullshit. He then goes to say that Walmsley's style and mine are "certainly similar." a notion that is possibly insulting to us both, I'm not sure. Gasparini or you could have cleared up the matter with a phone call to Walmsley, Pulp Press or me. Failing even that, you could have spelled my name correctly. Sloppy, sloppy, sloppy.

Doug Fetherling  
Toronto

Editor's note: We are glad to learn that Mr. Fetherling is not Mr. Walmsley and apologize to them both. We also apologize to Mr. Fetherling for misspelling his name. Moreover, we are delighted to learn he is still with us. He has owed us a review of two books since last fall and his tardiness, if not insulting to us, is certainly so to the unfortunate authors. Tacky, tacky, tacky.

## TONGUES IN TREES

Sir:

I was shocked by the venomous attack of your reviewer Ms. Bondar on [my handbook] *The Language Tree* (March). May I point out that the text is the result of 10 years' careful research into the English language needs of secondary-school students; that it, was field-tested by a team of experienced English teachers and 150 enthusiastic senior English students; and that it was carefully read by Dr. C. E. Sanborn, a senior English professor a, the University of Western Ontario, and by Don Gutteridge, contemporary Canadian author and professor of English a, Althouse College of Education in London. One of the English editors of the text has already done a considerable amount of editing for SRA.

I should like to deal with Ms. Bondar's objections to the text more or less in the order in which she has raised these objections.

For the term *handbook*, I would refer her to the current editions of *The Macmillan Handbook of English*, the *Harbrace College Handbook*, the *McGraw-Hill Handbook of English* (Canadian edition) and the *Prentice-Hall Handbook for Writers* (6th edition, 1974). Each utilizes the exercises that the reviewer claims do not "properly" belong in a handbook. Each of these current handbooks also uses the Reed and Kellogg method of diagramming (an analytic, not a "tree" method) that Ms. Bondar spurns as "outdated since 1954," "invalid" and "uninsightful." These diagrams are quite valid, quite effective, and easily comprehended by students. . . .

Three of these four handbooks contain a complete paradigm for English verb tenses, while the fourth uses an abbreviated paradigm. The scholars who wrote these texts do not appear to regard the classic paradigm of verb tenses as "verbiage." Each of these handbooks also recognizes the future tenses as part of the conjugation of an English verb; and none of them uses the term *modal* to refer to verbs expressing future time. May I suggest that Ms. Bondar re-examine the term *modal*, which is properly connected with the mood of a verb rather than with its tense or time? *Modal* is the adjective meaning *mood*; *modality* is the noun. Tense, on the other hand, refers strictly to time, both in the sense of when an action occurs and the duration of the action.

The "cursory" information about parts of speech and sentence elements occupies the first 140 pages of the text — hardly "cursory." The intention of the book is not inclusive, nor does it at any point make that pretence. It contains the information that my colleagues and I have found necessary as support for the literature and writing programs in the senior grades. . . .

Unlike Ms. Bondar, I have no "bone to pick." A great deal of admirable scholarly research in transformational-generative grammar and in psycho-semantics is currently in progress. I have, however, elected the traditional descriptive approach in *The Language Tree* for several compelling reasons:

1. The students who enter secondary school at present, when they have a foundation in language, have been taught in the traditional descriptive pattern.
2. The majority of English teachers is also familiar with the traditional descriptive pattern, but not with the transformational-generative approach.
3. The other modern languages are currently being taught in traditional terminology, and the confusion in the students' minds if teachers of English language should elect different terminology would be rare indeed.
4. The standard tools for English-language reference are written in traditional terminology — the handbooks I have mentioned, the standard books of usage, and the unabridged dictionaries.
5. There is, as yet, insufficient evidence of the effect of transformational-generative grammar on reading habits and vocabulary-building skills. . . .

As an editor, you cannot undo whatever you may have accomplished by publishing what I can only regard as an unprofessional and incompetent piece of reviewing. You might, however, reconsider an editorial policy that endorses a review such as Ms. Bondar has written, for you thereby destroy your own *raison d'être* — to provide a reliable, objective assessment of a book by a suitably qualified critic.

Anne Thompson  
The Book Society of Canada  
Box 200  
Agincourt, Ont.

Editor's note: Ms. Bondar is a grammarian and morphologist who holds a B.A. in English literature and English linguistics, a B.L.S. in children's and reference literature, an M.A. in linguistics, an M.A. in cognitive psychology, and is the author of a Ph.D. dissertation (published in series) on psycholinguistics with special reference to visual perception and spatiality. She has taught in those fields at such institutions as the U of T and Simon Fraser University, has published several articles and more than a dozen books, lectures internationally in linguistics, and serves as a language consultant to reading and communications committees in three provinces. Here is her reply to Mrs. Thompson:

The classroom teacher and his students have suffered for years in a time warp between the discovery of fact and the publication of its meaning for teaching impact. Granted, this lag is not always intentional on the part of the author or a publishing house. But falling into line or pattern

to reflect that of a dozen other books formerly published does not contribute uniquely to its field.

As a grammatical theorist, researcher, and teacher, I evaluated only the major problems I found in *The Language Tree*.

The professional assistance given to *TLT* shows the age of its research into English grammar. Much more insightful and replicable research and teaching strategies have been available to English scholars since 1954 (and much earlier in Europe). I question the place of dated material under *TLT*'s 1976 copyright.

The use of dated diagramming in handbooks such as Macmillan's, Harbrace, Prentice-Hall, etc., is no reason to perpetuate it. Reed and Kellogg diagramming may be comprehended by students. However, when a couple of decades has provided more comprehensible tools, it is surely our responsibility as educators to provide students with these. R & K diagrams are limited in their possible use as analytic tools since, by their definition, they cannot show the syntactic phrase movement that illustrates the dynamism of English grammar and makes its study exciting.

Those language handbooks that use verb paradigms do so without the information available from second-language teaching research. Again, the fact that some handbooks may not reflect current research is no reason to follow suit.

A few technical matters:

1. The word *modal* is a legitimate term recognized by modern grammarians as an "optional verb constituent such as time, tense, and number markers."
2. Although the first 140 pages deal with parts of speech, information about them is cursory. The included exercises outnumber the information without adding to it.
3. I find Mrs. Thompson's "compelling reasons" neither compelling nor complete because they are inaccurate and do not introduce today's teacher and students to a language awareness deeper than that previously available on the market.

## CanWit No. 24

THIRTY YEARS from now some bright CanLit student may well be submitting a Ph.D. thesis entitled *Beavers, Bears, and Fur: Canadian Women Writers of the 1970s*. Readers are invited to suggest other possible Canadian thesis topics for the year 2007. The topics need not be restricted to literature. The winner will receive \$25 and \$25 goes to Henri Pilon of Toronto for this idea. Address: CanWit No. 24, Books in Canada, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is Aug. 31.

### RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 22

OUR QUEST for appropriate mottoes for real Canadian places yielded an excellent response and an informative letter from the toponymy division of the federal Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources. Toponymy, it turns out, is the study of place-names, or toponyms, and the division has more than 260,000 of them in its working files. W. B. Yeo, the division's head of

watch for . . .

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research, tells us that Bolsover, Ont., which was quoted in our example, is in fact a reconsidered toponym: "Our file contains a letter from the postmaster, dated 1905, in which he says the place was once known as Onnacome."

We also received a delightful poem from J. E. Richardson of Toronto about a romantic trip to Newfoundland:

*A visit to Conception Bay  
Kept us busy throughout the day;  
And then a stay at Heart's Delight  
Brought us romance throughout the night.  
The end result of this has meant  
Confinement at sweet Heart's Content.*

The winner is Mary MacPherson of Toronto, who receives \$25 for this toponymous triumph:

- Dog Pound, Alta.: "Home of dog's best friend."
- Klock, Ont.: "Where lime files."
- Colgate, Sask.: "Puts a smile on your face."
- Change bland, Nfld.: "Is as good as a rest."
- Wild Goose, Ont.: "For the time of your life."
- Tilting, N.M.: "Overlooks the greater Atlantic."
- Scotch Bay, Man.: "For a drinking man's holiday."

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□ Nur Mountain, Sask.: "A crazy place to visit."

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- Jerry's Nose, Nfld.: "You couldn't pick a nicer place."
- Calves Nose, Nfld.: "The town like no other."
- Harbour Harbour, Nfld.: "Come come to a lovely lovely town town."  
— Peter Gorrie, Ottawa

\* \* \*

- Fanny Bay, B.C.: "Raw nature at its best."
- Toronto, Ont.: "Gracious goodness."  
— Tom Cocking, Delta, B.C.

\* \* \*

- Wells, B.C.: "All's well that ends in Wells."  
— Barbara Schulz, Thunder Bay, Ont.

\* \* \*

- Tincap, Ont.: "Hardheadedness built our town."  
— Marnie Klein, Colborne, Ont.

\* \* \*

- Lovett, Ont.: "We guarantee you will."
- Burnt River, Ont.: "Where the fish you catch are already cooked."  
— Phil Hall, Windsor

\* \* \*

- Embarras, Sak.: "The town where nobody makes fun of you."
- Natal, B.C.: "The place where life really begins."  
— Michael O. Nowlan, Oromocto, N.B.

\* \* \*

- Tiny, Sask.: "Tiny parts are interesting."  
— Derrick Murdoch, Toronto

\* \* \*

- Milk River, Alta.: "Come along and bring your honey."
- Hope, B.C.: "Where spring's eternal."
- Carberry, Man.: "Famous for its traffic jams."
- Plum Coule, Man.: "Also plum friendly and plum pleasant."  
— Ann McElhinney, Toronto

\* \* \*

- Apple Hill, Ont.: "Where you get to the core of things."
- Outlook, Sask.: "Where you go to get a new one."  
— Jeanne Sears, Minden, Ont.

\* \* \*

- Doting Cove, Nfld.: "For the golden years."  
— C. M. Beattie, Montreal

\* \* \*

- Brussels, Ont.: "The town that's really sprouting."
- Hydraulic, B.C.: "For a real lift, visit us."
- Tweed, Ont.: "A town tailored for your needs."
- Univy, Sask.: "The home of the national goal."  
— Michael Schultz, Norwood, Ont.

\* \* \*

- Heart's Content, Nfld.: "Needs no motto."  
— Warner, Stanley, Toronto



## Books received

THE FOLLOWING Canadian books have been received by Books in Canada in recent weeks. Inclusion in this list does not preclude a review or notice in a future issue:

- A Stone Diary, by Pat Lowther, Oxford.
- Innovation in School Psychology, edited by Solveiga Miezitis and Michael Orme, OISE.
- The Lippman Symposium, edited by Lorraine McMullen, University of Ottawa Press.
- Gilstealing in the Sun, Western Producer.
- Zodiac, Canadian Council of Teachers of English.
- The Sign of the Crescent Moon, by Thomas J. Saunders, Exposition.
- I Love You, Baby Blue, edited by Connie Brissenden, Press Porcépic.
- Family, by Jean-Guy Carrier, Oberon.
- Shoe, Betty, and the Morning Man, by Donald Jack, Macmillan.
- Sometimes I Think of Moving, by Elizabeth Brewster, Oberon.
- Diving Into Fire, by Robert Currie, Oberon.
- Children of the Black Sabbath, by Anne Hébert, translated by Carol Dunlop-Hébert, Musson.
- The Handbook of Canadian Film, second edition, by Eleanor Beattie, Peter Martin.
- Percy Rowe's Travel Guide to Canada, Paperjacks.
- Memoirs of a Canadian Doctor, by Dr. C. Lamont Macmillan, Paperjacks.
- Journey Across a Continent, by David Gidmark, Paperjacks.
- Thaw, by Douglas Smith, the four humours press.
- Grassy Narrows, by George Hutchison and Dick Wallace, Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Hi Mom! Hi Dad!, by Lynn (Franks) Johnston, Peter Martin.
- A Guide to Writing Essays & Research Papers, by Gordon Coggins, Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- So Much to Forget, by Albin Stanke, translated by Susan Altschul, Gage.
- Stones, Bones and Skin: Ritual and Shamanic Art, Society for Art Publications.
- The TM Technique and the Art of Learning, by Stephen Truch, Lester & Orpen.
- There's a Raccoon in My Parka, by Lyn Hancock, Doubleday.
- The Pacific Princesses, by Robert D. Turner, Sono Nis.
- The School Promoters, by Alison Prentice, M & S.
- Department Store Disease, by James Bryant, M & S.
- Time of Fear and Hope, by Escot Reid, M & S.
- The Neglected Majority, edited by Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, M & S.
- The Immortal Soul of Edwin Carlyle, by Blanche Howard, M & S.
- Blackflies and White Water, by A. Tony Sloan, M & S.
- Collecting Minerals, by Bill Ince, M & S.
- Take Notice: An Introduction to Canadian Law, by Steven N. Speiz, Pitman.
- Women in Canadian Politics, by Jean Cochrane, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
- A Complete Guide to Family Fun in Toronto, by Sheila Kennedy and Susan Seidman, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Poems of French Canada, translated by F.R. Scott, Blackfish Press.
- Grounds, by Gerry Gilbey, Talonbooks.
- Collected Citizen, by Joseph McLeod, Fiddlehead.
- No. 3, Frank Street, Lorraine Vernon, Fiddlehead.
- Widow's Walk, by Cathie Pelletier, Fiddlehead.
- I Never Wanted to be the Holy Ghost, by Nancy Senior, Fiddlehead.
- The Light is on My Shoulder, by Ted Plantos, Fiddlehead.
- History of Agriculture in Ontario 1613-1890, by Robert Leslie Jones, U of T Press.
- Here & Now, edited by Clark Blaise and John Metcalf, Oberon.
- Paddy, by R. D. Lawrence, Alfred A. Knopf.
- Given to Fraise, by Kenneth G. Mills, Sandscape Publications.
- Recollections of People, Press, and Politics, by Gratian O'Leary, Macmillan.
- Song of the Forest, by Isabel Barclay, Oberon.
- The Lady Who Loved New York, by R. L. Gordon, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
- The Noise of Singing, by Abraham Ram, Golden Dog.
- Dark of Caves, by Abraham Ram, Golden Dog.
- The Venturesome Voyages of Captain Voss, by J. C. Voss, Gray's Publishing.
- Native Education in Canada and the United States: A Bibliography, compiled by I. R. Brooks, Office of Educational Development, University of Calgary.
- Guide to Intelligent Drinking, by Zalman Amit and E. Ann Sutherland with Andrew Weiner, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
- Voices from Quebec, edited by Philip Stratford and Michael Thomas, Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- The Way Ahead for Canada, edited by Robert K. Logan, Lester & Orpen.
- Storting the Ark in the Dark, by Ian Underhill, University of Western Ontario.
- In the Presence of the Dragon Throne, by John E. Vollmer, ROM.
- The Complete Jogger, by Jack Batten, Musson.
- RCAF: Squadrons and Aircraft, by S. Kostenuk and J. Griffin, Samuel Stevens.

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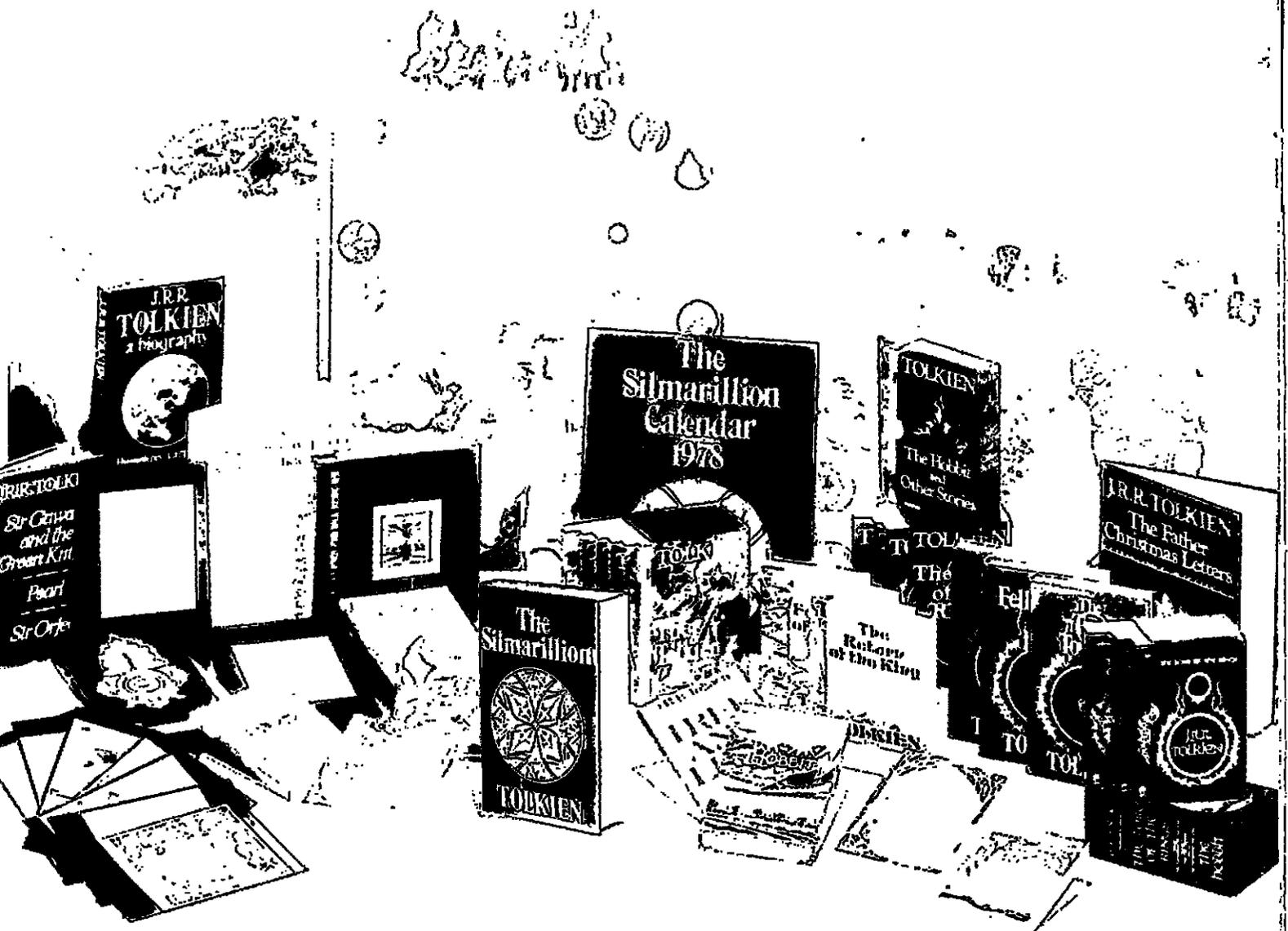
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