A NATIONAL REVIEW OF BOOKS

BOOKS IN C

March 1986 $1.

THE APPRENT
OF PAUL QUA

Psyched out:
Keith Maillard or
split personalities

And an interview
with Robert Harlo

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FIELD NOTES

Desert song

More than simply a meeting place, Mexico's mysterious Zone of Silence provides unique inspiration for a trilingual group of wrlters and artists

A CLASSICAL country scene of spruce woods and snowy fields surrounds me as 1 write. Logging trucks rumble by en mute to the nearby Rouge Matawin provincial Forest reserve. I hear chainsaws, blue jays. This is Lac Macaza, Que.

A little more than a year ago I was 3,000 miles away, giving a sunset reading in a" abandoned graveyard in a remote north-"ester" Mexican desert known as the Zone of Silence. I hadn't bathed for a couple of weeks and no longer eve" tried to get a comb through my hair. My' clothes held so much dust that they appeared to be smoldering as I walked back and Forth among the Fallen wooden crosses reading first in Spanish, then I" French, and Finally *in* English.

The audience I Faced was as sparse as the desert landscape around us. But Clod seemed to be handling the special effects. The sky brought out all its best colours, and the wind gathered a troupe of clouds For a brief, spectacular performance. Meanwhile nearly half my audience was moving about photographing me, taping me, filming me in video and in Super-8. Together we were participating in the Zone of Silence project, a month-long gathering of Canadian and Mexican sculptors. writers, musiclans, film-makers, photographers, performance artists, a composer, eve" a historian, as well as kids and dogs.

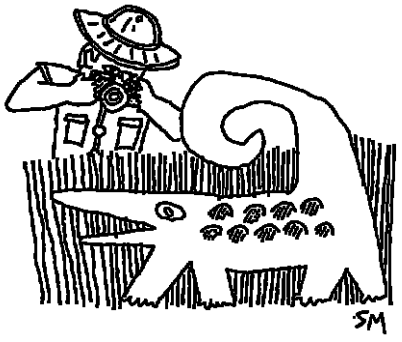
The Zone of Silence is not a" ordinary desert. Discovered in the 1960s by Mexican engineer Harry de la Peña while he was exploring For oil, it has since attracted scientists From all over the world. The "silence? has to do with irregularly emitted Hertzian waves, which render radio communication impossible. It doesn't prevail over the whole territory, but occurs in bands or strips. Batteries are liable to decharge in certain areas, too. and compasses refuse to point north. The Zone acts as a great magnet, attracting large quantities of meteorites, which occur occasionally in "'showers."

It is also paradise For the amateur. geologist or archeologist. A" enormous variety of minerals can be Found, high quality fossils are abundant. and anyone with a sharp eye can fmd a dozen arrowheads in a day's wandering. Long before it got its name, the area was a sacred place for native shamans. who sometimes travelled long distances to perform rituals and healing ceremonies. We were the first organized group of artists to make the pilgrimage.

We came in early December with our tents, sleeping bags, and equipment, and settled in among the stones and dust near a watering hole known as Mohóvano, one of three oases in the region. Apart from the shade of a handful of mesquite trees, our only protection From the desert sun came from the straw or Felt hats that we all wore so religiously that I can still clearly recall each person's hat. The rattlesnakes, tarantulas, and scorpions were mostly holed up For the winter, but cactus doesn't hibernate and there were several billion spines to deal with. Once we learned the rules of relationship with these stubborn, stoic, heroic plants, they became a sourcé of inspiration. They ended up winning a prominent place in almost everyone's creative work.

0" an average day, we were up shortly after dawn. After breakfast around the campfire, we were off into the desert, occasionally in pairs or teams, but usually alone. The artists worked on installation pieces at Four different sites. The musicians experimented with plants, stones, and other objects to discover their musical potential. The film-makers trailed us to record our activities.

For the writers, it was not a place to



devote much time to writing. It wasn't comfortable enough. One sat on the ground with no backrest, because it was dangerous (scorpions) to lea" on things. I Found this position tolerable For no more than two hours at a time. Mostly, I took notes.

Jeanne MacDonald Pokier, a Métis poet from Quebec, Found a meditation spot hiih on a hill, where she could look out over miles of desert. Although she wrote several short poems. she produced most of her work back home. several months later. Vancouver writer/poet Norbert Ruebsaat recorded interviews with all of us, which he later edited For radio, but the poetry that came out of the desert experience didn't begin to flow until he too had been home For a while.

To me, it seemed ridiculous to wield a pm when so many beautiful stone, Fossils, arrowheads, and other treasures offered themselves to my fingers. Getting the desert down on paper would — did — come later. It still does. I can't toss a log into my woodstove without recalling the little gnarled cactus roots that I prized so highly For my cooking fires in the Zone.

One opportunity the project offered was the chance For various artists to watch each other work. At best, the writers I know have superficial notions about the art world. Artists suffer from the same isolation (although I know more artists who read novels than novelists who look at art).

I recall a" exchange I had with Benjamin Medal just after the project. He burst beaming From his video studio in Durango, Mexico, to tell me that the images he had filmed at my reading were so good that he planned to let them stand alone, without the recording of my voice. We laughed about it later, but at the time I told him a writer might have different priorities about sound and image — especially where it concerns her own reading.

But Medel and Carlos Majul, our other Mexican fdm-maker. were the only ones who Felt they could convey the significance of the project without using words. Performance artists Silvy Panet-Raymond and Francisco Garcia both wrote lively, imaginative descriptions of their ventures, as did Richard Martel, editor of *INTER* magazine and artistic jack-of-all-trades, sculptor Lise Labrie, and composer Hildegard Westerkamp. The short texts by my Mexican husband, Domingo Cisneros — who originated the project — read like prose poems.

With the help of the Quebec ministry

of cultural affairs, the Zone of Silence participants have produced a show that has run at the Musée du Quebec in Quebec City and the Ottawa School of Art, and will travel to other cities in Canada. Mexico, and Europe over the next 18 months. In the meantime, we're going back. Cisneros and I will revisit the Zone this summer, and the other pmjea members are discussing another stay in the spring of 1987. Silence likes company. -WÄNDA BLYNN CAMPBELL

Lord of the rings

HOW TO BRIDGE that long-distance feeling between poet and public? For as many as 3.000 telephone callers a week, the answer is an extension of the oral tradition: Dial-a-Poem, operated by Fortner Anderson, publisher of Dromos Editions in Montreal. At the end of a particularly hectic day, the taped message on Anderson's Codeaphone 2540 answering machine is so worn that it spookily fades out and in like the voice of a spirit medium.

So far callers to (514) 843-7636 — in letters, it spells out THE-POEM — have heard readings by more than 35 of Montreal's English-language poets. They include veterans such as Leo Kennedy reading his erotica; visiting dignitaries like Erin Mouré, Pat Lane. and Lorna Crozier; younger rose-pickers such as Peter Van Toorn, Endré Farkas, Bill Furey, Anne McLean, Brian Bartlett, and Michael Harris; and budding rookies like Noah Zacharin, Howard Tessler, Esther Ross, Johanne Lafleur, and Margaret Christakos. (Free Verse, a similar service organized in Ottawa by Deborah McMullin, can be reached at (613) 738-0604.)

Anderson's labour of love runs on a ring and a prayer. The Word book store, Argo Books, The Double Hook, Steve Welch Books, Véhicule Press. and others have chipped in the $50-a-week to support their chosen authors. Other funds have come out of Anderson's pocket and the proceeds fmm Clifford Duffy's first book, *Blue Dog Plus*. The taped presentations conclude with information as to where each poet's work can be obtained. Like putting running shoes on a caterpillar, it helps-their books move faster.

With more sponsors, Anderson would set up two or three more lines. His ambition is to include francophone poets and eventually works by censored or imprisoned Thii World writers. He has already taped Filipino poet Edmundo Farolan, Spain's Manuel Betanzos Santos, and the multi-talented Chilean Renato Trujillo's "Icarus":

With my hands
forever
entangled in the
string of a blue kite
changing colours up above
you keep asking:
"What are you doing?
at your age . . ."
I repeat to you
what you already know
by now:
"Let me dream
with my hands
tied."

That is perhaps somewhat the way New York poet John Giorno, originator of the Dial-a-Poem in his own city, felt when the FBI descended on him following a tape by Diane Di Prima that told how to concoct Molotov cocktails and home-made bombs. Shortly after her reading, someone had bombed the IBM building..

Anderson's closest brush with the law came in the form of an envelope from the dreaded *Office de la langue française*. He opened it up only to discover a crisp one-dollar bill from a listener in Pointe Claire who requested a catalogue of the Dial-a-Poem poets.

As for telemarketing, late one night a local rock station relayed *tape over the airwaves of Robin Potter breathily emoting: "This field enters all possibilities:/finger-length variations of weed and grass/pry open my rib cage.".

"Hot stuff!" the DJ hooted.

The silent ones, the beautiful heavy-breathers, or a Ron Everson hauntingly intoning. "none knows where we are" — the bellringers for poetry are still out there. The lines are busy. —RAY FILIP

Taking it to the streets

IN A DAY when most Canadian writers are sustained by teaching jobs and arts grants, one man stands out. For the past eight years, Crad Kilodney has been writing and selling his own self-published books as his sole occupation. Six days a week. Kilodney can be found strategically located on the streets of Toronto, his briefcase by his side and a sign hung around his neck that pronounces him "WORLD'S GREATEST AUTHOR."

"Most of the time on the street I just watch the urban robots go by," says Kilodney, author of *Sex Slaves of the Astro-Mutants* and 14 other books,' "and most ignore me. Most of the human race is truly pathetic. Real civilization hasn't arrived yet on tbis planet. I write mostly humour because it provides psychological relief. If I didn't, I would be crushed by the weight of my own seriousness. It's no accident that a lot of my humour is laced with tragic motifs."-

A sample, from his short story "Mr. Schlepp and His Ace Mechanic":

> It's a rare individual who can manage to loss his job and his wife on the same day and, what's more. be taken completely by surprise in both cases. That these events struck Sidney Schlepp as unforseen bolts out of the blue says something about his judgement. That they struck him on the same day says something about his luck.

Kilodney's satire on academe, *Pork College* (Coach House Press), is only the third of his books not to be published under his own imprint. Charnel House. In the past he has produced such memorable titles as *Lightning Struck My Dick* (Virgo Press, 1980). Lately, however, he has taken to colour-coding: his last five titles have been *The Orange Book, The Green Book,. The Blue Book, The Yellow Book, and The Scarlet Book.* Each *contains the worthy* boast: "Charnel House is a private imprint dedicated to artistic freedom and free enterprise."

"I'm very respectful of local merchants," says Kilodney, who devotes more than 50 hours a week to peddling

his books. "I like to be on a main street with a good flow of pedestrians. I avoid trendy areas such as Yorkville or Queen Street West, as well as specialized areas such as the University of Toronto campus. Selling takes place either in a vacant doorway or against a plain wall of a large building.

"There is "o advantage whatever in, standing near a book store.. I used to sell "ear the biggest Coles in Toronto, and the clientele would completely ignore me. I try to work various locations because. people in Toronto are such creatures of habit that they tend to follow the same paths every day. Eve" by crossing the street you *see a* different crowd."

Born in New York and a graduate of the University of Michigan, the 37-year-old Kilodney has "no formal training" in literature or creative writing. (He has a degree in astronomy.) Nevertheless, he usually manages to sell a press-run of 750 copies within six months. His profit for an investment of $800 *is* generally about $1,500.

"I had bee" published in quite a few small magazines i" the U.S., Canada, and England," he says, "but I came to the conclusion that this wasn't good enough, because it had no impact on anyone or anything. I may get published by others in the future, but I'm not looking for a publisher. 'Ike main reason is that I can make more money doing my own books and selling them on the street.

"I figured that such a" audacious move would attract some attention and help me cultivate a local readership. I didn't see it as an end in itself at the beginning, but I know the best thing is just to keep doing it and not think of the next stage. I'm already doing better for myself than the majority of literary writers in this country."

— GRANT DAVID SHILLING

ENGLISH. OUR ENGLISH

Offensive language

If a company's product Is communication, Is It too much to expect that Its employees be able to **communicate well?**

By Bob ***Blackburn***

THE MAIL SENT to this column leads me to believe that many people worry about the fact that the careful writer is an endangered species. Others who write professionally on this subject share that belief, but can take little comfort from it. The wrong people are worrying.

As a consumer *of the* products of the communications industry, I think I can guess the identity of some of the ***non***-worriers.

My list includes the president of the CBC. the publishers of almost all the Canadian periodicals I see,, the head of every broadcasting operation whose product enters my home (and I do "ot except TVO, the Ontario educational TV channel), the Ontario minister of education. many Canadian book publishers. .. but why go *on? You get the* point.

I could be wrong. Perhaps some of these people do worry, but think that to do anything about it would be a" abuse of their great power. I would welcome any evidence that any one or more of these people is doing anything effectual to stem the decline of careful writing, or is troubled by it, or is eve" ***aware*** of it.

Someone (not an on-the-spot reporter, who might be pardoned, but someone sitting at a desk in a Toronto office) wrote tbls sentence in a report on a hotel fire: "No Canadians are believed among the dead." Whether or not this statement has any validity is a question best left to the mystics; surely it was irrelevant to the report.

.I, thank Kennedy Wells of Alberton, P.E.I.. for a letter reminding me of a report, bye senior CBC-TV reporter, on the visit *to* Washington last year by the Prince and Princess of Wales; He writes: "[She] said they had opened an exhibition of 'aristocratic British artifacts' and that at a press conference later, journalists were treated to the 'arcane sight' of the Prince answering questions for the Princess." I had seen that newscast, but had decided against singling it out for attack; it would have been too easy a target.

Nor will I now say anything more about it other than that it is one of thousands of reasons that the president of the CBC is at the top of tbe above list. 1 feel strongly that the CBC should strive to set an example of excellence in the use of our two official languages, and it might be appropriate to mention here that one of the first little economies imposed by tbe incumbent president was to effect the retirement of the corporation's lone official watchdog of English usage and turn the position into a part-time job.

I am h-cd by the fact that the Globe ***and Mail*** continues to publish letters from readers critical of its errors in usage, but not by the fact that both the letters and the errors are increasing in frequency. Again, I feel that a publication that styles itself "Canada's National Newspaper" should strive to set an example; the mere cheerful consumption of humble pie is not enough. (I will not cite anything fmm the sheaf of clippings lying beside my keyboard, save to mention that William French's predictably well-written review of the federal government's new guide to English usage — which I discussed here last month --'bore a headline that contained one of the commonest and most egregious grammatical errors known to man: the misplaced modifier.)

I took a few minutes away from the keyboard just now to watch a forecast by one of our most venerable TV weathermen. He warned me of the impending arrival of an air mass that was "moving in an easterly direction." I have bee" watching this fellow for about a quarter-century, always wondering if hi employer had ever thought of mentioning to him that he probably would not suffer a loss of credibility were he to say "moving eastward." Employers did that sort of thing when I was a boy, but I believe it has gone out of fashion.

If I had control of an operation. great or small, whose primary purpose was communication, I think I would require of the communicators I hired that they communicate well, but I suppose this is a bizarre fantasy.

No publishing or broadcasting enterprise I am reasonably well acquainted with is without at least a few employees who care about careful writing as deeply as do you and I, but very few that I know of are run by people who care (or ***know***) enough to do anything about it.

Please continue writing to me, but send a copy to someone who can *do something* about your complaint. He might have someone in his employ who could explain it to him. □

PROFILE

The apprenticeship of Paul Quarringtsn

One of the newly acclalmed '10 best young Canadlan writers' seeks to make ordinary characters seem extraordinary and extraordlnary characters seem human

By Barbara *Wade* *Rose*

> This wonderful **place was** on loan lo me by **Professor Harvey Benson,** who **teaches English** Language and **Literature at Chiliast Universlty.** *It* is **Harv's belief** that I am a young *writer of* **great promise, and it's** good he **has** tenure if **he's** inclined lo believe such **things.**
>
> — The ***Life Of Hope***

BEARDED PAUL **QUARRINGTON, a 32-year-old writer** of **great** promise, sits **in** a bar a few steps north of Queen **Street** on a windy **afternoon** in Tomato. He sips a beer and **munches** on chicken **wings** as he describes his reaction *lo* being **named, only** days **before,** one **of** the **10** but **Canadian** writers under 45 years of age.

"I was prepared to be **philosophical,"** he says in a low. **slow** voice. "Then **they** called me up and said, 'You **know this** list, 43 Below?' I said, 'Yes, and I'm **prepared** to be **philosophical about it.' They then** said, **'You** don't **have** to be.' **"** He **thinks for** a second. **"I** felt good, because I ***hate*** **being** philosophical."

Paul Quarrington

As the author of three novels, of **which** Home Game (1983) and last **fall's *The Life of Hope*** **(both** published by **Doubleday**) have **received considerable** but not **always** flattering attention. **Quarrington** is **resigned** to being **philosophical. *Maclean's* vilified** Home Game as "that saddest *of occurrences, a joke at which no one* **laughs"** and **then referred** to its "whimsical **style"** in a subsequent (more positive) review of *The* ***Life of Hope.*** *Home Game* **was** included as a **favourite among** 1983 books by Toronto ***Star*** **book critic Ken Adachi,** who **recently, Quarrington** feels, "had lo **go** out of his **way"** lo **find** something positive to say about ***The Life of Hope.*** *"Some people* **are** *saying The* ***Life of Hope*** didn't get the **reviews** ***Home*** *Game* **did," Quarrington comments. "I say** *that's OK,* **because** *Home Game* didn't gel **them** either."

PAUL QUARRINGTON, his two **brothers, and** a sister **grew** up **in** Tomato's suburbs, ***the*** children of **a psychology professor father** who **still** teaches at York University and a **child-psychologist** mother, now **deceased,** who **practised her profession** occasionally **on** Tony, Paul, **and** Joel. "She used **to** like lo devise **tests** and give **them** to **us," Quarrington remembers.** "We got very good at **knowing** how to **alarm** her. We could fake **all** sorts of sexual **deviances,** shock her, and make **her** put the tests away."

Music beats an insistent rhythm **in** the **Quarrington** blood: a great-grandfather who **was** a harp-builder, lots of music teachers, *church organists. and* **opera** singers. and a father who played the trumpet **in** his youth. **Joel practised** the **double** bass four or **five hours** a day and **now** Is a **distinguished** concert musician. Tony (aside fmm writing a doctoral **thesis** on Ezra **Pound)** became a singer **and** guitarist **with** Joe Hall and **the** Continental Drift and **the** author of such original compositions as "King Kong" and **"Hawayah."** (His 1978 **biography** noted, "We **can** look for similar **compositions** in the future. **barring** some major breakthrough in psychotherapy.") Paul, **the** middle **brother, also** spent five years **in** Joe Hall's band, **tapping away at** *a* **typewriter** in the **mornings** when he wasn't quite awake ("I don't **like** to get my brain involved — it's too **smart** for its **own** good") and **strumming** a guitar at night. Despite **some** plan lo form a fraternal trio, however, music was **never** intended **to** dominate Paul's life **the** way it did hi brothers'.

"I knew fmm ever since I **could remember that** I wanted **to** 'be a **writer," Quarrington** says as he looks out **the** window al a streetcar rumbling past. "At around **20** I **decided to write** seriously, and wrote some **long short stories.** It seems **to** me that I bad a lot of **technical problems** to work **through.** Of **course,** some **people** might say I shouldn't be so **quick** to say ***had."***

Two years of studying **English** at **the** University of Toronto only convinced **Quarrington** that **the** academic mute **to CanLit** was not for him. He **learned** by **reading** other writers, **John Gardner** being a particular **favourite,** and working **without the benefit** of writers' **workshops or** *Canada Council grants.* He

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL ORENSTEIN

supported his habit by working at a variety of jobs. "I was pretty good in the security field," he recalls. "I could always go back to that. It's a good job for a writer — they lock you in a room and make you read all night." Although he describes himself as "pretty shy," he learned to plant himself in bars and listen when patrons opened up to hi about their lives; now bars and the bar cars on trains are a continuing source of new material.

During his apprenticeship he began to pat down on paper a hi improbable story about a baseball team of, well, freaks. Quarrington has never talked to such people and does not consider himself an expert on baseball. The world he created in Home *Game* grew out of his imagination and ability to observe.

> Elsewhere in the audience a woman fainted with a short, breathy scream. Slowly the Hippopotamus Boy turned his head in her direction. The groan that was his speech became louder, more insistent. The children began to jeer at him: the men murmured sullenly. The Hippopotamus Boy turned and walked behind the curtains. It took some moments for the people to settle down. Nathanael's eyes didn't dry. even after he could no longer see tbc boy.
>
> — Home *Game*

"WHILE I WAS growing up one of the things the Canadian National Exhibition had along the midway was a freak show," Quarrington recalls. "I even forget how they advertised him, but what it was was ossified and withered away and all gnarly, and maybe they called him the Frog *Man or* something, because be had little flippers for arms and no use of his legs. They wheeled hi out to the centre stage. The girl I was with was quite taken aback, sort of gasped audibly and bad to hold on to me for support. I remember tbe way he looked at ha — he was so full of concern. He mast have known why she was alarmed, but he turned to look at her because be was worried about *her."* Quarrington developed that incident into the character of Bobby Merrill, the Hippopotamus Boy, along with such others as a bearded lady, Siamese-twin sisters, and the Alligator Mao. "Merrill is the ugliest guy who ever lived," Quarrington notes, "but if you talk to him that's not his problem. He doesn't even consider it. He's worried that he might not be as courageous as he could be."

No baseball team would be complete without someone to play against, so the opposing team in Home Game is made up of tbc House of Jonah, a religious colt. Religion, particularly fundamentalism — a subject that fascinates Quarrington — lends a little divine inspiration to both *Home Game* and *The Life of Hope. Although his* parents were agnostics, Quarrington can remember a period when his father would go to a different church each week. ("He seemed to like the Buddhist temple most.") As a boy Paul decided to attend church for a while, and now has "a fairly religious side" as well as an avid late-night curiosity about television evangelists. Bearded, robed Tekel Ambrose, leader of the *House* of Jonah, is, Quarrington feels, "a pretty admirable person. despite everything" — including his desire to drive the circus freaks from town. Joseph Benton Hope in *The Life of Hope* founds the town of Hope, Oat., through a desire to develop an experimental community along the lines of the Oneida multiple marriage religious homesteads in the United States — and is murdered for his efforts. "I think religious fundamentalists

The top ten

A new list introduces the best fiction writers of the 'post-Atwood generation,' but not everyone Is likely to agree

THE NIGHT WAS appropriately chilly as the writer, critic, and bookseller gathered in the private upstairs room of a small French restaurant in downtown Toronto. Martinis and mineral water were poured and pâté passed around as the three discussed their favourite young writers. Theo, one by one the books were piled on the table, discussed and evaluated, as Margaret Atwood, Robert Enright, and Beth Appeldoom distilled the 59 entries down to 45 Below — the 10 best Canadian writers under 45 years of age.

"It took two or three hours to arrive at a final decision." says Gordon Montador, national director of the Canadian Book Information Centre (CBIC), who hosted the dinner. "I think half the list was filled by people who had turned up on all three judges' lists of finalists. Theo there was a lot of negotiating — and a few very firm statements."

The winners: Sandra Birdsell, Janette Turner Hospital, Susan Kerslake, Paul Quarrington, Sarah Sheard, Aritha van Herk, Matt Cohen. Bharati Mukherjee, David Adams Richards, and Guy Vanderhaeghe. Most arc in their late 30s and — except for Mukherjee, who now lives in the U.S. — they represent most regions of the country, with the notable exception of the West Coast. The 10 arc to be flown by the CBIC to Toronto the first week in March for a presentation ceremony and a Friday-night bash at Harbourfront tbat is scheduled to begin with a five-minute reading fmm each writer.

"We believe the list is fairly representative of the state of Canadian fiction today,!' said Enright the morning after the judges' dinner. Atwood and Appeldoorn both declined to discuss their choices, believing that too many questions might be asked on who they left oat rather than who they put in. Montador insists that the choices were "inclusive rather than exclusive," and points out. for instance, that both short-story writers and novelists were eligible to be chosen.

The Idea of 45 Below originated — Montador frankly admits he stole it — with the "Best of Young British Novelists" promotion campaign three years ago, which more than tripled book sales in Britain for its duration. With the exception of the "First Hundred Canadian Novels" in 1980, little has been done to promote the collective excellence of Canadian writers — and nothing, Montador believes, has turned Canadian bookbuyers to younger writers, what be calls the "post-Atwood" generation. "Atwood and others of her calibre benefited from the nationalism of the early 1970s," be says. "But what has there been since then? These are excellent young writers. and they deserve something like that."

Montador expects some negative feedback to the judges' choices. B.C. critics might want to come up with their own list, and those who believe that older writers deserve some promotion might make up a "best of" list too. "Quarrel with it, argue with it, do whatever you want." be says. "It can only be good for more Canadii writers if you do."

— BARBARA WADE ROSE

take it too far," says Quarrington, "but I ***still think they're*** a cut above people who couldn't be bothered to **believe** in anything."

> **My experience as a writs (two published novels, mixed reviews. modest sales) tells me that what I should do is pry open Nathanael's mind. I should reveal his thoughts, as he was no doubt considering his past right that very instant. But my grandfather says no — and for emphasis he slams his cane on my tabletop.**
>
> **"Why not, you old feeble fool?"**
>
> **My grandfather's eyes and veins bulge and he says, "Beeecause —" through a clenched tooth. Then he relaxes with a sigh. "Leave the poor man alone."**
>
> **— Home Game**

WHEN HE WAS writing *Home Game* Quarrington wanted a tale of **mythic proportions, so** he added **a myth-maker in** the **form** of **the** narrator's grandfather, who arrives on his doorstep, sets tire to his half-finished novel ("a tale of sordid sex between sordid people in sordid **places"),** and threatens **him** until he **tells the** story. **The** grandfather may **also** represent, perhaps unconsciously, **the** conflicts and difficulties involved **in writing** a book. **"When** I was writing Home *Game,* I didn't **think** much about it," **Quarrington says.** But after the **first** book **was** published, "I sort of suffered badly from the second-novel syndrome."

The ***Life of Hope is not Quarrington's second novel.*** If **you** count The *Service* (which he never does), it's not even **his** third. ***The Service (Coach House* Press) tells** the story of Horace **Hodgkins,** a **much-afflicted fellow** who unwisely **accepts** a **man** named **Argyle's** offer to solve **all his problems** for **$50. A third manuscript, *Logan in Overtime* —** about **an industrial-league** goaltender who plays **in** a **never-ending overtime** period **—** was accepted by Avon Books but shelved **after** the **firm** suspended its Canadian **line.**

In **the meantime, Quarrington** had begun a novel about a **writer (also named** Paul) who holes **himself** up in a **friend's** house to try to **write** a novel. "When he gets there he's writing for **all** the **wrong reasons,"** says **Quarrington.** "A **lot** of the book is about his not being able to **function while** he **has** adopted **this cynical, world-weary stance." As he discovers a topic that** interests **him — the life of** Joseph **Benton** Hope **—** the narrator says, **"I began** to sense that I was **being** granted a reprieve, **that** I might yet avoid **the** fate ***of* becoming** a TV **sit**-corn writer or, worse **yet,** a book reviewer."

Quarrington laughs when **reminded** of **his dig. "There's** a **certain** amount of me **having fun." he says. But there is an edge to his voice.**

In ***The Life of Hope,* Quarrington concentrates on making**

The ***Life of Hope*** is not Quarrington's second novel. If you count The Service (which he never does), it's not even his third. Another manuscript — about an industrial-league goaltender who plays in a never-ending overtime period — was accepted but shelved after Avon Books suspended its Canadian line

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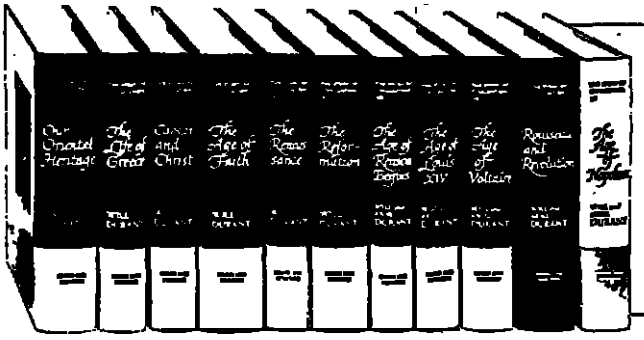

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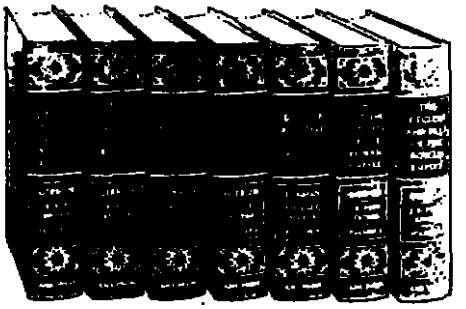

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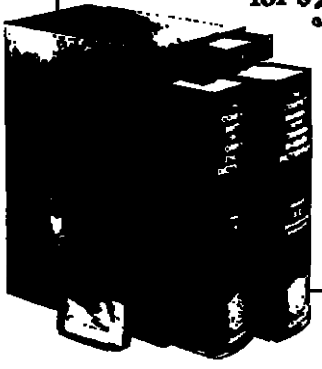

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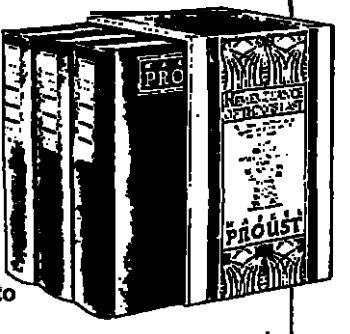

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ordinary characters — the regular patrons of a bar called The Willing Mind — seem extraordinary. I suggest to him that such a task might prove more difficult than making the extraordinary seem human, as be did in *Home* Game. Quarrington disagrees politely. "I believe that people don't need any embellishment," he says, glancing at a couple of patrons arguing over a sportscaster on the TV above the bar. "If we were to pick any one of these guys and have a long enough discussion with hi, you'd find out something. Maybe be was the world champion tlddly-wink player or has visited every country in the world, I don't know. People just aren't as boring as people like to believe.."

> "Here's the great Canadian novelist!" roared Harvey, blocking my only avenue *of* escape. I *covered my private* parts and made a valiant attempt to smile.
>
> — *The Life of Hope*

QUARRINGTON NOW IS at work on another novel about three male childhood friends, two of whom "conspire to do something lousy to the third later in their lives." He is writing "with a renewed sense of vigour these days" since acquiring new prestige as one of the under-45 elite. To help support himself, he also works in a Toronto book store. where buyers of his novels arc favoured with an autograph. ("The staff like to stick them in people's hands.") What he would like most is "enough money to buy a big block of time I could write in." Writers deal in time — a little here, a little there.

'People don't need any embellishment. If we were to pick any of these guys and have a long enough discussion with him, you'd find out something. Maybe he was the world champion tlddly-wink player or has visited every country in the world. People aren't as boring as people like to believe'

"I think as you get older you start to panic," he says. "Americans tend to put out three or four books — you've got to make sure that every book counts. British authors, they put out 20 or 30 by the time they're 50 and sort of go for an average. We [in Canada] have a choice. I kind of think I'll go for the average."

Quarrington jokes about the power of established, best-selling authors like James Clavell ("Five mill, that's what I'm going to ask for next time") and tells how he and a friend considered hauling' out the canvas and brushes when they heard that artists attracted more women than writers did. Press him about writing as a career, however, and he concedes that all the hours at the typewriter do mean more to him than mere status.

"You can have something legitimate that you want to say," he says in his slow voice. "'I've got seven or eight letters from people who seemed genuinely affected by a book of mine. One girl said that before reading Home Game she had felt pretty pissed off about the way things were going, and now she felt a bit better." He pauses. "That tends to make things worthwhile." □

FEATURE REVIEW

Third impressions

Fragmentary and redundant, the final book In **Grtrude** Story's **trilogy** Is incomprehensible without having read the **first** two

By Cary ***Fagan***

The **Way Lo *Always* Dance,** by **Gertrude** Story, Thistledown Press, 130 pages, X20.00 cloth **(ISBN** 0920066 66 **6)** and $9.95 paper **(ISBN** 0 920066 **65 8).**

It Never **Pays to Laugh** Too Much, **by Gertrude** Story, Thistledown Press, 139 **pages,** $20.00 **cloth (ISBN** 0 **920066** 86 **0)** ad **$9.95** paper (ISBN 0 920066 87 9).

The Need of **Wanting** Always. **by Gertrude** Story, Thistledown Press, 1% pages, $23.00 cloth **(ISBN** 0 **920633** 00 5) and $12.95 paper **(ISBN** 0 **920633** 01 3).

THE **TRILOGY FORM** is usually associated with genre literature such as science **fiction** or **fantasy,** or with autobiographical works. each volume corresponding to the early, middle, **and** late years of a life. **Authors** like Robertson Davies who **can** create an absorbing **narrative line** use the trilogy to extend their stories, **stringing eager** readers along from book to book. **Something** mysteriously **religious** may be in the form too. corresponding to the triptych in visual art. With the publication of ***The Need of Wanting Always*** Saskatchewan **writer** Gertrude, Story **completes** her **"Alvena** Schroeder trilogy" **and proves** herself **unconcerned with most** previous notions of the form. Story **isn't even** writing novels **but** short stories. **and** she uses the trilogy just as it suits her, thank you.

Not that no discernible form is evident in **the** three books. ***The Way to Always Dance*** **(1983) traces Alvena's** life into her 50s. ***It*** Never ***Pays lo Laugh Too Much (1984)*** backtracks to her childhood, **and** the **new** book gives us **Alvena's** final **years and** her death. But I suspect **that Story, an** instinctive rather **than** technically sophisticated writer, "ever **planned a** trilogy; the **first volume stands** on its **own, and** the second seems to have **sprung** from a belated **desire** to relive the most resonant moments ***of*** **Alvena's (and** perhaps Story's) personal **experiences.**

The Way lo Always Dance begins Story's penchant for awkwardly lyrical **— and** impossible to remember **— titles** such as "What Makes Two, Makes **Three" and** "Too Long, Too Long, No **Dance."** The voice is unschooled and emotional, as if **it** rose **directly** from **the** earth **tilled** by those strict Lutherans **who hold to German as the holy tongue.**

The major events of **Alvena's life that** are deployed here will be returned to **again and again in** the later books. She **grows up on a farm. daughter to a good man and a prissy, flirtatious mother (Alvena' catches her** embracing the pastor). Still a teenager, she moves **in** with ha half-brother. David Schroeder, pretending to be hi "hired **girl." Alvena,** not **brought up** to **express** her feelings, has a hard time admitting she loves him, and when she **finally can** David **accidently** blows his **own** head off with a shotgun. Theo follows a brief marriage, **an** affair **with** a man named Joshua, and finally a move Lo the big city **— Saskatoon.**

While the stories **drag sometimes, they can suddenly flarebrightly. In** " T h e Whitest of **Feathers" some** local boys **give** David Schroeder a **feather,** mocking **his cowardice** for **not going off to fight** in the war. Smiling, David **sticks** the **feather** into hi **"big** half-b-breed **hat."** Story skims over conventional events like weddings, her attention **drawn** to **more** personal emotional happenings. **When** some **internal and** subtle change takes place, Story f- the **moment, such as this little power struggle between**

Alvena's parents won by **her father: "then** I **saw** Mama's **eyes** go **funny.** For the **first** time ever I saw them lose their **everything."**

Alvena's father **dies** of **cancer;** it **seems her men are always leaving or dying on her. But Alvena is a survivor, not a victim,** and Story has created a **modestly** memorable **character.**

Story was right to **return** to **Alvena's childhood** in ***It*** Never Pays to ***Laugh Too Much,*** and **although** there **are** fewer **startling moments** here the **stories** are richer, **mostly** because of **Alvena's** sensitivity to the **strains** of a family so close **it** borders on the **incestuous. Keeping track** of who's who **isn't always** easy, and **at** one **point Alvena** says, "So **I** had two Uncle **Emils and** I even had **two Cousin Emils, too. If Germans like a name.** boy. almost **everybody gets named it."**

A funeral. **an impoverished girl's** birthday **party, an uncle** who **joins** the army, **an overgrown** schoolboy so **horny** he **"whumps" other** boys **against** the tool shed. But this is always Alvena's **book,** the story of a young girl who wants to live, to **dance.** She **finds** herself **drawn** to **those** who break the **community** rules **and attracted** to **masculine** symbols such as the **great Clydesdales** that walk **in** and **out of the picture. Alvena** is **never** able to **pull** back for a **wider view,** but her **very narrowness** is what gives this book its **quiet** power.

The Need of Wanting Always is a summation of sorts, **sketching** in the final **events** of **Alvena's** lie. Joshua **returns, bringing along** a **pregnant** girlfriend. The girl gives **birth and** abandons the newborn to **Alvena,** only to **return five** years later **with** a lawyer. **(No surprise** here: the **good things in Alvena's** life always get taken **away.) Alvena retires** Lo Victoria, **takes in** as a boarder a distant relative **named** Murray. and **learns** to **love** the **sea.**

None of these events is **as interesting** as **Alvena's earlier** experiences, but had **they been fleshed out perhaps the stories would** have held **together. Instead they read more like fragments, incomprehensible without having read** the **first two books** but largely **redundant anyway.** Pages and pages are **filled with Alvena's** tiresomely **repetitive memories** of David, Joshua, and **her** other lost loves. **Halfway** through this book I **thought that if Alvena told how David shot himself once again I would scream. And she did tell it — again and again. Almost as wearing** is the **kind** of **fuzzily abstract**

writing that marred the fii two books only slightly:

> When you were young, you were a wanter. You had toe many things; too many wants; too many words inside the head or hovering Iii hot honey bees around it; too many words telling you wants about things.

Conversations in The Need *of Wanting Always* occur *mostly* between Alvena and ghosts, usually the late David Schroeder. In the earlier books these visions were more ambiguous, but here there is no doubt that they are actual souls from the other world. Their words, however, are too mundane for any suspension of disbelief and when Murray's dead father appears to instruct hi to go back to school — well, that seems a bit much.

Alvena's earlier determination returns in the final story; the ghost of David Schroeder must convince her to leave her shrivelled body and become spirit. But in *The* Need *of Wanting Always* she has largely lost her way. Leaving behind that Saskatchewan soil, Alvena experiences a loss that is just as great, alas, for Gertrude Story. □

REVIEW

Man about the House

By *David Collenette*

Mr. Speaker: The Man in the Middle. by James Jerome, McClelland & Stewart, 175 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 4403 8).

A QUICK LOOK at the cover and one realizes that this book is not about the speakership of the House of commons in a general sense but about James Jerome and his time as Speaker. Since very little has been written about Canadian Speakers, one can applaud Mr. Jerome's desire to sham his memoirs. Yet the reader is entitled to be disappointed in that Mr. *Speaker* is really *just that — the memories* of one man recorded without an intellectually useful conceptual framework.

Politicians invariably write books to ensure that evaluations of their careers are not left exclusively to historians. They feel a need to "set the record straight," to put the best gloss on their achievements and rationalize their failures. Some politicians genuinely try to educate the reader, while others simply wish to sham their experiences. Mr. Justice Jerome tries to achieve each of these goals, but does not quite pull it off. Unlike Jean Chrétien, who has become a genuine folk-hero about whom Canadians wish to know everything, Jim Jerome's personality and recollections are not as noteworthy, and perhaps should have bean kept to a minimum.

Jerome does better in helping Canadians understand the great, yet often misunderstood institution of Parliameat. At times he explains the workings of Parliament in the sort of detail that would do credit to a high-school Canadian civics text. He has a fondness for the young student, a fact underscored by his establishing the parliamentary intern program, a worthy accomplishment.

Them is more than a little apology in Mr. *Speaker* for decisions taken by the Chair. Frequently, Jerome reveals a humility bordering on insecurity about his actions. This is touching but unnecessary because he was a very good Speaker — sensitive, reasonable, rational, and comprehending the organic nature of British parliamentary tradition.

Most 'observers who write about Parliament — and who may have themselves served there — do no-t understand the institution or its place in the evolution of democracy. Jerome does, and that is why this book is a little disappointing. With his talent, insight, and articulateness, Jerome could have written a truly great book. He presided over a tumultuous time in the House, which saw the rule of law flaunted by arbitrary actions of Canada's security force, the introduction to debate of television, the threat of separation by Quebec, and an assault on parliamentary privilege. He could have shown us what Parliament means to a free society, what a member can accomplish, and how a government can be held accountable.

He could have helped us resolve the dilemma of ensuring that a duly elected government, after exhaustive debate, can expect that the will of the majority should prevail in getting its program through Parliament, while at the same time ensuring that same government does not trample on the rights of the minority in being heard. Jerome does deal with this issue but comes down on both sides at once — although he does believe that the Opposition should, by obstruction of proceedings and not by division of the members. be able to force the government to go to the people.

He could have dealt more theoretically with the challenge to parliamentary privilege posed by the action of Canada's security forces and the revelation of information that could come under the Official Secrets Act. As well, he could have helped the reader understand that the real reasons behind demands for parliamentary reform spring more fmm the inability of Canadians to understand the true role of the House of Commons as an educational, expressive, deliberative chamber that scrutinizes the programs of the government and reflects the public mood rather than a widely held yet incorrect view that Parliament is government itself.

Instead, Mr. *Speaker* is one-dimensional and descriptive, rather than a coherent examination of the speakership in Canada. In writing the book Jerome appeals to the few of us who were associated with his time in the House, interested in scraps of inside detail, and perhaps to the curious student who wishes to understand some of-- the basics. If he had broadened his approach, he could have given us a landmark in the literature of legislative behaviour. I hope he will give us that book yet. □

REVIEW

Nothing ventured

By *Debra Martens*

85: Best Canadian Stories, edited by David Helwig arid Sandra Martin, Oberon Press, 176 pages; 823.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 589 9) and $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 590 2).

Coming Attractions 3, edited by David Hdwig and Sandra Martin, Oberon Press, 130 pages, 833.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 591 0) and $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 592 9).

BEST CANADIAN STORIES is a safe collection; all of the stories are good, though none of them are surprising. Our literature seems to have levelled off in quality — gone are the low dips of failure. But gone too are the peaks of excitement. Although enjoyable to read. none of these stories left me squinting in the light of revelation, or breathless with wonder, or listening to a rewarding echo.

Many inclusions are predictable. "Under the Hill," a story fmm Marian Engel's *The Tattooed Woman. is accompanied by a* preface in her honour. Norma" Levine, W.P. Kinsella, and Joyce Marshall make repeat appearances in the series. What is unexpected is that Jane Rule's "Dulce," a long portrait of the art patron as a young woman, marks the first appearance of her work in the annual anthology. Together the stories cover the range of rural, small town, and city settings; the

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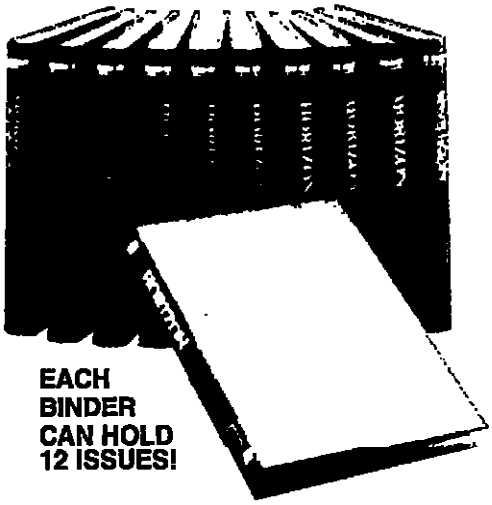

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middle class dominates the pages (with the exception of "The Accident," by Sheldon Currie).

The word "best" has lost its credibility. Past editors Clark Blaise, John Metcalf, and Leon Rooke ambitiously included stories that expanded experience, stories "not read before"; Martin and Helwig modestly publish (as they put it in the 1984 edition) "stories that were written to be read." Tbis approach creates a sturdy collection (with no attic, no basement, no stomach-lurching loose floorboards) apparently aimed at a different audience from the readers who were challenged by past editors.

Of the new writers introduced in *85:* Best and Coming *Attractions,* only Sheila Delany's work in the latter is disappointing. The tendency to tell rather than show in "At the Pool" results in condescending comments such as "this oasis of pleasure and innocence set in the horrendous lower east side." Her narrator has a remarkable inability to rise above cliché: as she is about to have intercourse with the lifeguard, she thinks "Am I another faceless one in the series of faceless women...." Similarly, "Ferragosto" is a story of an encounter between an academic couple and a misogynist, with state remarks such as "And she talks as well."

contrast, Judith Pond's' three stories skilfully weigh the balance in relationships. be they as temporary as those of a group at a barbecue ("Isn't It Odd") or as lasting as tbe family in "Tolerance" the analysis of the relation- uneven power struggle in which I was

descriptions of the smells farm life. "Scenes fmm a Pension" by Frances Itani, whose story "Grand- - mother" appeared in 84: *Best,* has the cold humour of a Mavis Gallant story. Itani's "Clayton" and "Songs for ' Children" are moving explorations of attitudes to death and the past.

Unlike Judith Pond's serious approach to stereotypes and Carol Windley's overly familiar theme of the trapped housewife in "Moths," Marion Johnson's "Coming of Age in Canada" in 85: *Best* is a three-part examination and development of the role of women today. Her work is Innovative in form and humorous in tone. Each section includes directive subtitles, disclaimers by the author, and questions and comments after each story. Part A, "Evelyn's Tantrum,' is "a short, childish story about a six-year-old girl named Evelyn" and about her mother. who has "quite a few" problems. In Part B, Elizabeth gives up her M.A. studies for a baby. She accompanies her husband to the Arctic and pursues her anthropological curiosity and finds that "in the end, this positive attitude proved to be the right response." In the last segment, Alice might be Elizabeth with her degree, as she is a sociologist who has left her unhappy marriage. Johnson's succinct style is refreshing, and the content of her work is thought-provoking.

Of the stories in 85: *Best,* the two most intriguing new works are about separation. Robert G. Sherrin's "Man in the Black Magic Box" is an interesting collage of scenes and images. It is also striking that the narrator, in talking about the male protagonist, seems to address the reader: "You are standing in Place du Canada"; "You take a deep breath." The disconnection that one feels after a separation is represented through an impersonal form of "armtic.". Tbe father is both "you" and the man in the photos in the candy box: his daughter is introduced as a photograph in a newspaper; tbe mother is the tall woman hunched over tbe toilet with morning sickness. Tbe absence of communication among them is reflected by their obsession with the boxes of photos and letters. an obsession with images.

I" Douglas Glover's "Dog Attempts to Dmw" Man-i" Saskatoon," the narrator's inability to accept his wife, Lucy, as she is and his guilt about leaving her arc brought out when he imagines himself drowning while Lucy tries to warn him — as had the dog that is falsely accused of trying to drown its. owner. Glover also departs from conventional story narrative, taking many runs at the story with fragment after fragment. I find Glovcr's style, however, too heavily self-conscious, with the repetition of "this is not the story I wanted to tell" and with other interruptions such as "an apology for my style." Innovators should never apologize. □

REVIEW

Money talks

By *Myron* Love

The Entrepreneurs: The Story of Gendis Inc., by Albert D. Cohen, McClelland & Stewart, 212 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 21860).

The Money Rustlers: Self-Made Millionaires of the New West, by Paul Grescoe and David Cruise, Penguin, 288 pages, 519.95 cloth (ISBN 0 670 80207 7).

Money Makers: The Secrets of Canada's Most Successful Entrepreneurs, by Kenneth Barnes and Everett Banning, McClelland & Stewart, 240 pages, 524.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 1047 8).

YEARS AGO AT university I knew a fellow named Ira. It was spring. The year was almost over and the summer job prospects were as dismal as ever. Ira, however, wasn't worried. He already had three job offers.

Now, Ira was not a" entrepreneur, but he illustrated some of the breed's characteristics: confidence, a degree in hustle, and a willingness to work, no matter what the job, to achieve his goals.

contrary to rumour, entrepreneurship is thriving in Canada. Yes, there are people in this supposedly cautious country who arc willing to take risks with their life savings and invest in themselves. These three books present us with almost 60 examples of Canadians who started with nothing more than an idea, a dream, and a small loan.

We're not talking about overnight millionaires or get-rich-quick schemes. As Kenneth Barnes and Everett Banning point out in *Money Makers*, *a* lust for money or compulsion for power arc not the marks of a successful businessman. According to newspaper reports, most U.S. millionaires got there by many years' hard work supplying the public with everyday items, and most of these manufacturers remain determinedly middle-class.

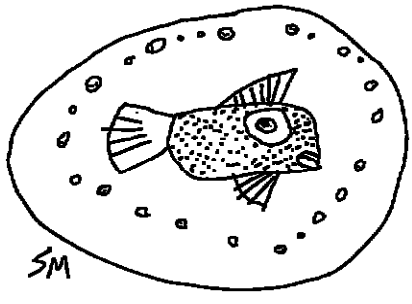
As it happened, I've interviewed John Buhler, one of the subjects of *The Money Rustlers*, *by* Paul Grescoe and David Cruise. Buhler's "office," a mom little larger than a closet, was furnished with a bridge table, a few files, three or four chairs, a" old cabinet, and a bottled ship. A short man in rumpled clothes. he may not look the part, but he is highly successful.

Albert Cohen of General Distributors (Gendis in the title) was constantly on the lookout for *the* idea, the one high-quality product that would propel the family business to success. He found it first in the Paper-Mate pen in the 1950s and later in Sony. He was one of the first North American businessmen to see the potential for Japanese technology on the North American market.

The Entrepreneurs is the story of the Cohen family. who *started* in Winnipeg as travelling salesmen 55 years ago and today own SAAN Stores, Metropolitan Stores, and Greenberg Stores and are the distributors for all of Sony's consumer products in Canada.

The third of six brothers, Albert Cohen would seem to be the driving force in the growth of the business. As he explains, having a good product is one thii; selling tbe public on it is something else. The selling concept Cohen learned from Paper-Mate and passes on to his readers is that of the "triangle of success." Quality is one point of the triangle. To make it work though you also ncbd saturation advertising and widespread distribution.

Cohen offers-many insights into the combination of honour and ruthlessness in the business world and examines the differences in business practices between



North America and Japan. But he is a better businessman than he is a writer. His "I answered, then he answered, then I answered" form of dialogue is awkward, and he tends to be repetitive: "We arc six brothers in four cities" appears several times. What is interesting is to see the transition in Cohen's book from 'the story of a family to the story of a family business.

The best of these books is Grescoe and Cruise's. They have written profiles of 15 Western Canadian self-made millionaires. we meet, for example, John Doole, owner of Winnipeg's largest independent building materials supplier and residential mechanical services company. Doole is also a musician, artist, and, most recently, has bought and re-opened *Mary* Scorer Books, Winnipeg's largest independent book store. Then there is Alberta oilman Nick Taylor, aficionado of classic English literature and lost causes such as Alberta's Liberal Party (which he leads). We arc told about the time colourful Vancouver restauranteur Umberto Menghi fired all the staff at one of hi expensive West Coast eateries an hour before opening time and turned the potential disaster into a grand party. B.C. electronics and computer whiz John S. MacDonald courted financial disaster for his worldwide multi-million-dollar business until he realized he was a better scientist than businessman and passed the reins of day-to-day management to someone else.

It is interesting to note that no women nor anybody from Saskatchewan arc represented among the "rustlers." The authors' criteria were that their subjects be self-made millionaires who own their own businesses. Although they point out that there are many women now in business in western Canada. none yet qualify as self-made millionaires. As for Saskatchewan, it Is a province traditionally more inclined to cooperation than individualism.

Although not all of the rustlers are as multi-faceted as Taylor and Doole, and the section on the Ghermezian family (they of the monstrous West Edmonton Mall) suffers somewhat from lack of hard -facts available about the family members, this book is worth the price of admission.

Money *Makers* suffers *by comparison* (perhaps because outlaws are more exciting). Barnes and Banning have attempted to write more of a how-to book while warning readers that there is no simple formula to success.

The book Is most useful for prospective entrepreneurs in listing maxims such as "there arc no rules," "challenge the status quo," "embrace risk and defy the odds," and "fear not failure." The W-page conclusion discusses in detail how to go about becoming a successful entrepreneur; which government agencies are available to help; how to raise money, hire labour, and figure out pro-, vincial tax laws. But there are too many examples of successful entrepreneurs,

most of them uninteresting. The authors also overuse — gratingly — the phrase "money maker." The message that comes through in this book is that anyone with a good idea and a little spunk can succeed in business in Canada — except government.

By the way, the last I heard of Ira, he was happily ensconced as principal of a school in Northern Manitoba. □

REVIEW

For God's sake

By *I.M. Owen*

The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian **English** Canada, by **Ramsay** Cook, **University** of **Toronto Press,** 301 pages, $32.00 **cloth** (ISBN 0 8020 5670 9) **and** $15.95 paper (ISBN 0 8020 6609 7).

THE GREEK ROOT of our word "ethics" and the Latin root of our word *"morals"* both meant "the things that are customary." The implication is that to the ancient Greeks and Romans the rules of good behaviour, which made it possible for people to live together in an ordered society, were man-made and hence subject to change by consensus. But when Christianity arrived in Europe it brought with it the Jewish Creator God, who had made the rules, demanded obedience to them, and provided a rule-book. Virtue, then, was defined from eternity, and a main function of religion was to enforce it by threats of eternal punishment.

Protestantism lo its various forms emphasized the moralistic side of religion even more heavily than the medieval Church bad (none more heavily than Presbyterianism, though its basic Calvinistic doctrine asserted that virtue wouldn't get you anywhere). By tbe 19th century, among Protestants, the sacraments were a minor part of corporate worship; the main purpose of churchgoing was to get a weekly reminder from a preacher of how you ought to behave.

Then two alarming thiigs happened. The "higher critics" appeared, examining the Bible as an ordinary piece of literature composed by fallible human beings; and Darwin in *The* Origin *of Species* (1859) and still more shockingly in *The Descent of Man* (1871) offered a reasoned scientific alternative to the biblical account of creation. To many thinking people brought up in the unquestioning acceptance of scriptural truth, it seemed that the foundations of morality were shattered and social chaos loomed ahead.

In *The Regenerators* Ramsay Cook assembles and examines the effects of this on many such people in one corner of the Protestant world. English Canada, and traces how they issued la such varied responses as the single-tax movement, spiritualism, and the social gospel of J.S. Woodsworth. The title reflects the fact that the wórd "regeneration" and its cognates, until then used *mainly* in a religious sense ("being born again") or in physiology (the regeneration of tissue) came increasingly to be used in the sense of social salvation.

The quotations in the *OED* bear this out; and one dated 1861 is in fact fmm Goldwin Smith, one of Cook's principal characters. Smith, whose own religious convictions seem to have been minimal, was convinced that society had always broken down in ages of religious skepticism, and that this time capitalism itself was threatened: "secularism among mechanics . . . is likely soon to breed mutinous questionings about the present social order among those who get the poorer share, and who can no longer be appeased by promises of compensation in another world" — a blunt expression of the attitude satirized in the Wobbly song.

Work and pray, live on hay,
You'll get pie, in the sky,
When you die —
It's a lie!

Then there *was* J.W. Bengough, the editor of *Grip.* whose crude hut historically interesting cartoons illustrate this book effectively. Bengough totally rejected Darwinism, and took refuge from it in sabbatarianism, prohibition. and that curious nostrum of the age, tlie Single Tax. I'll never understand why the doctrine of Henry George had such appeal, based as it was on the idea that "the private ownership of land has been the great cause of serfdom" — in the very age when possession of land had been definitively replaced by the possession of factories as the principal source of wealth and power.

One who totally accepted evolution, though not in its Darwinian form, was R.M. Bucke, an "alienist" — as psychiatrists were called before psychiatry was invented. The doctrine he

Consciousness:

"that the Cosmos is not dead matter but a living Presence. that the soul of man is immortal, that . . . all things work together for the good of each and all, that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love and that the happiness of everyone is in the long run absolutely certain." He worshipped Walt Whitman, whose collected works he described as "the bible of the future for the next thousand years." He also believed that Bacon wrote Shakespeare.

What Bucke was trying to do — like William James and others at the time — was to apply scientific method to religious experience, to reconcile science and religion. That was what was happening also in the spread of spiritualism. IL'S easy to dismiss this as a nutty fad exploited by charlatans — which it is; but it is also a serious attempt to use experimental methods to investigate the question of immortality. That makes its appeal in the late 19th century perfectly understandable, and helps to account for its acceptance by intelligent people like Conan Doyle.

In this contact, Mackenzie King can be allowed to revert to what he in fact was — a somewhat commonplace man of his time, rather than the closet weirdo that recent writers have made him out to be. Cook's *treatment* of him is a welcome return to the real King. The earnestly platitudinous quotations from his diary show him as a typical end-product of the turmoil of the generation that preceded him, aspiring to be "a political leader who will be a true servant of God, helping to make the Kingdom of Heaven prevail on earth." We who inherit the Mackenzie Kingdom are quite justified in smiling at that; but it's the way the dominant minds thought when King was a student.

Cook could have made this book more entertaining and much more superficial if he bad yielded to the temptation to make merry at the expense of these earnest characters. To his credit, though his lip inevitably twitches from time to time, he has done his best to treat them with respect and present their thinking to their own terms. It can't have been easy. □

REVIEW

Born again

By Phil Hail

The **Glass Air:** Selected Poems, by P.K. Page. **Oxford,** 191 **pages, $11.95 paper** (ISBN 0 19 540506 4).

THE IMPORTANCE of this book, its luminous exactness, knocks all the reviewer-cleverness *out* of me. And gladly so. This is a most whole. generous, and optimistic book. We are given all the poems Page wants to *bring* forward from previous books to addition to, by my count, 32 new poems, nine drawings also by Page (who signs her visual art P.K. Irwin), and two disarming, sprightly essays about craft and tbe progress of the poet.

The essays are disarming because Page is talking about her development to a point at which her writing stopped. But she is not talking about writer's block. Hers is a success story — the book is a success story. For what Page chronicles, in the two essays and in any of the poems, is her overthrow of "the tyranny of subjectivity." The writer becomes visual artist, magician; opaque becomes translucent. After years out of Canada, stunned by Brazil's luscious light and then by Mexico's primitive darkness, Page speaks of ha return to Canada as the "start of a new day."

The famous, much anthologized early poems are all here, weighty and formal in the book's first section of poems from 1944 to 1954. They share the technique of focusing on and really *doing a* subject for everything it is worth symbolically. They reflect both Yeats's strong influence on poets during the 1940s and the social events and concerns of their day (the Spanish Civil War, "Election Day," office politics, and poetics). Here is a sample from "Virgin":

> By *the sun, by the sudden flurry*
> *of birds in a flock,*
> *or by love's ghost*
> *and the imagined guest —*

Water and ocean imagery dominate, seconded by flowers, snow, birds, close and common images that even in these rigid early poems never quite settle, never quite stop vibrating. Wit and attention make the cages dance. And it is this dance that Page has been quietly following for 40 years.

The result is a poetry more personal, quicker, lighter (in both senses). None of the wit or attention has been lost, but now Page speaks of "spontaneous involvement." Ha last book, *Evening Dance of the Grey Flies,* by its title alone, told of the new emphasis that is also here in her paintings and drawings of moon-crazy plant forms: "garden abstracted, geometry awash —" ("After Rain").

This is as if a new poet/new artist were born. Except that there is a direct connection between the preoccupations of the early poems and the revelations of tbe later ones. A vague, mannered remorse has been ousted by inner amazement. The early caustic quotables about people and things well observed have become questions about the intricate methods of self and self-expression: "Shall I break the bones of my head/in a nutcracker?" ("Concentration").

Page has moved from pride to awe. And all this has been so quietly accomplished that we have run the risk of missing it. Page won a Governor General's Award (for *The Metal and the Flower)* as far back as 1954, sad it is to the earlier poet and poems (good poems) anthologists have tended to turn.tenderhorneywith Fists was gaul'd;/And he was gifted most who loudest bawled" — Dryden.)

In her last essay. at the very end of *The Glass* Air, Page asks herself and her reader whether the most recent poems printed here are "any advance over the earlier work," and whether perhaps the writing has started again. She leaves me with affirmations and hopes. *The Glass Air* has been so well and fully realized that Page's progress and successes should have rightful, hiihr profiles in the future.

I can't resist ending with a quote from my favourite of the new poems ("The New Bicycle"):

> *How we all adapt ourselves*
> *to the new bicycle*
> *aglow in the furnace room,*
> *turquoise where turquoise*
> *has never before been seen,*
> *its chrome gleaming*
> *on gears and pedals,*
> *its spokes glistening.*
> *Lightly resting on the incised*
> *rubber of its airy tires*
> *it has changed us all.* □

REVIEW

Coming of age in Cavendish

By Mary Ainslie Smith

The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery, Volume 1: 1889-1910, edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, Oxford, illustrated, 424 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 19 540503 X).

AS THE POPULARITY of the recent CBC TV dramatization of Anne *of Green Gables* has *shown,* L.M. Montgomery has meant, and continues to mean, a great deal to many people. Certainly the world is full of much more intellectually challenging writing. but Montgomery's stories continue to be read for the order. good humour, and security they evoke. They are comforting books, because although they may deal with such realities as separation. loneliness, and death, they all have happy endings.

Montgomery's books were loved from the beginning. She gained considerable fame during ha lifetime — Anne *of Green Gables,* her first novel, published in 1908, was an American best-seller. She published 19 more novels before her death at the age of 67 in 1942. and since that time interest in her life and in her books seems scarcely to have abated.

Montgomery has proven to be the ideal subject for research. She wrote vast

numbers of letters many of which have bee" preserved. She kept scrapbooks, made annotated lists of the books she bad read, recorded the stories and poems she bad written and the details of her success in getting them published. Most important, she chronicled more than 50 years of her life in ha journals.

These journals, 10 large ledgers cootaining almost two million hand-written words, were acquired in 1981. along with Montgomery's other papers, by the University of Guelph. Although public access has been restricted until 1992, Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston have prepared and published a selection of the journals, covering Montgomery's life in Prince Edward Island until approximately a year before her marriage, when she moved with her husband to Ontario.

This first volume makes fascinating reading, although not necessarily for the information it contains. Readers have already had the opportunity to learn many details of Montgomery% private life from previously published work. most notably Mollie Gillen's biography, The Wheel *Of Things* (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1975) and *My Dear* Mr. *M.* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), a collection, edited by Francis W.P. Bolger and Elizabeth R. Epperly, of letters written by Montgomery over a 3%year period to her favourite correspondent, G.B. MacMillan of Alloa, Scotland.

But certainly the journals tell us a great deal about tbe woman herself. When Montgomery began them, she was a school girl of 14, bright, inquisitive, and appealing. Her mother died when Montgomery was a baby, and her father soon after moved west, leaving his daughter in Cavendish, P.E.I.. to be raised by her maternal grandparents. Later in her journals, Montgomery writes that they were strict and unreasonable in their expectations of her as a child, but her early entries do not reveal this. In fact, the main impression they give is of a girl who enjoyed life to the full, loved to be with her friends, and revelled in all the social functions that rural P.B.I. had to offer.

At 16, Montgomery went for an unhappy year to stay with her father and his second wife in Prince Albert. Homesickness brought her back to P.E.I., where she studied for her teacher's certificate. She spent several years in small communities teaching school, interrupted by one year at Dalhousie, where she took special courses in literature. She had several unhappy encounters with love during this time. The most unsettling was a passionate attraction to a young farmer, the SO" lo one of the households where she boarded as a teacher. He returned the affection. but Montgomery, in spite of her feelings for him, was convinced that they were "ot sufficiently compatable intellectually for a happy marriage, and so she did not allow the relationship to develop. The passages describing her internal conflict between passion and reason are the most moving lo this volume.

In 1898 her grandfather died and Montgomery returned to Cavendish to stay with her grandmother. With the exception of an interlude of several months when she worked as a proofreader for the Halifax *Echo,* she stayed in Cavendish until 1911, when her grandmother died at 87. Duty, training, and circumstance compelled her to stay while ha youth passed, her friends married and moved away, and her grandmother became increasingly petulant and diffiiult to live with. Her journals for these years reveal a desperately lonely woman whose frustrations. caused periods of deep and morbid depression.

But while these years were painful and tedious, they were not uneventful. Montgomery kept at her work and gained more and more recognition. It was in Cavendish that she wrote *Anne of Green Gables* and learned of its success. Also during this period, she became engaged to the Rev. Ewan Macdonald, the man she eventually married after her grandmother's death. And she did love Cavendish, delighting in its woods, fields, orchards. and seashore. Still, she apparently felt, at least in the darker moments when she needed to confide in ha journals, that life had cheated her of happiness.

The question remains how much of herself Montgomery actually revealed in thue journals. I" 1919 she recopied her early journals into the ledgers that the University of Guelph eventually acquired, and destroyed the originals. She was by this time a famous woman and certainly aware that all her writings might be of future interest. But whatever the degree of accuracy and objectivity, some of the entries seem to delve so deeply into the soul of their author that they present a portrait of a woman much more complex and interesting than any of the characters she created.

The journals also hold interest as documents of social history. They clearly reveal the restrictions and bonds placed on women of that time. In one passage, Montgomery presents, quite cold-bloodedly, her reasons for deciding to marry Ewan Macdonald. She admits that although she is very fond of him, she has ceased to hope for marriage to a man she can love intensely. She balances ha longing for a home of her own, corn-

panionship, and children with the possibility of losing her freedom in a union from which she could not escape, even if it proved uncongenial. When we consider that Montgomery saw as the only likely alternative to marriage a lonely existence in some boarding-house in Charlottetown, churning out pot-boilers for a living, we can understand her motivation.

Unlike her fictional creations, Montgomery's life apparently did not have a happy ending. We know that her marriage brought her more crushing responsibilities and pain. Montgomery's own acount of this later part of her life will appear in the subsequent volumes of her journals, which Rubio and Waterston are now preparing for publication. ❑

REVIEW

Prophets and loss

By Judy Margolis

The Pundits, by Lloyd Tataryn, Deneau, 198 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 68879 123 2).

MUCKRAKERS, OPINION-MONGERS, pontificating soothsayers, media megastars — call the political columnists, the instant analysts you down with your morning coffee, by whatever name you like. Investigative journalist Lloyd Tataryn chooses the term "pundit" to serve as the filter on the rather wide-angle lens he uses to peer at some of the more legendary (Walter Lippmann) and, in his opinion, not-so-legendary examples of their number.

Through that lens he looks at how the columnists' profession emerged: "their influence on journalism ... impact on their colleagues, the politicians they cover, and how they exercise the opportunity their columns offer of translating their views into public opinion." And the lens is as broad in its sweep as it is wide: it spans the United States. Britain. and Canada (in that order): the political institutions, social systems, and press traditions of each: and a lot of history — from the 1800s to the present.

From that vantage point, it's not difficult to see that Tataryn is more interested in the big picture., as it shapes the personalities of our political commentators, than he is in the personalities themselves. But with his overarching theories, he runs a risk similar to the high diver about to leap into a pinprick of a pool. It's a long way down, so his aim had better be accurate, his measure true, for at bottom are the very people 'he maintains wield incredible power — "the kind of power that's the envy of all politicians and political figures ... the potential to determine the nature of our political dialogue."

Powerful as he portrays the role of the pundits to be, he's harsh in his assessmeat of their fitness to the task: "It's doubtful whether there exists, in any country, a handful of writers with a truly worthwhile opinion to share with the world each and every day." As for the. longevity of their opinions, he writes: "In reality, of course, punditry enjoys the intellectual life expectancy Of a delicate lace hanky in a three-alarm fire, the sustaining ability of a croissant breakfast as preparation for a day of heavy labour." Is Tataryn being flip?

More likely he's issuing a warning. If, as he contends, "today's citizen has little choice but to form his views on what he reads, hears and sees from the media," the political columnist, through the quality of his syndicated opinions, does indeed set the tone of political dialogue — "whether it's banal or perceptive, accepting or questioning, focused or philosophical, ideological or conflict free. Yet many journalists argue that they don't make news; they simply report events as they unfold."

Politicians, says Tataryn, "have always been acutely aware 'of the formidable ability of the medium to influence the political agenda and complicate the prevailing social and political order. In politics. medii content can be critical: change it and people's perceptions and politics will also change." Therefore, it is important, he says, "to examine what sort of simplified world has floated our way, through the media for us to accept, along with the filtering system that has been used to sort and categorize events."

The U.S., with its division of powers, "its incredible openness, its freedom with official government information, as well as its vigorous reporting tradition," has produced a strong national press whose columnists take an active part in the political process. The only difficulty, says Tataryn, "is that in a system that is so mutually manipulative and interdependent, the lines between the two sides sometimes are distractingly blurred — so much so, that without a program, it's almost impossible to tell the journalist players in the governmental game from the legislators."

In Britain, where Parliament is supreme and secrecy is at the core of power, the role of the press is more an adversarial one. Each paper has its own ideological bent, thus "brand loyalty in newspaper consumption can even be used as a guide to predict the political persuasion of the reader," Tataryn explains. "At its worst, British journalism shamelessly distorts events in favour of preferred ideological Interpretations. At its bet, it allows readers to bounce interpretations of what's happening off a recognizable intellectual framework."

In Canada, home to an adversarial system similar to Britain's, journalists "can't figure out whether to play the role developed for the press in the American republic or the one that British journalists have settled into." Our "schizophrenic media," as he puts it, don't attract as much prestige or derision as their counterparts. In fact, they don't even garner much la the way of recognition. This book is a case in point, Says Tataryn: "No foreign columnist interviewed for this work could name, or remember reading, a Canadian columnist."

Citing the predilection of our pundits to make more of political personalities than ideas, he dismisses their efforts as hopelessly second-rate, drawing into the debate the likes of Richard Gwyn, Dalton Camp, Douglas Fisher, George Bain, Barbara Amid, Peter Worthington, Anthony Westell, and Jeffrey Simpson. (Many of these and other interviews that make up a good part of this book were originally conducted for a series of documentaries for the CBC-Radio program, *Ideas*.)

Allan Fotheringham and *Charles* Lynch (both of whom were also interviewed) come in for more than their fair share of criticism. Tataryn assails them, among others, for being "decidedly flip, nonchalantly discursive, and hardly intellectually rigorous. Negativism for negativism's sake abounds, political gossip is their staple, and personalities are their main course. Policy analysis and political ideas are secondary matters."

It is in rapier-like episodes like these that Tataryn comes closest to losing sight of his main quarry and to resembling the columnists he so disparages. That Canadians have not generally been well-served by their pundits is due to the absence of a strong body of nationally syndicated columnists, primarily because there is little in the way of a national newspaper system to serve as a forum for them. As for Tataryn's contention that we only take our politics as seriously as our pundits do, in that he may be tight. ❑

CRITICAL NOTICES

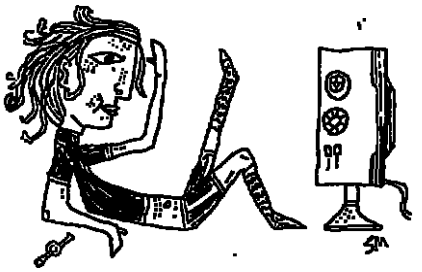
BELLES LETTRES

Northrop **Frye:** A **Vision of** the New **World,** by David Cook. New World **Perspectives** (Oxford). illustrated, 122 **pages,** S19.95 cloth **(ISBN** 0 920393 12 8) and $7.95 paper **(ISBN** 0 970393 10 1).

By **Lorne Ellaschuk**

FRYE USED TO be known as the **taxono-** "list **of literature,** a **Linnaeus** intent **on replacing the messy herbal of evaluative criticism** with a **scientific** system. He was later **seen (mostly** in the United States) as a nearly **home-grown structuralist** and **(in certain** Canadian **literary** and intellectual circles) as a near-Goethe **figure.** it would **now** appear **that** he is the last defender of liberalism in a **technologized** society, Matthew Arnold **returned** in **the New** World, **or** a twin of Lionel **Trilling** strayed north. This is. at least, the impression give" **by** David Cook **in** thii interesting recent addition to the New World Perspectives series.

Cook, a University of Toronto political theorist, looks at **Frye's** social **criticism** and describes it in a somewhat dizzying post-structuralist style. Liberalism is posited as a paradox: complete **freedom** with complete equality. **Beginning** with this impossibility and **the** necessarily weak **compromise** of **some** freedom with some equality, Cook



heads off in search of **further** liberal paradoxes and their Frye compromises. A single example: the liberal **imagination, in** its **choice** between the **unique** creative vision (Blake, for example) and the sensual world (Locke and the scientists). **compromises** in **something Frye** designates as **"educated"** or "recreative." It holds **in** tension the mad poet and the mad scientist's worlds. Who best ***possesses*** the "recreative" imagination7 The **literary** critic, of **course: "the** detached **spectator** . . . the Aristotelian citizen most ready to govern **and to be ruled." *Sweetness and light?***

Cook is **invariably** fair and generous to Frye. No Marxist, he does not "se Frye's liberal compromises to deride him. A good **post-structuralist,** Cook knows the most **interesting aspect** of any theory (social, **political,** literary) is its insoluble **paradoxes.** □

NOTE

Particularly positive critical notices are marked at the end with a star ☆

CITIES

Spadina Avenue, by Rosemary **Donegan,** Douglas **& McIntyre,** illus**trated, 192** pages, $29.95 **cloth (ISBN** 0 88894 472 **1).**

By Roger ***Hall***

nits BOOK ALMOST works. Based **on** a 1984 photo **exhibition, the** book argues, more **through** show than tell, that **the prominent** street has always **been** a" anomaly in **Toronto's** staid grid **—. and** shows **every sign** of **continuing** that role.

Rick **Salutin's** lively **memoir** of the street and its important **role** as a focus of the Jewish **garment** trade., **in** which **his family** played a part, is informative and engaging. Equally effective is **the** idea, in a picture **book,** of incorporating 'a photo-frieze of the contemporary street **running along the bottom** of most pages and giving street numbers. Thii device allows a reader **to** locate **other historical** photos quickly in **their** modem setting, and it forms a" important **archival record** itself.

There is much tine, although **impressionistic,** social history in these well**chosen** photos, and **Donegan** is good at peeling back the **ethnic** layers of the street as it has been occupied by one **immigrant group** after another. The role of **Spadina** as one of the muscular **centres** of the Canadian **working** class is felt particularly strongly throughout.

The **book;** like the street itself, changes **character** north of **College.** The frieze peters out along the **stretch north** to **Bloor** (called Broadway) and little attempt is made to **analyse** the kii impact of **the** University of **Toronto on** that region's formerly **genteel** character. **Unfortunately,** the **book concludes** with a pedestrian account of the ***Spadina*** expressway **controversy** and the curious printing of a stray photo **from Spadina *Road* (as** the artery is know" north' of **Bloor).** Purists will quibble. A little **more** attention in these northerly latitudes would have made a good book **into** a" **excellent** one. □

FICTION

After **Six** Days, by Keith Harrison, **Fiddlehead Books/Goose** Lane **Editions,** 127 **pages, $7.95** paper **(ISBN** 0 86492 070 9).

By Douglas **Malcolm**

THIS NOVEL takes place during **six** winter days in the intertwined lives of two Montreal coupler. **Daniel** and **Sarah** and **Warren and Annie,** the four of whom **alternately** narrate its 12 brief chapters in a series of brisk interior monologues. Harrison's artful rendering of his char**acters' thoughts as they** go about their everyday lives is at **once entertaining** and entirely **convincing.**

The six days, of **course, were not** chosen arbitrarily. Sarah suspects Dan of infidelity, **only** she blames Annie rather than the real culprit, Dan's secretary. Needless to say, her doubts **and Dan's** deceptions cause **anxieties** that have repercussions in **Annie** and Warren's **lives.** The lurking tensions eventually erupt at a **yuppie dinner party** (Warren prepares shrimp-stuffed shrimp) that **turns sour.**

***After Six Days* is flawed by its extreme** shortness. **Almost** half its pages are gobbled up with chapter headings and **directives** informing us of the day **and** whose thoughts are to follow. With **the** possible exception of Sarah, who is **more strident** than the others, the characters do not **emerge** 'as distinct voices. The reader **skims** pleasantly **along** on the surface of **their** minds but is not given enough background to understand them **fully.** One is **left** not **really caring** if **these two marriages survive** or become divorce **statistics.** □

Canadian Short **Stories,** Fourth **Series,** edited by Robert Weaver, Oxford, 275 **pages,** $10.95 **paper (ISBN** 0 19 540502 1).

By ***Allan Weiss***

ROBERT WEAVER'S ROLE as Canada's leading popularizer of the short **story** has bee" acknowledged by critics and authors alike. Since 1932 he **has** showcased the work of established **and emerging** short-story writers, **providing** them with a much wider audience through his **anthologies** (and the **now**defunct **weekly** CBC-Radio **program *Anthology)* than** they "light otherwise **have** enjoyed.

Weaver's fourth **volume in** this series **maintains** the **standards** set by the **earlier**

collections. The stories are of consistently high quality, from Margaret Atwood's exploration of female role-playing in "The Salt Garden" to Helen Weinzweig's fugue-like depiction of a directionless affair, "What's Happened to Ravel's Bolero?"

The anthology is dominated by such familiar names as Alice Munro, Norman Levine, Mavis Gallant, and Joyce Marshall, but also Includes such younger writers as Guy Vanderhaeghe and Nell Bissoondath. One might find fault with its range.: no French-Canadian writers are included (even in translation) nor, apart from Leon Rooke's "A Bolt *of* White Cloth," are there examples of the post-modernist or magic-realist writing that Weaver mentions in his introduction. Nevertheless. as a reflection of current work in the mainstream of English-Canadian short-story writing, this anthology is an excellent addition to Weaver's already vast contribution to the genre. □

Eye of the Father, by David Williams. House of Anansi, 186 pages, $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 88784 144 9).

By Sherie Posesorski

IN TODAY'S population-conscious society, the only place we like our families large is in fiction and on TV. There. we encounter the unruly passions of g&rations of autocratic fathers, stoic mothers and *angst*-ridden children. However titillating these households are to peek into. a long look usually confirms the virtues of family planning.

This novel. the third in the Lacjardin trilogy, begins lo 1900 in Norway with the departure of Magnus Vagnal for North America. Like many young men of the time, Magnus decides to emigrate not so much to seek adventure but to escape the consequences of his misadventures — his robbing his father and impregnating of a village girl. What minimal virtue Magnus possesses is lost in America as he takes to the ways of the New World. He marries a Norwegian girl only to obtain her fathds farm, which he then drunkenly gambles away.

AU the plot standards *of* the epic-length family saga are here. However, since Williams's book is relatively short, those standards inadvertently get played at a Keystone-cop pace. The novel Is somewhat redeemed by the distinctive voice of Magnus's first-person narration, but when the narration switches to Magnus's wife Hilda, it begins to sputter to a halt: she lists Magnus's misdeeds with the flatness of a police call-sheet.

This awkwardly constructed novel is top-heavy with action in the first generation, and talk-heavy in the following generations — leaving the reader wishing for a little more original sin in the present generation and a little less in the rust. □

The Last Echo, by Byrna Barclay, NeWest Press, 157 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 920316 94 8) and $7.95 paper (ISBN 0 920316 92 1).

By Janet Windeler

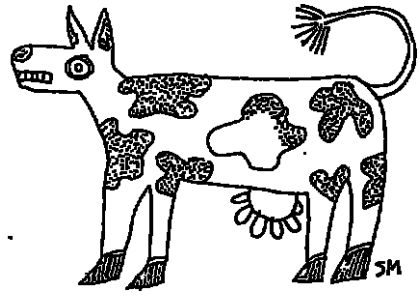
THE SECOND NOVEL *in* the projected Livelong quartet takes us on a fantastic voyage into the lives of the Inhabitants of a small Swedish village in the late 19th century. Per Lundahl carves music boxes out of magic hazelwood; his wife Hanna devotes her energies to snaring husbands for their *four* daughters and boiling up soap of a fearfully granular consistency. When Arvid Bjornsson, a northlander "versed in literature" and "smooth with words," suddenly leaves the village, breaking a promise to the idealistic young Johanna Lundahl without an explanation. she withdraws, disillusioned, to a bell-tower along the seacoast to free herself from petty village talk. The events of the story lead up to and account for the eventual emigration of the Lundahls and several other village families to Canada.

The plot-line is workable, yet Barclay runs into trouble with her extravagant and sometimes bewildering use of metaphors. Images are either too quickly unlocked with the slightest twist of the metaphoric key, or Uke the blue spirit that twirls and dances above tbe Lundahls' bed and the trolls that seem to pop out from behind every tree, they are informed with a curious obscurity, and are stubbornly resistant to interpretation.

Like Julia Mills in *David Copperfield*, Barclay has a wonderful flow-of words and likes to pour them out:

> Remember the double row of beech and elm and oak arching high above, the hollows on each side of the cartway where trolls emerge fmm water graves and dance in a circle until the false light of *dawn* reminds *them* of sleep.

But lyricism alone, amid such a grand collection of Imagistic oddities, cannot. urge to life the pages of this decidedly off-beat tale. □



The New Press Anthology 2: Bert Stories, edited by Leon Rooke and John Metcalf, General, 260 pages, $5.95 paper (ISBN 0 7736 71048).

By Nancl White

METCALF AND ROOKE edited the New *Press Anthology 1: Best Canadian Short Fiction.* This collection of 22 "pieces" by 16 authors is hailed In the title simply as "stories." However, all the semantic disguises in the nation can't escape the fact that these are short stories and must stand or fall according to some critical standards of style. structure, content, imagination, and control of subject and form.

Presumably rejecting E.M. Forster's formulation that "the short story is a series of events arranged in their time sequence," the editors have been "looking for lo assembling this annual collection . . . work that can change your lives." As for the "Canadian" part of tbe formula, that vermiform container is best left alone or restricted to the insight provided by Mavis Gallant in her introduction to Home *Truths*: "A Canadian is someone who has a logical reason to think he Is one." And by extension, there will be Canadian stories.

Mostly, these are pretty good. Many of the writers are excellent stylists: Paulette Jiles, Sarah Sheard, Alice Munro, Evan Green, and Ray Smith. Some are creative fabulists: Patrick Roscoe, Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, and Stan Dragland. Still others have skilfully alluded to traditional narrative themes: Carol Shields, Marlene Coshshaw, and P.K. Page.

But if the short story is to be defined as having a beginning, a middle and an end, many of these "pieces" come across as just that-taken from a whole organism and placed under the appropriate magnification of language, point of view, setting, or character. The experience is similar to being la the wrong seminar at a large literary convention. A semiologist isn't necessarily going to hate an anthropological look at the subject matter, but the degree and intensity of the scrutiny is liable to seem excessive.

In the short story. while variety and individuality are to be highly prized, if they appear at the expense of the whole they may threaten to subvert the survival of the species. The compactness of the form is an elegant stricture that allows for crafty manipulation, like a sonnet or a sports car. It is not a time-worn gilded cage from which escape is always a virtue.

This collection has merit, but with the exception of Ray Smith and Alice Munro, tbe authors have conscientiously made the sum of the parts larger than the whole. □

FOLKWAYS

Legacies, Legends & Lies, by Joan Finnigan, Deneau, 162 pages, $16.95 paper (ISBN 0 88879 120 8).

THIS SECOND BOOK of Finnigan's yarns (the first was Some *of the Stories I Told You Were True*) is humorous end light ventiveness that comes from necessity. Finnigan provides some of tbe background of her trip through the Ottawa Valley, then goes on to introduce tbe story-tellers by describing their physical and mental characteristics, surroundings, and history. Each chapter then takes on the individual's stamp and character.

Finnigan's characters range from the farmers, whose "paradoxical complexity" is derived fmm the need to keep farms going, to town drunks, lazy rascals, businessmen. French Canadians, and wealthy socialites. Practical jokes, folklore, and the Valley itself bind the" together. Throughout the Valley are those of Irish descent — and some French — who have retained much of their origins and who still fight, with verbal humour, the battles and prejudices they brought with them fmm the bld count&. One Irish mother tells another about her son's wonderful job in a London crematorium: "He's burning Englishmen and getting paid for it!!"

Unfortunately, humour — especially that in folklore — is a neglected part of our literary tradition. Instead. we usually dwell on the gravity of the intangible "survival" without ever experiencing it. (As one contributor puts it, "You have to have had to face tragedy before you can enjoy a good joke.") *Legacies, Legends. and Lies* is a must for anyone who enjoys a good story and a good chuckle. Or for those Canadians who can laugh at themselves. ☆

The Morningside Papers. by Peter Gzowski, McClelland & Stewart, 352 pages, $14.95 paper (ISBN 0 7710 3743 0).

By Valerie de Montigny

WITH MORE THAN a million listeners a week, CBC-Radio's *Morningside is one* of Canada's most popular shows. combining reminiscences, news, views, drama, music, songs, poetry, argument, sentiment. science, and politics, presented by host Peter Gzowski with a mixture of intelligent curiosity, concern, and wit. Some of that is caught by the pieces in this book, a compendium of letters fmm listeners and articles by Gzowski and other journalists. Out of the 10,000 letters received since Gzowski resumed broadcasting tbe program three years ago, 200 were picked for tbis book..

They include a passionate denunciation of Ra[illegible] for crafty manipulation, like a sonnet or[illegible] ing old, being a parent, facing death; chat from Greece; politics from Nicaragua; modern, Canadianized Gilbert and Sullivan and other spoofs in verse; advocacy of country living; a diary by a man ever more desperately looking for a job, another by an alcoholic trying to stay dry; an apologia for good grammar; descriptions of Canadian life in different regions, in different ems. Tbe moods; opinions, and subjects variously provoke sympathy, anger, thoughtfulness, sometimes laughter, sometimes a letter in reply. Written by Canadians from all across the country and tbe globe, they are words exchanged between friends.

For any fan of its eclectic source, *The Morningside Papers is* great fun. It may lack the immediacy of the show, but it has the advantage of being available any time of the day or week. □

FOOD & DRINK

Jubilation: A Celebration of Favourite Recipes. Junior League of Toronto. 254 pages, $15.95 paper (ISBN 0 969203 01 1).

By Volker Strunk

WRITTEN TO CELEBRATE the diamond jubilee of the Junior League of Toronto, part of an international organization that trains volunteers to serve their community, *Jubilation* could not have been more coy about revealing the League's activities had it been written by the Mafia.

Charity. as Sir Thomas Browne (or was it Lady Thomas?) remarked some 200 years after the invention of the printing press, begins a tome. This one's bad a first printing of 10,000, thanks to corporate aid. But the book's true sponsor, I'm led to suspect by the ungodly number of recipes that call for the can opener, is the notorious Mrs. Heinz Campbell.

The party doesn't get off to a good start. Leading the pack of recipes is Antoine's Pâté (good old chicken liver pâté with a liver/vegetable shortening ratio of 4 to 1) whose perpetrator believes in deglazing the pan before adding the chicken livers. Avocado Pie has an optional garnish of black caviar — optional, I suppose, in case you blew all your money on the shortening. And if you're wondering how to wash your bands of the dirty deeds that enable you to afford pickled roe of sturgeon (at $24 per ounce, that's caviar to tbe general indeed!) the Junior League's not-bangers offer a solution: don't attempt it; wash the caviar. "Before serving, rinse caviar under cold water in a sieve." What will they rinse next7 Oysters7 But Florentine reveals that one should: "Cut oyster in half, saving the liquor."

In short, the book is unpredictable. Just when you've come to believe that *all* the sauces and casseroles in this collection are thickened with all-purpose flour. you stumble upon a recipe for Mustard Sauce-a Hollandaise, really, mar for reasons of secrecy isn't called Mustard Hollandaise — that makes you. want to rethink your conviction that burning some recipe books isn't such a bad thii.

By my count there are IS passable recipes hem. but Pm not sure whether there is any incentive to search for tiny treasures in a sea of culinary dreariness swarming with such things as Cocktail Meatballs with cornflake crumbs, a Cinnamon Ring made from loaves of frozen white bread dough, and a Consommé Surprise sprung by opening a can of consommé.

Complementing the liberal use of canned guck is the writers' uncannily modest imagination — even in the annotations, which are of the "A picture to behold," "Absolutely sinful!" and "Party pretty" variety. "Party pretty" is not only the recipe for Spinach and Smoked Salmon Salad but also the one for Tomato Aspic in Cheese Crust, in which the aspic turns out to be lemon-flavoured jelly powder "bud with boiling *water. You are nut* invited to mix lemon-flavoured jelly powder, boiling water, ketchup, onion juice, and celery powder to attain Quick Tomato Aspic, which tbe annotator considers "A tangy treat! Recipe can be increased to serve a cast of thousands!" As if Hollywood didn't have enough trouble. □

Perfect Pies, by Diane Fine, Macmillan, 206 pages, $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 7715 9897 9).

By Valerie de Montigny

FINE ATTEMPTS TO turn the old standby into an adventure in taste and nutrition. Clear instructions, a pastry chart, and hints for pre-baking and freezing are useful and often glossed over in other cookbooks, and the format is attractive and practical. The names of some of these pica are a treat in themselves — Chinese Bird's Nat Chicken Pie and Scallops with Cucumber Sauce in Pastry Puffs — but what really matters is how they taste and how easy they are to make.

The answer to the first question is mixed. Ria's Creamy Prawn Quiche (made with fresh shrimps, heavy cream, and cream cheese in a whole-wheat crust) was applauded by six of my seven testers. Chicken Curry Pie with Yoghurt Crust (a whole-wheat double-crust pie with a filling of chicken, green peppers, nuts. raisins and onions in a curry-yoghurt sauce) was less popular.

Making the pastry is not easy, despite all of Fine's hints; the dough is dry and hard to handle. I also question how many of us would routinely use expensive non-salted butter for frying and dough-making. and then add salt. On the positive side, the fillings are time-consuming, but foolproof.

Perfect Pies suffers from the same faults as its predecessor, *The Cookie Bookie* — flavour suffers from nutritional overkill. Most of the time, the whole-wheat pastry is just too heavy. However, if you experiment, there is boundless inspiration here for many delicious meals. □

HEALTH & WELFARE

Medical Research In Canada: the Fascinating Stories of 30 Canadian Scientists, edited by Jon Gerrard, White Horse Plains Publishers, illustrated, 152 pages. $9.95 paper (ISBN 0 920103 04).

By Ann Lukits

TWO *HUNDRED* and fifty scientists and research physicians gathered in Winnipeg recently to celebrate the 33th anniversary of the *Medical* Research *Council* of Canada (MRC). For two days, they reviewed the achievements of the past quarter-century and mused about the future. They also received complimentary copies of *Medical Research in Canada in* which Winnipeg researcher Dr. Jon Gerrard profiles the background and work of 30 men and women, including himself, who received one of the much-coveted MRC Scientist Awards.

The release of Gerrard's book is timely. In it, he takes a first step toward fulfilling one of the most ambitious resolutions to come out of the anniversary symposium: to better inform the public about the nature and scope of medical research in Canada.

But despite his efforts to write the book "in a manner that can be easily understood," Gerrard could have gone much further than he did. *Medical Research* remains full of technical and scientific terms that obscure the link between research and human suffering. As a result. readers with a background in medicine or science will have an easier time understanding it, and should find the book useful as a reference guide.

The book is arranged in four sections, beginning with chapters about research on the body's organ systems. The second section reviews studies into particular cells of the body. The third focuses on subcellular components, and the fourth is devoted to cellular communication processes. A profile of the researchers

follows each essay, but except for Gerrard's most are flat and offer few insights into the scientists. It is surprising, however, to learn how many Canadian medii researchers grew up believing they wanted to be engineers.

Despite its many shortcomings, *Medical Research makes* a good start at unveiling some of the well-kept secrets of research labs around the country. But its tiny print, uneven format. and occasional typographical errors do little to dispel what Gerrard describes as the "mistaken image that research done in Canada must be second rate." □

THE PAST

The Domesday Book: **England's Heritage** Then **and** Now. edited by Thomas Iimde, Penguin. **illustrated,** 351 pages, **$22.95 cloth (ISBN** 0 670 **80921 7).**

By *I.M.* Owen

IT WAS EXACTLY nine centuries ago this year that commissioners were travelling all over England carrying out the order of William the Norman to give him a description of his kingdom in detail unprecedented, probably. in the history of the world. As the monk who noted the event in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* said. with a sniff that is still audible over 900 years. "there was no single bide nor a yard of land, nor indeed (it is a shame to relate but it seemed no shame to him to do) one ox nor one cow nor one pig which was there left out."

The book issued to mark this anniversary isn't. of course, an edition of the Domesday Book itself; but it lists all the places named, with some of the particulars given for each one, full quotations for a few in each county, descriptions of these today, and some anecdotal history of events there between then and now — irrelevant to Domesday but interesting in themselves.

The photographs are also mostly irrelevant to Domesday, for very few buildings or landscapes look now as they did then, but they are the great glory of the book — about half of them in colour, many of them commissioned for the book and taken by Marianne Majerus, who seems to have enjoyed unusually good weather. The printing is by the Italian firm of Mondadori, who live up to their reputation by their magnificent colour work. The typographic design is beautiful too. The editing and proofreading are as characteristically English -that is, sloppy — as the colour printing is characteristically Italian.

The price for all this is astoundingly low. If you happen to have $22.95, you could hardly spend it better. ★

Beyond Courage, by George Cassar, Oberon Press, 184 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 600 3) and $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 601 1).

By Derek Suchard

THE *SECOND* BATTLE of Ypres, one of the first battles of the First World War in which Canadians took part, was also where the "colonials" made a good deal of their reputation, by standing firm when all about them took flight in the face of the first gas attacks.

Though Cassar tried to write this account "as much for the general reader as for the military student," it is unlikely to achieve this audience due to the sheer terseness of bis prose. The human element is given short shrift and emphasis is placed on dry recitations of attack. counterattack, and strategic error and success.

The presence *of* maps does not help much as each of them gives the scene from a different perspective, with few reference points in common to convey the ebb and flow of battle, insignificant though it was in this ultimate war of attrition.

A good companion to other more military — or more lay-oriented — works, *Beyond Courage* finds its greatest weakness in trying to be both. □

Maple Leaf Route: Scheldt, by Terry Copp and Robert Vogel, Maple Leaf Route. illustrated, 144 pages, 327.00 cloth (ISBN 0 919907 04 0).

By Gregory *M.* Cook

THE SILVER COVER of this photo-documentary album of military history is appropriately designed to honour the 6,387 casualties and the more fortunate of the Canadian army who saved in the Oct. IO-Nov. 8.1944. campaign to open the allied supply mute to the port of Antwerp. The book is dedicated to the mat of eight nations. especially the infantry, who stand in the foreground of

human history on a horizon so flat in this "landscape format" that they must have easily imagined their own grave-markers at the end of their muddy march.

The authors weave their detached scholarly narrative through Canadian war diaries, other official documents, photographs, war art, intelligence maps, as well as the book's own maps designed with a red marker (a ribbon of blood) of temporary front lines that were drawn like an eternity for many. The dominating story — revealed by graphics — is of commanders in sheepskins. reconnaissance maps and photos of land pock-marked by bombs, and military machinery photographed during breakdowns, smoke breaks, demonstrations, and occasionally in action.

Background includes: evacuated civilians, destroyed villages, flooded agriculture, one dead enemy soldier, prisoners, a medic at work, and pipe players at my father's burial — the reality of war. But thii is a military (not a war) history, in which the authors' passion for documentary detail provides a frame of reference to judge the accuracy of the- current wealth of war memoirs, tall tales, and myths. No puncher are pulled in exposing these or in confirming errors of allied commanders. ☆

"We Were the Salt of the Earth": The On-to-Ottawa Trek and the Regina Riot, by Victor Howard. Canadian Plains' Research Centre, illustrated, 208 pages, $15.00 paper (ISBN 0 88977 037 9).

By Valerie Keller

THIS THOROUGHLY researched if somewhat less than exciting book will make a good reference . because of Howard's passion for detail. and would be a gem for someone interested in writing historical fiction. Howard knows his subject and has done a lot of work, but his account is dry reading and should have been more closely edited.

Howard provides far too much information. Often he misleads the reader by including an anecdote that seems to be introducing a new element. then turns out to be irrelevant. For example, a trekker falls to the ground during the demonstration in Regina, leading the reader to assume be has been shot. But no, be has suffered an epileptic seizure: the inclusion of this anecdote has no bearing on the story.

History buffs will find this book presents a thorough picture of the plight of the unemployed in the 1930s, the relief camps and the resulting strike and demonstrations. But Howard has missed many opportunities to develop a readable story. All the elements are there. □

SCIENCE & NATURE

Yukon Wildlife: A Social History, by Robert G. McCandless, University of Alberta Press, 157 pages, 814.95 paper (ISBN 0 88884 093 5).

By Claire Brownscombe

THE DEVELOPMENT of wildlife management was interwoven with the Yukon's social history throughout the first half of the 20th century. People streamed into the area during the Gold Rush of 1896-1900 and again in the 1940s when the building of the, Alaska Highway brought the Yukon into the modem world. In the intervening years, two cultures, white and native, coexisted in approximately equal numbers in a society where wild animals supplied money for both government and its citizens.

Government officialdom, changing attitudes in other parts of the continent toward the exploitation of wildlife, fluctuating fur markets, and improved travel and communications all affected the Yukon's management procedures. In turn, government regulations such as those requiring trapline registration added to the strain on natives already hampered by low fur prices and the social changes brought by the Alaska Highway.

Regrettably, lack of knowledge of animal populations and harvests precludes an objective, assessment of wildlife policies, and any abundance of, wild animals appear to owe more to the sparse human population than to sound game management. The reader may wonder if wildlife management had any major significance apart fmm its reflection of changing social values.

This somewhat repetitive analysis covers a lot of ground, and includes factual detail that sometimes makes for dull reading. People create interest, but this book seems cluttered with names of government officials, hunters, and others. Colourful sketches of fewer characters would be welcome.

Nonetheless, the Yukon is an intriguing area for the study of wildlife management. In this book we're reminded that, particularly in a society economically dependent on wild animals, conservation must be more than a numbers game. □

SOCIETY

Language, Society and Identity, by John Edwards, Basil Blackwell (Oxford), 245 pages, $22.50 cloth (ISBN 0 631 14232 0) and 88.95 paper (ISBN 0 631 14233 9).

By Lorne Ellaschuk

EDWARDS HAS WRITTEN a scholarly book on the connection between group identity and the language a group speaks. He has attempted to do this in as disinterested a way as is possible with such a value-laden subject. He examines the supposed connections between national and ethnic identities and language and finds no necessary ones. In a chapter on the dynamics of small languages (Irish, Breton, the minority British dialects), be concludes that languages shift and disappear because of economic forces. If a group has a strong enough sense of its "groupness," this "alteration" ("loss" is a negative word, implying a static concept of history) will be accepted: "Another language comes to serve and, in' the transitional period, bilingualism is the usual bridge." Bilingualism is, then. a means to an end, and multiculturalism, if looked at closely, is an indication of how comfortably integrated ethnic groups feel in the mainstream culture. They are so sure of their children's English, they can send them to heritage language school on Saturdays. The mainstream school system should do nothing to promote either bilingualism or multiculturalism, except as these are in themselves good things (like a knowledge of music or art).

Somehow reading thii intelligent, reasonable book has left me extremely angry. Its disinterestedness hider the fact that Edwards and myself aren't in any danger of being "altered." English is healthy and virile. So we can comfortably look an, note each group going through language "alteration," and mildly chastise its leaders if they oppose the inevitable. And if they point out our unfairly strong position, we can always take what Edwards calls "a long enough perspective" and remind them of 1066 — Anglo-Norman and all that. We've been through it too, and look at our sense of groupness! It's so strong we can ignore the pain of any minority language group, turning its loss into a synonym for change.. □

FEATURE REVIEW

Psyched out

Though both make provocative reading, two books about the human mind indicate that science is better left to the scientists

By ***Keith Maillard***

Multiple Man: Explorations i " **Possession and Multiple Personality, by Adam Crabtree, Collins, 278 pages, $22.95 cloth (ISBN 0 00 217225 9).**

Objectivity and Human Perception; Revisions and Crossroads I" Psycho-**analysis and** Philosophy, by M.D. Faber, **University** of Alberta Press, 229 **pages,** 514.95 cloth **(ISBN** 0 88884 083 **8).**

THESE **ARE UNLIKELY** candidates to be reviewed together. Adam **Crabtree's exploration** of **the** multiple **personality** phenomenon is lively, entertaining. academically **naïve,** at times **downright** batty-bar also provocative and useful; anyone **interested** in the material could read it quickly, with pleasure. M.D. Faber's **attempt to wed psychoanalysis** with philosophy **is** ponderous, frequently **dull,** on **the** surface academically sophisticated, at Limes insightful — but far too often muddled; no one without **at** least some background in **philosophy** and **psychoanalytic theory** mold **manage** to **slog through it. But** botb books, despite vast differences **in** style **and subject** matter, have **this** in common: they stand **firmly** in opposition to the most **reductionist,** mechanistic, **and destructive** strand of that myth **system** that is described **as** "scientific," yet both remain trapped by it.

Crabtree is a therapist, not a psychologist. When he's **writing about** therapeutic techniques, he's **on firm ground;** when he's **writing** about **what** he calls "philosophy," he's in deep **water and often in** danger of drowning. He's take" **considerable** pains to organize his material clearly. Part **one,** "The **Multiple** Self," offers a brief **history** of **mesmerism** and introduces the multiple personality phenomenon. Part **two** presents anecdotal accounts of the possession experience: **we're** introduced **to various** possessing entitles who jump **into** people's psyches and take them over. In part three — by far the most **interesting** and **fruitful** portion of Crabtree's **book — we are** presented **with** *accounts of his* **own therapeutic practice. Part four is** a" attempt to explain **multiple** personality and possession.

As I found myself reading **descriptions** of case after case with such **dates as** 1816 **and** 1887, I began **to suffer from an increasing anxiety —** perhaps I **might** eve" say ***angst.*** **One of my** multiple personalities — the one who managed, long ago and far away, to make it through a psychology **course** or two in **university** — was **whispering** nasty **things** in my ear. I managed to make **out** the words "control: and **"experimenter** bii," and **"verifiable";** I wondered why **Crabtree was** writing **about** the multiple personality **phenomènon as** though most of the **important** work in the **field** had been done before 1900, and **why** the few cases reported **after** that date seemed to have **occurred in** places at considerable remove from university psychology departments.

Aha, I thought, be's preparing **us** for the **argument that** contemporary psychology **has** a blind spot in **this area, that we're forced to look at early reports** and **recent** emanations from **the lunatic** fringe because academic **psychologists** do not believe **that** some of **these phenomena** are possible., **and** if you don't believe **that** something is possible, you're **not** going to see it, not even if it is standing in **your** office **and taking up** as much space as a rhinoceros. **"I,** however." **Crabtree might have** said, "have seen and examined such things myself, so I **know** that **they** exist; therefore I conclude that **contemporary research is** severely hampered by its **own unexamined *a priori*** assumptions." **Crabtree** presents **no** such argument.

To **give Crabtree his** due, be ***has*** take" a look at **recent** work **with** some claim **to academic respectability. But it's only a look; what I miss is an overview of the field, some sense that Crabtree might have spent a week** or two **in** a library going through psychological **abstracts. Without such an overview, a certain weight is missing, a ballast that might** have saved the book fmm sailing off **into mvsterious realms where visitors from ancient sacrificial cults cavort with demons** from **hell.**

Of **the concept** of **experimental control, Crabtree** appears not **to** have a well-developed, notion, **and** defending himself by calling his approach **"phenomenological"** fails to save him. **He does argue convincingly that taking their reports at face value is a good way to work with clients. "As a &rapist,"** he says, "that is good enough for me. As a **philosopher,** I **remain** puzzled." Equally puzzled **remains the** reader. Most of the cases described **in Crabtree's** book are based **upon anecdotal and** hearsay **evidence, and** this reader **is** still **wondering** why it's a Catholic **priest** who witnessed levitation and not B.F. **Skinner.**

I've bee" o" the receiving end far **too** often of reviews that **tell** me about the book I *should* have **written** to be **comfortable** doing **this,** but I'm **going** to do it anyway: I wish **Crabtree** had **written** a book **about his therapeutic practice and had** left **what** he mistakenly **calls** "science" or **"philosophy"** to **those** competent to comment on if. His **accounts** of bis **own** therapeutic work are **fascinating;** I wish **there were** more of them, **presented** in greater detail. His therapeutic approach **appears to** he creative and healing; I **wish** he'd told **us** more **about** how he'd **learned it** and how he does **it.** Nevertheless, I believe **that** Multiple ***Man*** should be **required** reading for any **practising** therapist. and I would **certainly** recommend it as good **fun for anyone who enjoys swimming in** the vast. **undiscriminating** sea of the **occult.**

To say **that** Faber's **book is** difficult reading is **thunderous** understatement. One **thing** for ***certain:*** he **knows Freud and** the **Freudians, and,** bawd **upon** the **speculations** of certain of the **Freudians** (he's careful to footnote them), be **claims** that **human perception** is learned **in** a "mirror **relationship"** between the infant and the mother:

> What **occurs as the infant undergoes separation** has **been described as a "life-**long **mourning process," a process** that **triggers an** endless **search** for **"replacement"** which is tied **integrally** to our **participation** in the symbolic **realm. . . . Every new step that we** take **toward autonomy** holds **the threat** of loss. We ***agonize*** as **we** come to differentiate our**selves** from **the other,** to **learn in our** body-minds what reparation **means. . . .** In **this way,** our **very** ability **to conceive** of **"objects" as *separate in space,* an** ability **which** underlies the

"scientific" view Of the world.. . , is awakened early in life in inextricable association to the emotive dilemma of separation from the caregiver.

Our very perception the", Faber claims — our notions of space and time, our use of language — remain forever fraught with anxiety related to the separation from the mother, for, as Faber puts it, "mu perception itself is the chief carrier of our conflict."

There is (if I may present Faber's argument in my own crass fashion) something wrong with us. The something wrong is perception itself, and it got to be wrong because we learned it from Mom, and whenever we try to see things clearly Mom always gets in the way. We can't possibly be objective, and science can't "take any claims to objectivity. But it's eve" worse than that. Our entire civilization — particularly our science — is screwy because our perception is screwy, and if we don't do something about it, we're going to blow ourselves up.

Is there a way out? Yes, Faber says. There is a practice "designed to diii the stress accumulated during the primary years and to foster a non-projective perception of 'objects,' a" epistemic alteration of the manner in which one apprehends not only the external environment but the 'world' within oneself." He -the" lists seven schools of such practice: Hindu Bhakti, Jewish Kabbalah, Christian Hesychasm, Sufism, Transcendental Meditation, Ashtanga Yoga, and Z-s". Why, we might ask, when there are so many mystical traditions available, did he pick this particular seven? We might also ask whether or not these seven "schools" from such widely divergent cultural backgrounds offer a practice — that is, are their methods or the results they obtain in any sew *the same*?

Having arrived *at the truth* of human perception, Faber proceeds to run through some of his predecessors to see how they fared. Freud, Descartes, Home, Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Merleau-Pony, and eve" Karl Marx are examined in turn and found wanting. Faber the" argues "for synthesis among these three fields. psychoanalysis, phenomenology, and what I have chose" to call practice." (Buddhists had been calling it that too, incidentally. long before Faber chose the label.) He concludes his book by arguing that "our understanding of ourselves. our perception, our cognition, our whole manner of relating to and being in the world, will remain tragically incomplete until we integrate the psychoanalytic 'data' on the dynamic origins of our 'mental apparatus' into our theoretical schemes.

Now, wait a minute. What data? The word lends a lovely *cachet* of science to this ringing sentence, but the claims upon which Faber's argument rest *are not verifiable. Coming* from an entirely different angle, the depth analyst James Hillman, in his brilliant book *The Myth of Analysis, writes: "I* question the tales psychology tells us about infancy — those fantasies about babies' experience at the breast." So do I. (And, while I'm *at* it, I also question fantasies about human perception, particularly when those fantasies do not take into account the work of cultural anthropology. Do Hopi Indians or Australia" Aborigines perceive things the same way that we perceive them?)

I have considerable sympathy for the position Faber holds and no sympathy for the methods he uses to get there. Faber, who teaches English at the University of Victoria, suffers from physics envy — a common pathology among people working in the humanities these days. Writing of "a danger" in certain approaches to behaviour, he complains that "the emphasis comes to be on 'human meaning' and 'relevance to the whole person' in a 'soft' way, a kind of humanistic way. . . ." But if "soft" is humanistic is bad, then what is "hard"? Despite his torturously academic style and multitude of citations, Faber's book is just as "soft" as the work of any of the people he would dismiss.

Faber is a" amateur. His love of his work is apparent in the time, effort, and care he's take" with it. But bow, for instance, can one comment intelligently upon the origin of what's wrong with our "scientific" world-view without mentioning Frances Yates or pronoun& upon Zen without citing D.T. Suzuki, the *Huang Po Doctrine,* or eve" The *Diamond Sutra*? How can one argue that our civilization itself is mad without at least a mention of others — Jules Henry or R.D. Laing, for instance — who have argued the same thing? How does one have the *chutzpa to* comment on the Kabbalah without having read Gershom Scholem?

Before I revert to infantile howling, I want to pose a modest question. What's wrong with the humanities? Let us not tom our back upon our Alma Mater — our great old mother of intertwining corridors and multiple layers. By all means take on the mean-spirited technicians of our botched civilization with both scalpel and bmad sword, but leave science to the scientists. Psychoanalysis and the various psychotherapies have as their nearest relative not physics but literature. "Only literature," as' Northrop Frye has told us, "gives us the whole sweep and range of human imagination as it sees itself " Cl

BookNews: an advertising feature

REVIEW

On the road to Rajast han

By **Stella Sandahl**

India: Labyrinths in the Lotus Land, by **Sasthi Brata, William Morrow & Co. (Macmillan),** 336 pages, **$29.95** cloth QSBN 0 688 **04780 7).**

The Wells of **India, by George** Woodcock. illustrated **by Toni Onley. Lester & Orpen Dennys, 136** pages, **$29.95** cloth **(ISBN** 0 88619 067 3).

THERE IS A widespread belief that anybody **can** teach **his own** mother tongue, **simply** because he knows it. Similarly, there seems to **exist** a conviction that any Bust Indian, by the mere **virtue** of being a" Indian, knows **everything** there is to **know** about India **This misconception seems** to be a" **article** of faith **among** Indians. and **it is probable** that all ethnic communities settled outside their homeland have the **same** belief **about** themselves. Unfortunately, publishers **also** fall **victim** to **this** false notion.

Sasthi Brata is a" ***East Indian journalist*** settled in Great **Britain** who has **taken** upon himself to "explain" India to Westerners. He expresses opinions about **practically everything —** politics, the emergency, Indian inheritance laws, **resigning** and resigned chief ministers, the **Sikhs,** religion, ***suttee,*** the lousy **service** provided by Indian Airlines, history, philosophy, art, **and,** with particular **insistence,** sexual mores. All this stated with ***little*** **apparent knowledge or insight, and complete confidence.**

Indeed, **Brata** has **tried** to toll every**thing** he knows about India, past, present, **and** future. About the past he knows precious little. He continuously repeats that the ***Mahabharata is a religious*** epic end, more **astonishingly,** that it comprises "some **40** volumes of 1,000 pages each." A" epic it is, and it is indeed very long, about 100,000 ***slokas*** (a ***sloka*** **consists of two lines of 16** syllables each) if one includes the ***Harivamsa. However,*** I have "ever see" it in 40 volumes. **Religion** is present in the epic, and many a moral and **religious** lesson can he drawn **from** it — as is the **case with** practically every piece of literature — but there is **nothing** particularly religious about it.

The other **great** Sanskrit **epic,** the ***Ramayana,*** would qualify better **to be called "scripture," especially since the Rama** story is the object of devotional recitals. most often in its later, **vernacular** versions. **Brata claims** that the ***Ramayana*** is about "the **life history** of **Rama** and **Sita** before they were actually born." a statement that **defies** both logic and truth. There is no mention of ***Rama's*** and Site's previous ***lives*** in the **entire** epic.

Kalidasa's *Meghaduta (The Cloud Messenger)* incorrectlv described as one of **the poet's longer poems** (it is **actually** the shortest of them), is assessed as making **"Keats** and **Shelley** look like amateurs in the **art** of poesy." Apart **from** the doubtful advantage of **comparing** apples **to** oranges, **Brata's** childish **bragging** about **Indian** culture does not do it **any** good.

Being a Bengali, **Brata** declares that his home **city** (Calcutta) "is the only **city** in the whole of India that has a **direct** historical link with the **past."** What about Delhi, **Lucknow, Benares, Hyderabad,** and a score of other India" **cities7 Brata** then **proceeds** to inform us that "culture is a birthright for a Bengali," that **Bengalis** have the sharpest minds **in India** (why not **in** the world?) but, **unfortunately,** "Most Indians resent **Bengalis** for no better reason than that they are unfathomable." I presume the reader is supposed to conclude that **Brata himself is exceedingly cultured and intelligent —** which is sadly ***contradicted*** by ***his*** book. He may he "unfathomable," but is it worth taking a sounding7

Rabindranath Tagore gets a pat on the back, **but he** "is **embalmed** in. his own **image." Brata** is right to deplore the **old**-fashioned and 'inadequate translations of **Tagore's prose and poetry,** often by the poet himself. But even in mediocre (and **downright** ridiculous) translations,

Tagore is alive, and he will surely remain a living author.

If **Brata** appears misinformed **or ignorant** about the **past,** he **is** hardly any **more** knowledgeable about the **present. Goa** is **described** as **"a tiny** island," a **statement** any map **will** disprove. Hope Cooke, the m-queen of **Sikkim,** is alleged to have **been** linked **to** the CIA, and **"mixed** up with the overthrow **of Mossadegh** in Iran." Hope Cooke **was** 13 **years** old at the time of **Mossadegh's fall,** and thus not very likely to have taken active part **in** political events.

One could make a very long **list** of **glaring** factual errors in **Brata's** book, not all of **them** excusable as sloppy proof-reading. **However,** the real point is that **Brata's** neglect of facts puts his **entire endeavour** in jeopardy. **His** book's only **saving** grace **is** the **description** of daily life, **customs,** and rituals observed **in** his **own** home. **And these** have bee" much better **described in** his **first** novel ***My*** God ***Died Young.***

Brata ***would not*** be **Brata** if he **did** not parade **his favourite obsession: the lack** of sexually available women **in** India **(except** for the **either** very expensive or very cheap **prostitutes),** and the Victoria" puritanism of the **entire country.** All **this** is true, but what **Brata** fails **to** realize, much less analyze, **is** the **economic structure** of the India" middle class, where women are still treated es commodities.

It is a **social** disgrace for a woman — and one reflecting on her father — to remain **unmarried,** and it is **considered** unnatural **if a man refuses** to **fulfil his** duty to be **a *pater familias* and** produce a male heir. Marriage is a social **sacrament,** and the equation of love and sex ***has very little to do with it. It is above all an economic arrangement for the*** **family** at large, **not** a" individual **decision.** The **price** of **individualism is** very **high in India,** and only a very few — such as people from **Brata's social background — can** afford it.

It was a relief **to** pass on to ***The Walls of India, a short,*** low-keyed hook, intelligent and **competent** without any grandiose **designs** of knowing and saying it all. I" the ***company*** of George Woodcock, the **painter** Tony **Onley, and** their wives, **we** are take" on a well-documented but never boring guided tour of **Rajasthan, Kerala,** Orissa, and the town of **Darjeeling** in **northern** West Bengal. I have visited **all** the places Woodcock and his little group **visit, and** wish this book had bee" available before I **travelled** there.

This said, it must be stressed that ***The Walls of India*** deals **with** much more than just sightseeing **and monuments.** Although Woodcock and Co. **travel** rather comfortably — as comfortably as is possible in India — **and** meet a **fair** "umber of **Rajasthani maharajahs (rich as well as moth-eaten),** we do **not get** a distorted **view** of the **subcontinent** as see" by a group of tourists o" a **luxury** trip. **Woodcock describes** the **splendours** of forts, **monuments, and nature,** but he also has a" open and **critical** eye for India's defects.

He also has something very **unusual** to offer: constructive **criticism.** ***The Walls***

of *India* is written as a fund-raising project, the proceeds going to the Canada India Village Aid Association (CIVA) for medical aid in rural areas. The Gandhiite Woodcock has retained the Mahatma's conviction that development in India means improving the living conditions in its villages. Much could thus be gained by simple means: clean water, sanitation, a small dispensary, or jut one trained nurse.

These are needs that any illiterate villager can perceive as his, and very little has been done so far. Most great schemes concocted in Delhi — such as rural literacy programs, instruction in elementary hygiene and sanitation, not to speak of family-planning counselling — have "ever bee" implemented. Many believe that there has "ever bee" a real political will to do so, regardless of the lip-service Indian politicians automatically and regularly pay to Gandhian ideals, socialist ideals. or any ideals at all.

Why this is so is hinted at in Woodcock's excellent last chapter about Delhi. New Delhi, he says, is a city where all the mediocrities converge, including the mediocrity of its foreign diplomats. Woodcock confirms my low-held conviction that whatever is decided and planned in New Delhi is totally irrelevant 20 miles outside of the capital. The rest of India lives its own life.

New Delhi is a *babu town,* its ministries teeming with Byzantine intrigues. It is far more important to have a car and driver and a bigger bungalow to indicate where one stands in the hierarchy of the civil service than actually to improve the country. Most IAS (Indian Administrative Service) officers want to be posted to New Delhi, and consider their periodically recurrent provincial postings as a chore necessary to climb the ladder toward the summit. The only other worthwhile posting is that of a provincial governor, and such positions are necessarily quite limited.

Woodcock testifies that the people he encounters in Delhi, mostly bureaucrats. assume a blank look when he tries to talk about the other India, the one outside. They are simply not interested. (This seems also to apply to foreign journalists reporting on India. They go to Delhi and get a largely distorted view of things.)

Woodcock does not say anything earth-shaking; he even occasionally quotes what he has already written in his previous books about the-subcontinent. Still, it is necessary to keep on saying it. Woodcock has remained an idealist in spite of everything, something I find both moving and admirable. He does not offer any spectacular or drastic political solutions, "or does he preach. His view is simple and modest: let's try to do what is possible, however small the scale may be. Maybe one small initiative. reasonably well-implemented, will spread like rings on the water. It is reassuring that there still are people like him around.

A word about Onley's illustrations. They are, no doubt, exquisite, but also very surprising. Onley's cold greens, blues, and greys seem so alien to the India I know. Or maybe I am too influenced by the warm yellows, ochres, reds. and dark greens of most indigenous Indian art. Another intriguing feature in Onley's watercolours is the total absence of what is absolutely unavoidable in India: its omnipresent, teeming populace.

Woodcock unmaliciously describes how Onley was constantly harassed by curious onlookers, that he was really comfortable only in the isolation of the luxurious Lake Palace in Udaipur where few Indian$ have access, except the uppermost stratum and its savants. The cool distance that comes through in Onley's illustrations gives the impression that he really did not like India.. They stand in sharp contrast to Woodcock? warmth toward India and its people.

My remarks are of course not an aesthetic judgement. I very much appreciate the assured competence of Onley the artist. I do have some doubts about Onley the observer of his fellow man. It ultimately goes to show that one has to have a great deal of knowledge about India to be able to appreciate it in real life. George Woodcock has ii. □

REVIEW

Less than meets the eye

By Roger Hall

Canada: The **Missing Years,** by **Patricia** Pierce. **Stoddart.** illustrated. **160 pages, $24.95** cloth **(ISBN 0 7737 2052 9).**

BY NOW THE story of the remarkable discovery of some 40,000 items of Canadiana "lost" for years at the library of the British Museum is well known. The cache was uncovered in 1979 by Patrick O'Neill of Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax. He had been searching for lost plays, and found 300 of them, alongside some 2,500 maps, 10,000 books, and 11,000 pieces of sheet music. There was much more too — including 5,080 photographs — all duly placed according to copyright law at the Imperial nexus in the years from 1895 to 1924. and the" largely forgotten.

Some of this material is indispensable.' Copyright law had certified that sets also be placed at the Library of Parliament in Ottawa and at the Canadian copyright office. But the former fell victim to two disastrous fires (one of which, in 1916, destroyed the parliament buildings), and the latter was scattered by an even more destructive agent: a" order-in-council that sent a few volumes to the library of the secretary of state and recommended disposal of the rest. Canadian negligence and British indifference have combined to preserve a great chunk of Canada's documentary past; copies of some items simply are not to be found anywhere ! else.

Patricia Pierce's book focuses on the found photographic collection, especially the items located in the "colonial dump" of the British Library at Woolwich Arsenal. Her book has three broad divisions: in the first she retells the story of the finding of the hoard of Canadian materials; the second presents a disappointing, simplistic sketch of Canadian history from 1895 to 1924; and the third — the hulk of the book — is a portfolio of .some 200 of the discovered photographs. Unfortunately, Pierce's photographic bag 1s a very mixed one.

The essential problem is that Pierce doesn't know much about the history of Canadian photography. As a result, she has published a "umber of very common photos — ones not lost at all, but very much present in repositories throughout Canada and published and republished many times. Such is the case with two photos, one of soldiers supposedly tensing to go over the top during the First World War and another, from the same lot. of dead bodies on a shell-swept battlefield. Both are dated 1918. The first is, in fact, a widely-known faked propaganda photo (usually linked with 1916 and the Somme), and the second is a scene reproduced in at least half a dozen books and from better copies.

In this same area of the book is a very dark, well-known portrait of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall (later George V and Mary) at Government House in Ottawa by "William Notman and So"": again, much clearer copies exist in Canada. Other examples of duplication abound — for instance. the photo of the execution of Stanislaus Lacroix at Hull. (Besides,' the caption Pierce provides gives the wrong date; it was July 21, rather than March 21, 1902.)

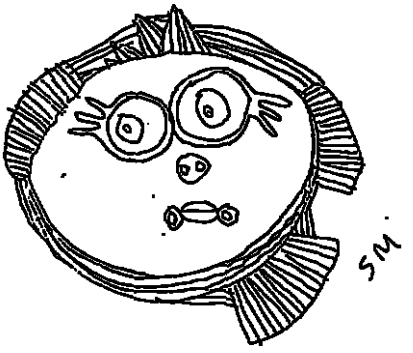
One wonders why certain photos were chose". A cramped cyclorama of the Canadian National Exhibition is simply too small for us to see anything, and the kitschy buckskinned beauty in "A"

Autumn Outing" would have been better served if the glass negative hadn't been cracked — and so on.

There *are* better photographs in tbe collection. In the summer of 1984, with the cooperation of James Egles of the British Library end Canadian researcher Barbara James, I had the chance to examine most of these same photos. There were — not surprisingly — lots of familiar images and a lot of materials from non-professionals, bat there were also some very fine, scarce images from some very well-known Canadian photographers. A few of these are reproduced here, but where is the fresh work of, say. Josiah Bruce of Toronto, William Topley of Ottawa, or the prolific Livernois family of Quebec? That material, and not *some of the humdrum* snaps of this publication, is what all the excitement is about.

There are other problems with this, book. There is no adequate the-me — what were "the missing years," 1895-1924, all about? And do these selected photos show us? The conventional interpretation of the period is one of an enormous transformation in Canada, from a country basically rural to one urban, from an agricultural society to one increasingly industrial, and, on the world's stage, effectively from a colony to a nation. The photos used here pmvide little documentary evidence of that stunning transition.

Perhaps the chapter titles suggest this limitation best: from "Wild Splendour" to the inevitable "Last, Best West," to "Crown and Country," to "Having Fun," images are used as nostalgic diversion, to suggest amusement or quaintness, rather-than supply documentary evidence of what the missing years concerned. As well, them are a lot



of unnecessary slips in captions and historical material that someone more familiar with Canada's past should have caught. One mold, at least, get prime ministers' names spelled correctly.

This compilation is the first popular publication fmm the valuable Canadian cache uncovered in Britain. The others, which inevitably will follow, can only be an improvement. □

REVIEW

Pillars and eye-cons

By Ray Filip

Selected Poems 1933-1980. by George Faludy, edited by **Robin Skelton,** McClelland & Stewart, 232 pages, $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 7710 3117 3).

Oab 1, by Robert **Zend, Exile Edi**tions. illustrated, 98 pages, 812.95 paper **(ISBN 0** 970428 22 **3).**

Oab 2. by Robert **Zend,** Exile **Edi**tions. illustrated, 237 **pages,** $12.95 paper (ISBN **0** 920428 22 3).

GEORGE FALUDY follows in the *wieszcz* tradition of Hungarian poets as "pillars of fire." He carries the distinction of having been persecuted by. both Nazis and Soviets as a voice of freedom for the Magyar peoples. This edition of' his poems is a most for English speakers.

Robin Skelton and a brigade of such habile Canadian poets as Robert Bringhurst, John Robert Colombo, George Johnston, George Jonas. Dennis Lee, end Seen Virgo have rendered the graceful palatal glides of the love poems, as well as the vicious vowels and strident affricates of the diatribes, into a parallel Anglo world. It is a tribute to their workmanship as translators, or to Faludy's pure lyricism, that the images come across as clean as a laser beam through a transmission fibre.

As with Lithuanian, Latvian, Polish, end the poetry of other Eastern European Christian nations under oppression, Faludy's early verse equates the scourged mother country with Christ crucified. In "Danse Macabre" the final steps lead to death as a 'door to salvation:

— We go underground one and all,
years fly like minutes to amaze us,
by the spilt dewdrops of your blood
be merciful lo us Prince Jew.

Faludy's flights, political and imaginative, cover the universe. "A Rich Friend of Ours" endorses the transmigration of souls:

Metempsychosis? I've experienced il.
One day as I was leafing through a book
published in 1710 upon antiquities,
although I'm sure I'd not seen it Won?
I knew the title page immediately
and each of the engravings, and was sure
that I had owned il in a previous life
and had it in my library, but with
a somewhat different binding. I went cold,
but then felt comforted. Two hundred years,
no more, and one emerges from the grave
into a not uncivilized situation.

As in the Hungarian czardas dance. Faludy's poems often begin with slow melancholy steps that accelerate *into a fiery* climax. "Ave tuna, Morituri Te Salutant" is a case in point. From the luscious lunar imagery of the opening section, it builds to a dramatic denunciation of imperialism upon the moon through technological conquest.

. . . Kick the vicious television
over, strike it dumb. A little freedom
still is left. Run out into the garden,
smell the spreading trees, drink in the grasses,
stroke the silver tresses of the moon.

Faludy is more of a bibliophile than a technophobe. In "Sonnet Seventy-Seven," he says of humanity:

Casually, they have finished off the future.
After all, who knows or gives a damn
what is lo come, contented to have comfort
rather than the ardours of civilization.
. . . What's our defence against these living dead?
Maybe a thousand books, two hundred records.

He chooses Petronius as a model.

. . . because he demonstrated, and I learned,
that mere existence is a greater pleasure,
hundredfold, than luxury or possessions;
because, though he loved life, he did not gmb il.
and, even in the direst situations,
conjured a paradise around himself.
(Imprisoned by the Reds, I tried to ape him.)

And from Faludy, we can continue to learn that poverty and physical torment are not enough to destroy nobility of heart and mind.

In Robert Zend, we have a Hungarian without an inner censor. Legions of Reach poets from Apollinaire on down have spent a century exploring the variations of the word *soleil* as eye, *sun. earth.* and other things. Zend spent 14 years exhausting au the possible combinations of his ineffable alter ego *Oab. The* two-volume set is a self-contained cosmos of gems and garbage.

An ophthalmoscopic close-up of each of Zend's eyes on each front cover stares at the viewer with an intimidating I-opening question: can you see my contacts?

This is how bad, or good, the humour gets. depending upon the reader's pre-&position toward punning. Puns are the lowest form of humour only to dimwits who can't think up one original pun. Zend was a brightwag who takes us through a phantasmagoria of parano-

masia powered by his self-involved nervous energy.

Cute, cute, cute, I found myself saying throughout book one, swallowing Zend's "Alphoabet" with the curiosity of a three-year-old playing with his Alpha-bits. But by book two, my smile had absented itself end I found myself saying stop, stop, stop!

The visual and verbal puns on the word Oab, and his tripleganger playmate Irdu, blitz you until the "doodles" turn into flapdoodle. You end up no longer caring for the characters. The formula becomes overprocessed beyond enjoyment, like feeding peanut butter to a squirrel.

Zend, God. is aware of this. Like a merciful creator, he has even made provision for book reviewers as fault-finders. Faced with a value judgement upon completing his work, Zend sees that it is good — and bad-and names some of tbe flaws: "the story of an oabsession" and "a fable on .self-indulgence."

As far as alter egos go. Don Harron's Charlie Farquharson is a more convincing punny persona. *Oab may work with multimedia crutches* to prop It up; but as literature, the novelty of the visual miscellany, as with TV, turns the reader into a passive observer. Reader-writer text games are es old as neo-modernism. Hubért Aquin in his novel *Trou de mémoire, uses* inner duplication as a technique to stimulate co-creativity with the reader. But in *Oab, we watch* with inactive vision as Zend squeezes detail upon encyclopedic detail into his two pun sons.

It's unfair to compare Zend with Faludy. But for the sake of argument, consider this image from Faludy's poem "Noon to Sunset": ". . . It is sunset: the hundred/shapes of your face are displayed in the clouds." There are as many ways to see that beautiful metaphor as there are readers to read those words. With *Oab, we only receive one* picture.

Zend at his best can at least keep comparative philologists in stitches, as in the zonky "Oab and Irdu Play Languages":

FRENCH Eau'ab
SPANISH Uabez
ITALIAN Oavo

Friends of Zend, (even they are listed in his pen-ultimate uni-verse,) will no doubt greet this collection with enthusiasm. But to an impartial eye, the expiration of this "NEOVEL" leaves one cold. On page 206, "Zend dies," in *real life!* The announcement of his death in his own oabituary bears as much impact as Mickey Mouse dying in his own cartoon. Concrete verse *verité.* Maybe that's the way Zend, the Maker, intended it7

Oab is an eye-conoclastic celebration of individuality and freedom of expression. It is a difficult easy-read that belongs beside junior's MacPaint computer program and G.K. Dewdney's *Planiverse, or as a teaching aid* for poetry-hating schoolkids raised on rock video. □

REVIEW

Conservative. progressives

By ***Bruce Allen Powe***

Unlikely Tory: The Llfe **and Politics** of **Allan Grossman,** by Peter **Oliver,** Lester **& Orpen Dennys, 322 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN** 0 88619 049 5).

"Honest **Enough** to **Be Bold": The Life and Times** of **Sir James Pliny Whitney,** by **Charles W. Humphries, University of Toronto Press, 276 pages, 918.50 cloth (ISBN 0 8020 3420 9).**

THE POLITICAL junkie, like this reviewer, comes away from these two books with acute pangs of **frustration. Against the background of today's exciting political scene in Ontario, a ferment not seen in more than 40 years, the biographies of two Ontario politicians — one** of **the re-**cent past, **the** other early in the century **—** fall short **of giving us the real inside dope. No question that the two authors are able and competent historians; but they** have **imposed** restrictions **on** themselves' that deny **us their** own **views or speculation,** which **would be** really **useful now.**

Take Peter' Oliver's biography of **Allan Grossman,** father of Larry **Grossman,** the **current** leader of Ontario's **Tories. Labelling his** book **as an "authorized** biography," he tells us **"nothing** from **his** [Grossman's] papers or **our recorded** interviews would be **published** without **his** permission." Ah, **the** perils of **trying to write** about **living** people.

Then **Charles Humphries** says **his** book on **James** Whitney, **Ontario premier** from 1905 to 1914 and the founder of "progressive **conservativism,"** is a "political biography without **adulteration** through **any** attempt at psycho-biography." All **right, he adds that no family papers remain. Still . . . .**

So these two historians have maintained **their** purity, they leave **us** wondering. **For instance,** why **did Allan** Grossman, tbe working-class Jew who **in** the **1850s wrested** a downtown riding **from** the **Communists,** become a **Tory** instead of a Liberal or **social democrat?** what **really** motivated **Whitney,** a crusty, **bad-tempered lawyer** fmm the eastern **Ontario town of Morrisburg, to become the great** reformer who **brought us state-run Ontario Hydro** and workers' **compensation?** These **two Tories,** men who **were "progressives"** in **almost** every sense **of the word, remain as enigmas.**

In saying this, I don't want to detract fmm the scholarship **that has gone** Into the two books. In **another** respect, too, they **are** linked. Peter Oliver, **a professor** at **York University, is associate editor of the worthy Ontario Historical Studies Series and wrote** tbe book **on another** Tory premier. Howard **Ferguson (1923-1930),** as **one** of the Premiers **of Ontario sub-series. Charles Humphries, a** professor **at the University** of **British Columbia, has produced his Whitney book as the third volume in the series on** the **premiers. (A.K. McDougall's biography of John Robarts, 1961-1971, Is completed and will be out soon.)**

On the **surface,** the Grossman **story is,** well, **more engrossing for** today's reader. covering as it does his remarkable career **until his retirement in** 1974. He was indeed tbe **"Unlikely** Tory" of tbe title. Fmm **an impoverished immigrant background,** he **became an insurance agent,** a **Toronto alderman, then plunged in** to tackle the awesome **Communist** organization in St. Andrew **that** had kept the popular Joe **Salsberg** at Queen's Park. Grossman became **the first Jew in** a Conservative **cabinet in Ontario — serving under** Leslie Frost, **Robarts,** and **William Davis —** where he kept **them in** touch **with** the needs of **the urban workers, especially** the post-war **immigrants. Ever** so cautiously, Oliver says **"there is little** agreement **on** how to **account** for **that success"** of **the Tories.** But we need only to **open tbe Whitney biography to find a good pert of the answer.**

The *Unlikely Reformer might* **have** been **a** better **title** for **Humphries's** book. **Even the** photos make us wonder about **Whitney.** Bowler **hat, walrus** moustache. double **chin,** crinkly bard eyes **—** he looks **the** very **stereotype of the turn-of-the-century** tycoon. Yet thls was **the** man who dared to **rail** at **the** "barons" and **the** "corporations," as **though** he were a **forerunner** of the NDP.

How did it all **begin:** tbis **rush into** reform and **populism** that Grossman **helped** to keep alive **a** half **century later?**

To start **with,** Ontario had **changed from** a **society that** was 57 per cent **rural in 1901 to 52.6 per cent urban only IO years later, with all the problems that went with** it: **harsh,** dirty **working conditions; six working** days a week, 10 **hours a** day; **exploitive** piecework; *typhoid*

outbreaks, unclean milk, overcrowded housing. Unions were weak, yet Toronto workers paraded under the black flag of anarchy.

Politically, throughout a time of incredible change, Ontario was in the hands of the Liberals, under Oliver Mowat then George Ross, a 33year-old regime running out of steam. The province needed fresh ideas, new leadership. Once, however, Laurier became prime minister in 1896, Ontario fell into what we see today as an almost instinctive balancing act, a tendency to put the opposite party into power at Queen's Park.

Despite the decline of the Liberals, Whitney had an interminably long struggle to unseat them. First elected as a local member in 1888, he became party leader in 1896. Old Mowat left the scene to join Laurier's cabinet in Ottawa, but the Liberals continued to hold on. No wonder Whitney had such an irritable disposition. After nine successive victories, the Liberals finally lost to Whitney in 1905, and "from the date of his electoral triumph the Conservative party in Ontario has only been out of office on two occasions." Well, three, as of 1985.

Somehow, in some way that Humphries doesn't — or can't-really answer, Whitney set off upon his course of reform. Besides creating Hydro and workers' compensation, he carried out an amazing program of modernization of almost every institution: education (normal schools): health services. including compulsory vaccination; reformatories instead of prisons; new urban railways and lines for the north; reform of mining claims to protect prospectors: and the inclusion of Catholics in his cabinet. His opponents were left in disarray.

Liquor policy, that ultimate Ontario hang-up, dogged Whitney as it did Allan Grossman years later. Yet Whitney handled the-competing lobbies of drys and wets by shuffling it all off to local-option votes in each municipality. His attitude towards the liquor question gives us an insight into what made him so successful: "The Conservative chief argued that, in urban centres at least, there was more drink cawed by poverty than poverty by drink. . . . He would worry about poverty first."

Thus, both Whitney and Grossman devoted their careers to meeting political radicalism on its own ground. Whitney faced only one elected socialist in the House, always there as an implicit threat if social action was not taken Grossman outfought a formidable Communist machine. Each man seemed to believe that a responsive conservatism, willing to change the rules but not the system, was the better way. Shrewd opportunists they were, but what they wanted to see was more tolerance than one would get fmm. the hardliners of the left. Grossman, for instance, was angrily frustrated by the arrogant elitism of the urban activists in Toronto. He couldn't abide them because he felt he knew the people better than they dld. When the Tories lost that touch, we all know what happened. □

REVIEW

Taking sides

By *Rob Carrick*

Canada and the Arab World, edited by Tareq Y. Ismael, University of Alberta Press, 206 pages, 824.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88864 085 4) and 514.95 paper (ISBN 0 88864 086 2).

Canada and the Birth of Israel: A Study in Canadian Foreign Policy, by David J. Bercuson, University of Toronto Press, 291 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 8020 2568 4).

FOR ALL ITS solemn proclamations of neutrality in the affairs of the Middle East, in the eyes of the Arab countries Canada has always stood firmly on the side of Israel. This belief is central to the arguments introduced in *Canada and the Arab World, a* collection of essays as much about Canada's relationship with Israel as with her Arab neighbours.

Canada's favourable bias toward Israel is not documented in any statement of policy but in small incidents, such as Joe Clark's ultimately doomed decision to move the Canadian embassy in Israel to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv and in the more recent appointment of Stephen Lewis as Canadian ambassador to the United Nations. Lewis is said in one particular chapter to be considered an "ardent and active Zionist" by Arab diplomats in Ottawa and at the U.N. Tareq Ismael, the book's editor and author of an entry titled "Canadian Foreign Policy in the Arab World," considers Canada's bias to be rooted in its "prejudice against Arab peoples." Each day, he says, 'this prejudice — along with "an ignorance of the basic issues involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the strength of the Zionist lobby in consolidating a negative image of the Arab World" — is documented in the actions and statements of Canada's political leaders and journalists.

Peyton Lyon, a well-known Canadian political scientist. also describes a policy tilt toward Israel in his contribution, "Canada's National Interest and the Middle East." Lyon contends that the stated Canadian foreign policy goals of economic growth, social justice, and peace and security have been ill-served by our government's stance on the Mldle East. Inequitable treatment of the Arab countries has hindered the development of trade relationships and has been unproductive in addressing the problems of the Palestinians.

Additional chapters discuss Canadian policy regarding the Palestinians, trade relations with the Arab states, perceptions of Arab peoples in the West, and the role of Zionist interest groups in Canadian foreign policy. The book concludes with a verbatim transcript of the Stanfield Report, a review of Canadian Middle East policy prepared by former Conservative leader Robert Stanfield in the wake of Clark's embassy débâcle in 1979. The report advocated a posture of "fair mindedness" and called for justice and reconciliation to be Canada's objectives in its Middle East policy. Prom all accounts in *Canada and the Arab World, the* report *seems to* have been viewed positively by the Arabs. At the defeat of Joe Clark's government by 'Pierre Trudeau and the Liberals, however, the report was shelved. The Mulroney government has similarly shown no interest.

Canadian historian David Bercuson's *Canada and the Birth of Israel* functions as something of a rebuttal of *Canada and the Arab World.* Bercuson categorically rejects the Arab contention that Canada has always favoured Israel in its Middle East policy, illustrating through impressively extensive research that, in addressing the problems of the Middle East, Canada has served no party so well as herself.

Bercuson's book focuses on the years

following the Second World War when the newly formed U.N. attempted to solve one of its first major problems, the fate of Palestine. If Canada now enjoys the reputation of being an early supporter of the Zionist cause through its actions at the U.N.. then it does so under false pretences. In fact, Canada

did its best not to involve itself at all in the Palestine debate, instead contenting itself to shadow the position of the British. then holding control of Palestine under a League of Nations mandate.

One may have difficulty agreeing with the assertion offered in *Canada and the Arab World,* but this is irrelevant. The book's considerable value is that it provides a rarely encountered perspective on a much-discussed subject.

Canada's neutrality on the matter. and the solid record of its post-war diplomacy, however. made it an ideal participant in the U.N. proceedings directed at sorting out the Palestine situation. But only at the insistence 'of the U.S. did Canada participate.

Bercuson points out that although Prime Minister Mackenzie King had dispensed pm-Zionist rhetoric on a number of occasions, as had several of his predecessors, he had no intention of providing any support for the formation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Kii saw no real national interests being served by involving Canada in the Palestine debate, aside from trying to harmonize the differing positions of Canada's major allies, the United States and Britain. With the Cold War commencing simultaneously, Canada felt it important not to allow disagreement aver the Palestine issue to weaken the North Atlantic alliance.

With the passing of the Canadian government leadership to Louis St. Laurent from King, greater control over Canadian foreign policy went to Lester Pearson. It was under his authorization that Canada finally recognized Israel. This decision is attributed by Bercuson not to Pearson's support for the already-declared state of I&l (though Pearson was a sympathizer) but to the need to fall in line with the commitment of President Truman and the Americans to the existence of a Jewish state.

Bercuson is persuasive largely owing to the exhaustiveness of his research. As the reader is guided through what seems to be literally every decision and discussion that took place within the Canadian government on the Palestine question, it rapidly becomes obvious that, at least as far as the origins of the state of Israel are concerned, Canada played no favourites between Jews and Arabs.

The modem-day ramifications of Canada's role, when viewed against the ironically similar claims by Arabs and Zionist groups that Canada has always been a staunch supporter of the Zionist cause, are dealt with only briefly by Bercuson. Tbii is unfortunate, because the manner in which both sides of the Arab-Israeli diipute have co-opted Canadian history to suit their ends — for the Arabs, a realignment of Canadian policy to be fairer to the Arab countries, and for Israel. a continuance of Canada's support — is what makes Bercuson's history especially noteworthy. □

REVIEW

Drifting out of focus

By ***Kevin Roberts***

Upcoast Summers. by **Beth** Hill. **Horsdal & Schubart,** 156 pages, **$9.95 paper (ISBN** 0 **920663** 01 **X).**

THIS BOOK is based **on the diary** kept by British immigrants Francis and Amy Burrows, wealthy hobby-farmers in **Saanich,** B.C., who sailed **their 26-foot cruiser *Toketie*** up the Strait of **Georgia** in **the** summers of 193341, visiting **the** islands and **harbours** of **the** "Inside Coast." The book **makes interesting** historical **reading,** though **the prose** style is **plain** and flat — "nice trip," **"beautiful scenery."**

But it lacks a recognizable **focus.** We **wander with the** Burrows and **their two spaniels in and out** of **tiny coastal** inlets, camps, and **settlements,** and with "Johnson" **(their outboard** motor) up rivers. We **touch** briefly **on** the lives of a myriad of **fishermen,** loggers, settlers, and farmers. hear **the** usual **anecdotes about** beam, **cougars,** and wolves, and listen to yams about "characters," boats; and **commerce.** Some of it is amusing, some of it **pedestrian.** We hear about the **scavenging** of **Indian artifacts, which** Amy seems most interested in. **and the** innumerable photos and **films (now** apparently lost) that **Francis Burrows takes. The diary** is full of **vignettes — tinkering interminably** with ***Toketie*'s engine, playing cribbage, eating** meals with locals, **doing** jobs, **and taking expeditions.**

But **only a vague** picture **emerges** of just **who Amy** and **Francis** Burrows **were.** Amy rows naked, once, and Francis **loves** food. **They** don't want to visit **the "famous Barrymores** of **film** fame" **on** their **yacht,** for some **reason. Francis** has harsh words for stock speculators of the Julie, Alexandra, and Hercules **mines on** Phippr Arm. **They** like **their** dogs and **admire** well-kept farms. But in the end **these** two people emerge as shadowy **figures we don't** really **know; Beth** Hill, the author, appears to **lack** sufficient information to flesh out **character or** to expand events.

The limitations of the diary **entries** in **both** depth and **breadth** of understanding are obvious. and Hill's **choice** of what to enlarge **upon** in the **often** cryptic **notes** offers as **much frustration as** it does **enlightenment.** We are flooded with the names **of diverse people,** most of whom **are struggling** in **isolated settlements for** a **self-sufficient existence** in **the** hard economic **times** of **the** '30s. but only a few **are** given enough biographical background to make them come alive. **More than that, the** notion of **change — that this coastal** life-style is **disappearing, that the canneries and mines are** closing, the **fishing** and **logging** dying **out, the Coastal Steamship Co. folding, the** Depression gripping **tighter,** and the **threat** of the Second World War looming — scarcely impinger, nor **does** it **emerge in** the author's embellishment of **the** Burrows's notes.

There are a few **puzzling things** about **the** book's **production.** The **petroglyphs** or **pictographs that** so **fascinated Francis Burrows** that be pursued **them** endlessly are reproduced **at the beginning** of **each chapter** but without any explanation **or discussion. Considering** the number of names mentioned, it **is no** surprise that **the** index is inadequate. And **the** marine maps **on** the **first pages** are not **sufficient — they would** be far more **useful** if placed at the **beginning** of each chapter and **drawn in greater detail** so **that** the reader **could follow** accurately the **course** of **the *Toketie.***

Also, I wonder how many readers outside B.C. **would** be familiar with **unexplained** terms: **"humpies," "no-see-ums," "peavies,"** "black fish." "trollers," **"grilse,"** and **"bluebacks"? Similarly, Hill's discussion** of the Easthope **family** and their famous **engine omits the** fascinating **Christian fervour that led** them to **give** "equal time **for Jesus" in their advertising (They** printed "Jesus, Light of **the World"** at **the** bottom of all **their** ads, and added **the Gospels** of **Mark** and Luke to the **back** of most **Easthope engine** manuals.)

Deserted and looted **villages, decaying or** stolen totem **poles, desecrated middens,** and **burial houses** constitute the **background** for Amy Burrows's **incessant collecting** of beads, **arrowheads,** bracelets, and **other Indian artifacts.** Francis picks up **a skull he thinks might** interest **his** dentist. But we **are** not told **much** about **the** one photo **of two Indian women** at **Karkuklwees** village in **1934. Apart from a** few **"wise"** quotations (old **Chief Edward's "There are** plenty of **salmon** but they **are scarce," and** Francis Burrows's self-betraying **comment,** "I expect a **lot** of good stuff has been looted, **as** Indians are **always** careless in **leaving everything lying** about"), **the** Indians **are** an **unexplained,** ghost **like presence.**

Indeed, **this** distance from **the**

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material may be the book's central problem. The Burrows were an integral, uncritical part of their times, possibly insulated by their wealth from the real hardship about them, and it may be asking too much for the author to build upon their diary. As it is, we become immersed in a" interesting pastiche of events, vignettes, history, and folklore, but somehow, when we've finished reading *Uncoast Summers*, we feel we've just scratched the surface, that we're lost in all the detail, that an important petter" or shape or insight about these times *should* be there but isn't. In the end, the book does not irradiate its materiel, but merely reflects it. □

REVIEW

The plot thickens

By Jack **Batten**

Backrooms: A Story of Politics, by Colin Thatcher. Western Producer **Prairie** Books, **241 pages,** 518.95 **cloth (ISBN 0 88833 173 8).**

Deny **Deny Deny: The Rise end Fall of Colin Thatcher. by Garrett Wilson** end **Lesley** Wilson,. James **Lorimer,** 340 pages, **$24.95 cloth (ISBN** 0 88882 922 **2)** and **$16.95** paper **(ISBN** 0 88882 9214).

YOU THOUGHT THERE wasn't room for **any** more Colin Thatcher books? **Wrong.** Here **are** two more, one from the convicted **murderer himself** and another that offers a slightly different approach to en account of the Thatcher **trial** than we received in other books by Maggie **Siggins (*A Canadian Tragedy*, Macmillan) and Heather** Bird **(*Not Above the Law, Key*** Porter).

Colin Thatcher's own book sticks **almost exclusively to** politics, specifically to **Thatcher's** adventure.5 es a **Saskatchewan** Liberal **MLA who crossed** over to the Tories. ended up in the **cabinet** when the Conservatives **defeated** the NDP government in April, 1982, end **was tossed** out of his minister's job by Premier **Grant Devine** in January, **1983, one week** to the day before he murdered his ex-wife. Thatcher is **a fairly** able **writer,** and he seems blessed with **total recall** in **this** tale of the **twists** and turns of hi life **in** end **around** the **legislature.** Still, the book's appeal will be **mainly to citizens of** Saskatchewan and to political scientists **who** specialize **in** the minutiae of provincial politics.

For the **rest** of us, ***Backrooms*** is **valuable** only for **whatever** light it **might** shed on the murder case. Ales, that's not **much, though** if you **look** diligently, you **can** pick up **a revelation** or two. Thatcher **lets** us know. for example, that Dick **Collver, the** former Conservative **party** leader who provided a **piece** of damning **testimony at** the murder **trial,** is **a** me" who **can't** be **trusted** under **pressure.**

Thatcher comes close to **contempt** of court in his depiction of **Sandy MacPherson, the** Queen's Bench justice who **wrote** a devastating — end accurate — **analysis** of Thatcher's character in the **course** of hi **judgement** in the custody **action** Thatcher fought with his ex-wife. And Thatcher **also** drops this tantalizing **line** into his book: **"I** em not the **male** chauvinist **many** have portrayed me to be. but **I** concede that I **have** "ever **related** well to women."

Deny Deny Deny shows once **again** just how poorly **Thatcher "related" to one woman, Joann Wilson,** his former wife and his victim. For all of us **who've read Siggins's** and Bird's books, this is **familiar** territory. But it **remains** a **totally absorbing story,** and **part** of the appeal in **ploughing** through a third telling is to **search** out new **material or** fresh **angles.** The two Wilsons don't let us down. Largely that's because Garrett Wilson is .a senior Regina lawyer who has **had** personal or professional dealings with **almost** all the major **players** in the drama. The other **Wilson, Lesley, is** Garrett's daughter. **a** freelance wits who covered the **trial** for a **Prairie** newspaper.

The **Wilsons seem** to have bee" **particularly chummy** with the police detectives who spent **a year** end **a half** putting together the case against Thatcher, and **who** have opened **up** their memories&d **files to the two authors.** The materiel is intriguing stuff and **gives** the book a "ice focus. So does the **running commentary**

that Wilson **Sr.,** the old pm of the courtrooms, offers-of the handling of the trial by crow" end **defence.** He **points** out the goofs end the **triumphs** end sounds convincing in the **process.** The book **also** makes clear one fact. if anyone doubted it: justice was done **at** the **Colin** Thatcher murder **trial.** □

REVIEW

Lady of the house

By** Sharon **Drache

Wife Of . . . An **Irreverent** Account of **Life in Washington,** by **Sondra** Gotlieb, **Macmillan,** 208 **pages, $18.95** cloth **(ISBN** 0 7715 9899 5).

A SELECTION of Sondm Gotlieb's regular newspaper columns, "Letters from Washington," **this** irreverent book by the wife of the **Canadian ambassador** to the United **States,** Allen Gotlieb, is indeed a cultural triumph. Gotlieb **has proved** she is a writer of **uncompromising talent,** resourcefully drawing **from** material at the end of her **nose** — in this case, the edges of her dinner plate — to write what she knows but.

Gotlieb's **accounts** of life in official' Washington come in the guise of a series of letters **to** her bat friend, **Beverley,** in Ottawa. But Gotlieb is nowhere **near** the Canadian bumpkin she makes the writer of these letters **appear** to be. She uses her intelligence to assert repeatedly some of the **realities** of Canada, **a** country she respects, loves, **and** even seems to miss. **Her** friend **Beverley — an** independent **woman** whose husband George is her business partner (they **own a muffin** shop) — serves es her **alter** ego.

A **Washington** socialite, Popsie **Tribble,** acts es Gotlieb's second **alter** ego. **Tribble** knows the **ropes,** and when Gotlieb can't bring herself to **say** things the way she reads them, she **uses Tribble. Tribble** ticks off the categories of Powerful Jobs for **Sondra** — administration, **congress,** lobbyists, and the press. She also tells Sondm that Powerful Jobs **come** to **parties** to trade information with other Powerful Jobs they haven't made contact with during the day. **Sondra** passes on **Tribble's** information to her friend **Beverley:**

> Powerful **Jobs** become **Profitable** Jobs when Powerful Jobs leave **government. Profitable** Jobs **are** more sociable unless **they** suffer **from "decompression," a Washington** cede **word** for. **an emotional state** caused **by loss** of power. **Close-To's don't** have **Powerful Jobs or Profitable** Jobs. They **are people** the Candidate **trusts;** they have power **to** whisper in the **ear** of **the** Candidate on behalf of others. A **real Close-To never has political** ambitions. which might **cause** the Candidate **distress.**

AU the code words are **real enough** to be **universal** but the individuals who **play** the **parts are** pointedly drawn if **not** per-

sonally named. Of the entire cast, Mr. Ambassador is the most remote, though Gotlieb manages a few lines to show that he, like all persons well into mid-life, tends to become a parody of himself. For instance, if Mr. Ambassador hasn't read a newspaper in more than 24 hours, he suffers withdrawal symptoms.

As "wife of" Mr. Ambassador, Gotlieb has guests to the embassy residence for her country's sake. When Popsie Tribble tells her, "You have a heavy burden in this country. Canada is just not chic . . . it would be more chic if you spoke a foreign language," Sondra gets annoyed, rebutting, "We do, we're bilingual, so we speak French."

At a dinner in honour of Canada's prime minister, Sondra becomes furious when nobody seems to notice the Canadian national dishes she goes to great trouble to provide. Guests mistake the beaver-tail soup fo consommé with gristle, and not one person recognizes that the mousse is made with Canadian maple syrup. Popsie Tribble immediately universalizes the wound to her hostess's national pride: "In Powertown people don't really care what they eat or drink. But they know if the fare is not as impressive as their power."

Generally the mood of the book is one of frivolity, a sort of party in itself, an intimate meeting with an audience Sondra Gotlieb certainly deserves and may even prefer. In her candid introduction she tells readers that writing comes more naturally to her than being dignified. This protest ably informs her work: the undressing of public personalities. Certainly it keeps readers glued to her text and may even win a Leacock medal. □

FIRST NOVELS

Double trouble

Though two novelists base their plots on remarkably similar situations, they end up with amazingly different books

By Douglas Glover

IN TORONTO, in 1915, a 17-year-old English maid named Carrie Davies shot and killed her employer, Charles "Bert" Massey, scion of the wealthy and upright Massey family. Suspicions that Bert had tried to molest the girl prompted the publicity-wary Masseys to attempt a cover-up by having Carrie shunted into an insane asylum without a trial. But crusading newsman Archie Fisher of the *Telegram* broke the story, raising a storm of public controversy. Ultimately, Carrie was found not guilty by an all-male jury and set free, thus proving, as one contemporary journalist put it, "there is a fate worse than death."

Frank Jones's fictionalized account of the Massey murder case, Master and Maid (Irwin, 337 pages, $19.95 cloth), is a fascinating and sympathetic portrait of the people, the place, and the era. Jones sees Carrie Davies as a focus for the aspirations and cross-currents of an age: the impact of the Jazz Age, the First World War, and the manufacturing boom on staid, buttoned-up Toronto; nascent feminism; political corruption; classism, upstairs-downstairs shenanigans, and aristocratic hypocrisy (some of his writing is reminiscent of John O'Hara); the treatment of the insane; and the heyday of partisan journalism.

Dealing as it does with sexual ignorance and sexual crimes, *Master and Maid* could have been lurid or facetious or both. But the overriding feeling one gets is that Jones cares for his characters in the sense that he is careful about not selling them short, either by sensationalizing them or by mocking them. This approach somewhat softens the effect of his devastating deconstruction of the Massey myth (we see mostly the warts — they come off in Jones's version as hypocritical, vindictive, petty, squabbling snobs).

Jones, a columnist at the Toronto *Star*, is clearly a newspaperman of the old school, a curious, skeptical humanist, to whom the scent of cover-up is always irresistible. But *Master and Maid* takes him far beyond the usual newsman's brief — it is a carefully constructed novel that moves deliberately from scene to scene, each scene designed to illuminate some aspect of Toronto's social history while at the same time advancing a plot that remains suspenseful to the last chapter. One senses a tension throughout between the journalist (occasionally the omniscient narrator breaks in to tell us what will happen to this or that character far in the future) and the novelist. But, on balance, I think the novelist wins.

Sarah Sheard's novel Almost Japanese (Coach House, 126 pages, $6.95 paper) bears a startling resemblance to the winner of the Seal Books first novel prize, *A Certain Mr. Takahashi* by Ann Ireland. Both books deal with an adolescent girl's obsession with a Japanese musician (Sheard: conductor, mid-30s, drives a white Camaro; Ireland: pianist, almost 30, drives a black Thunderbird) who happens to move into the house next door. Both girls keep a log of his comings and goings, observed from a bedroom window. Both bake him something by way of introducing themselves (brownies, a cake). Both snoop in his belongings when he's out of the room. Both keep bits of memorabilia. Both loiter in the street waiting for him to drive home from rehearsal. And both suffer for years after he has left Toronto, until, in fact, they both meet him one last time and exorcize the old ghost.

Remarkably, though both Sheard and Ireland start from much the same place (material and theme), they end up with amazingly different novels. *A Certain Mr. Takahashi* is tightly plotted (perhaps a touch over-plotted), richly textured, and written in a style that is often lyrical. *Almost Japanese*, by comparison, is flat, under-plotted, and literal. Here are the two protagonists fantasizing about their new neighbour. Sheard:

> When he walked around outside did he hear things differently? Could he read symphony scores as easily as books?

Did he speak English? Was he lonely in a city where no one spoke Japanese?

Ireland:

World famous, not quite thirty years old, and perhaps (dare we imagine?) *lonely* in a new city. Did he speak English? We asked around. Some. He spoke Music, the word that was still a mocha cream in our hearts, a bleeding centre of dissolving sensuality we were so eager to swallow.

Where Ireland writes a scene, Sheard will write a sentence. Sheard:

I began to keep a window log.

Ireland:

My bedroom was high on the third floor facing the street — and his house. Colette's was downstairs at the back facing only trees and alleyway, but she never complained. I had a clipboard to which I fixed several sheets of graph paper and so began the Chart. Like a detective I noted everything, in no-nonsense factual form . . . I took care not to be seen. To this end I devised a periscope using paper towel rolls and mirrors. . . .

The biggest technical problem the authors face is how to keep the Japanese musician *in the book* after he's left Toronto. Ireland succeeds through two devices: (1) She tells the story of the adolescent relationship in a series of flashbacks distributed throughout her novel. (2) She invents a plot in which the protagonist's sister actually goes on seeing and sleeping with the musician. Sheard fails to come up with any solution. Except as he is bodied forth in her heroine's somewhat abstract and unconvincing yearnings, her male lead just disappears until the final scene of the novel.

This is an interesting study in real-life reversal: books published by literary presses are often supposed to be more imaginative, risk-taking, and "written" than books published for the mass market. In this case, the opposite is true. *A Certain Mr. Takahashi* is far richer in imagery, stylistic complexity and felicity, character, and humour. Where Sheard's protagonist is just an adolescent girl, Ireland's is a musician — and Ireland plays throughout her novel with the music-musician motif, making it resonate, adding meaning, expanding and complicating.

Where Sheard's protagonist thinks, "I love the idea of growing miniature trees, raking gravel into patterns, pushing six square feet of dirt into a dream garden," Ireland's actually does it. Ireland weaves Japanese lore and myth through her novel, always as an expression of character or the character's obsession. Sheard has much less lore at her fingertips, and when her protagonist actually makes a trip to Japan, what we get reads more like travelogue than part of a novel about teenage love.

Memoirs of God (Lone Pine, 219 pages, $8.95 paper), by Clement Leibovitz, is one man's attempt to solve, once and for all, certain niggling

"philosophical" problems in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. It is very thinly disguised as a novel about God being deprived of his omnipotence and sent to earth to live with us humans. The story is told from God's point of view. But is it really God? Leibovitz plays coy, nesting his novel in a series of introductions and prefaces. It could be that we are only reading the ravings of a madman, incarcerated in an asylum in France for thinking he's God.

Leibovitz's conception of God stalls at such a level of puerility that it fairly takes one's breath away. Jehovah turns out to be a rather whiny, male chauvinist, hasty, bloodthirsty sort of guy who through the course of the book (his trial by other deities from other possible universes and his subsequent adventures on earth) learns about the equality of women, the evil of genocide, and other up-to-date notions — yet fails signally to come to grips with, say, Marxism, Islam, or Vatican II. Leibovitz seems not to have read any work of theology or philosophy more recent then *Jeremiah*.

Memoirs of God is only marginally more interesting on the artistic level. There might just have been enough dramatic material here for a whimsical short story along the lines of Bernard Malamud's "Angel Levine" or one of Isaac Bashevis Singer's haunted comedies, but it is completely squandered as a framework for tedious chapters of argument and proof. Really, what are we to make of pages in which characters say things like:

"Consider this minimal configuration which feels the minimal sensation of existence. Remove a single one of the N atoms and the sensation would disappear. The property of minimally feeling existence is not inherent in one of these N atoms, but is a collective property of the N atoms."

Bagdad (Macmillan, 224 pages, $15.95 cloth) is half of a silly pseudo-Arabian fantasy by Ian Dennis (according to his publisher, "a computer whiz at Queen's Park"). Its loose plot revolves around a religio-political one-man revolution in ancient Syria. Throughout the narrative the author interpolates Arabian Night-ish "tales," such as the story of how the protagonist is conceived while his mother is being raped by an *Ifrit*. The noble woman resolves not to enjoy the rape, but has a sort of involuntary orgasm when a piece of fruit falls on the *Ifrit's* back. " 'O! O!' cried out she in her chagrin. 'The *fruit*! The *fruit* is ripe! O! *Ripe Fruit*!' "

Here is the Grand Vizier describing the Empress's lesbian lover:

> "She is indeed fulgent," he murmured, "possessed of a form, whose full charms can but narrowly be surpassed. Supple, lithe and lissom — another certain disquietener of poets. With such thick black hair, and visage exotic and sharp-boned, like a figure slashed from subterranean rock by the scimitar of some pre-Adamite sultan of the lower earth."

This is what the French critics, quite rightly, would call dead language, empty of meaning. I don't think it is meant as parody; if it is, it's bad parody. Perhaps it is meant to be funny but, if so, it is the sort of humour you run across in contests to see who can write the worst opening sentence of a novel. I can understand finding one badly written sentence funny — but 200 pages of them?

Worse, it's not even finished. *Bagdad* ends, as it were, in mid-careen, with the protagonist, leader of the "Ripe Fruit Party," disappearing into his tent to have sex with one of his followers, a young man called only "the young-man-lover." We are promised/threatened with a sequel later this year. □

INTERVIEW

Robert Harlow

'A novel is often considered to be an entertainment. But the best novels always try to get to the bottom of a problem'

By Geoff Hancock

ROBERT HARLOW was born in Prince Rupert, B.C., in 1923, and grew up in Prince George, the setting of his Lindon trilogy: *Royal Murdoch* (Macmillan, 1962), *A Gift of Echoes* (Macmillan, 1965), and *Scann* (Sono Nis, 1972). His fourth book, *Making Arrangements* (1978) — recently reissued by McClelland & Stewart — is a comic novel about horse-racing, and *Paul Nolan* (McClelland & Stewart, 1983) is an exploration of emotional failure. After attending the writers' workshop at the University of Iowa, Harlow joined the CBC as a public affairs producer, and in 1953, with Robert Weaver, created the radio program *Anthology*. In 1959, Harlow joined Earle Birney and others to start the literary magazine *Prism International*. In 1965 he became founding head of the creative writing department at the University of British Columbia, a position he held until 1977. Harlow continues to teach at UBC and at the Ganaraska Writers' Colony in Port Hope, Ont. On a recent visit to Toronto he spoke to Geoff Hancock about his new novel, *Felice: A Travelogue* (Oolichan), which came about after a trip to Poland:

Robert Harlow

Books in Canada: *What does Poland mean to you?*

Robert Harlow: France, Spain, Italy, and England are tourist places for Canadians, but Poland is central Europe. Poles live a life very different from any other people I have run into. There are few places for tourists. Poland is a country with a lot of money, but no goods to buy. Families spend their days waiting in food lines. Despite this, Poles love flowers, dogs, kids. They have great poster art, and they are great engineers. They are also great jazz players, with ensembles as good as any in the world.

BiC: *When were you in Poland?*

Harlow: At the peak of Solidarity's power. Nine million people had joined this group. It was an emotional experience. People had come from all over the world just to sit in their Warsaw headquarters and be near the people who were running it. Here's a country that's been overrun for 1,000 years, invaded back and forth from the Teutonic knights to the Germans in the last war, and they are still Polish. Talk about a sense of identity!

BiC: *Felice, in her travelogue, also learns about living in Canada after her trip to Poland.*

Harlow: I've been interested for a long time in oppression. As Canadians we are culturally oppressed by our next-door neighbour. Russia is as big to Poland as the U.S. is to us. I had gone to Poland to research a Second World War story, but I never got past Warsaw. A different story happened to me. I realized that I needed to bring somebody here who would be open enough to see some parallels, and also get to the bottom of herself. I didn't want her to get intellectually what oppression was, but to get it physically in her body and soul. Then I wanted her to walk away from it a free and powerful person.

BiC: *Was the character of Felice always in your mind, or, did you discover a Jungian anima aspect of yourself?*

Harlow: I discovered the anima aspect. I originally thought of writing a story about a man going to Poland, but men in our culture are not considered to be oppressed. I thought it would be wrong to send an American there. If what happened to Felice happened to an American, they would have returned and bombed the place. So I was forced more and more into a book that had a woman's sensibilities. She went as a

PHOTOGRAPH BY EVANGELOS

woman and as a Canadian. That's two kinds of oppression right there. I also needed someone who could be open. I don't think men are that open. They struggle in different ways.

BiC: *Writing out of a female point of view is new for you. Was it problematical?*

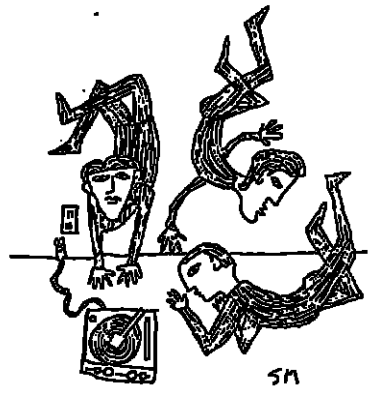
Harlow: I held tightly onto the fact that some of the best novelists in history have written out of the consciousness of the opposite sex. I thought I'd give it a try. I didn't find it difficult. I think there is a great deal of the female in males, and vice versa. When I was through I checked with some women friends, some in their 40s, some in their 60s, to see whether I had gotten it. Most agreed I had.

BiC: *The book starts off fairly simply. The family gets on the boat, takes a journey, then returns. But you've layered it so other things start happening.*

Harlow: The travelogue was the technical vehicle on which I could pile the other material and run it along. I also designed the novel as if it were a train. It starts slowly, and gradually picks up speed. Felice becomes more involved and more open and more motivated by the physical and mental adventures that happen to her. By the time she gets to Auschwitz, it's all downhill from there. The last couple of hundred pages are very fast.

BiC: *Do you still see the novel as a flexible form?*

Harlow: It's the most flexible form in the world. It has no limits. Perhaps



technical experiments have gone as far as they can. But the experimentation that goes on in great novels is always in the content. Nietzsche said the most radical thing you can do is get to the bottom of a problem. A novel is quite often considered to be an entertainment, which it is. But the best novels always try to get to the bottom.

BiC: *Can oppressors ever be forgiven? Can Germany ever be forgiven? You make it clear in* Felice *that the answer is probably no.*

Harlow: I make two points in the book. One is that if you go far enough down to the bottom forgiveness is there. Some Germans have probably forgiven themselves. It's important. One character says, "We sentenced the Germans to life, and then suspended the sentence so we wouldn't have to forgive them." That's a double way of dealing with oppressors. I hope the book is not anti-German. But I wanted to make it clear there is a personal responsibility to be decent, to be a real person.

I was a bomber pilot in that war. What made me angry when I visited Auschwitz was that Churchill, Roosevelt, and the Pope knew — and if they had told me, *I* would have known — that this was where the war was. The war wasn't in German cities and French towns. The war was where six million people were killed for no reason. It isn't just the Germans. Every day, some country has massacres — terrible things happen to people. This is what the Auschwitz survivor says to Felice: "When I got out I thought the world would change." But it hasn't. □

LETTERS

Not Kosher

SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, I read Kathleen Moore's review of *Essential Words: An Anthology of Jewish Canadian Poetry* (November), and having an interest in the subject, I decided to test her evaluation directly. Now, having read the book, I am forced to conclude that in a personal perceptual sense, Moore in effect read a somewhat different work.

The poem she displays as exemplifying the "narrow-mindedness" of the anthology — George Jonas's "Once More" — in fact criticizes anyone who passively accedes to murder, not only anti-Semites. The first two lines (Moore's excerpt begins on the third) make this clear: "Kirov was short, Solon will rot in jail,/even the smallest hold-up man will hang." Jonas nowhere implies that "only Wasps are capable of imposing stereotypes."

Does the anthology provide us with a representative selection, a mirror of modern Canadian Jewish poetry? Can one study it to get an accurate sense of what has been written? To these questions, I would have to answer "Yes."

Unlike Moore, I fail to see the "narrow-mindedness" or the "exclusive" in the collection, nor do I see it in the rather ethnocentric accusation of "an insular dialogue of Jew with Jew, rather than as Canadians who also happen to be Jewish."

Ironically, two of the four poems described by Moore as "fine pieces," those by Avi Boxer, express the intense Jewish alienation in the world that she appears to reject as a legitimate central focus for a Canadian Jewish poetry anthology.

Furthermore, Moore claims that the book's terminological and religious references "bar easy access across the cultural border." It happens that out of the 94 poems only 13 use Yiddish or Hebrew words. Some are defined within the poem, some are very familiar (i.e. *alph* or *Kaddish*). The great majority of poems do not contain obscure religious references. Still, a second edition would be improved by a glossary.

The general alternative suggested by Moore is, I believe, a propagandistic one: "a joyful tone for an anthology" and "a celebration together with all Canadians of one people's particular gifts." This would impose a preconceived thematic straitjacket upon the anthology.

If there are common threads running through Canadian Jewish poetry, they will be far better explored by using the vague criteria of creativity and strength of expression rather than general thematic divisions. It is for this reason that *Essential Words* is an interesting collection that one can work with effectively and use for a better understanding of Canadian poetry.

Shloime Perel
Montreal

IN HER REVIEW of Seymour Mayne's *Essential Words: An Anthology of Jewish Canadian Poetry* (November) Kathleen Moore scolds a number of the contributors and suggests that it is somehow unCanadian for Jewish poets to testify to their real experience of Canada if it happens to contradict her vision of Canada as the place where we must all clap hands and sing the songs she likes together. She complains of "Biblical references obscure to the non-Jew" — surely her own shortcoming and one not shared by most literate gentiles I know.

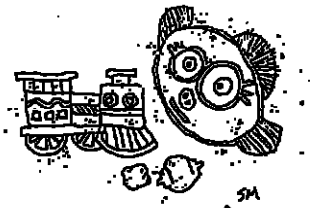
Further, anyone who knows our own recent history knows that Canada threw open its doors to Nazis and fascists after the war while still maintaining restrictions on the immigration of Jews, and would therefore perceive immediately the point of the George Jonas poem, in which he reflects on his neighbours, and which she quotes at length and completely misinterprets. It is insulting and certainly has nothing to do with literary considerations to read a review in which I am told what I should write and what I must not write, regardless of the urgency and validity of my perceptions, on pain of incurring the displeasure of the people with fragile literary resources and restricted as well as restrictive consciousness who are, as she obviously sees herself, the legitimate Canadians.

Moore suggests that this anthology should have been modelled on *The Precious Legacy*, a small selection from thousands of religious artifacts collected by the Germans from the hundreds and hundreds of Jewish communities they destroyed. She likes the idea of joining hands in quiet piety and celebrating the fact that some few survived. I find her demand for a blinkered, grateful, undisturbing art pretty chilling. Just go on singing "Mammy" and do your buck and wing. No, thanks, I have higher hopes for Canada.

Adele Wiseman
Toronto

I READ WITH mixed feelings of incredulity and dismay Kathleen Moore's review of Seymour Mayne's anthology, *Essential Words*. The review strikes me as a remarkably obtuse and insensitive reading. Moore's complaints are not only trivial but irrelevant. Easy access as a criterion for literary and cultural exchange simply will not do. Literature is not a customs clearing-house. What is easy of access in literature is all too often banal and platitudinous. As to the objection about Biblical obscurities: has Moore looked into Milton recently? *Paradise Lost* is replete with Biblical obscurities and obliqueness. But then, perhaps, Moore does not read Milton. Her style suggests that she does not. I am not Jewish nor am I learned in Jewish lore, yet I found *Essential Words* very accessible.

To Moore's objection that the poems in *Essential Words* are exclusive and insular, a "dialogue of Jew with Jew rather than . . . Canadians who also happen to be Jewish," I would reply: so is Alexander Pope, in *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*. Not very accessible is our Alexander, and very literati to fellow literati. Nonetheless, a fine poem. God-in-Gumboots! Has it come to this that Jew ought not to address Jew, nor Mennonite address Doukhobour unless on a subject of easy access such as the Wheat Pool or the Milk Board?



What I found most rewarding in my reading of the book was the discovery of a universal and *reassuring humanity* in this dialogue of Jew with Jew. The poets there reaffirm the paramount imperatives of tradition, its importance to community, its profound relevance to the shaping of a literary style. They focus on the resonances of history and how these echo in the life of the individual.

Moore should be reminded that cultural diversity is not confined to either ethnic schmalz (gefilte fish and bagels at the easy-access corner delicatessen) nor to cultural exotica (*The Precious Legacy* exhibition). If Moore is so moved by Jewish art, she might have sought to find some evidence of a *tallith* or a *teffilin* on display to dispel her unfamiliarity with these terms. It is difficult to imagine anyone who claims familiarity with the work of A.M. Klein having trouble with a *minyan* or a *Tzadik*.

The anthology is also rebuked for its "black vision of Jewish fate," its lack of joy. The Holocaust was not a cheering experience! Centuries of persecution may well incline the persecuted to a melancholy habit of mind. Nor is the invidious comparison Moore makes with *The Precious Legacy* valid. *Essential Words* is, in part, a record of the conse-

quence in the individual lives of Jews of the concentrated effort of the Nazis to destroy what *The Precious Legacy* celebrated.

More serious is Moore's misreading of George Jonas's poem, "Once More." This is not the imposition of a stereotype on the gentile character; it is a comment on the ubiquitous potential for evil in the soul of everyman, be he Wasp, Jew, Teuton, or Slav.

What is in the end most disquieting in Moore's review is her uneasiness with what is not a commonplace of her own experience and her antipathy to the legitimately recondite — in short, anti-intellectualism. Given these apparent inclinations, Moore might do better to give up on books about Jewish culture and religion as such books err, as Moore has pointed out, in the directions of the recondite and the rigours of metaphysics. She might well consider books on comparative cuisine.

Marya Fiamengo
West Vancouver, B.C.

Kathleen Moore replies: My remarks about special Jewish terminology were made, not because *I* do not understand them, but because I *do* understand them and felt that readers were being short-changed of vital detail in the absence of a glossary.

Fiamengo has twisted my words to create an excuse for hers. I did *not* say the excellence of a poem depends on its "accessibility." I *did* say this collection (the overall quality of whose writing I still do not consider high), would have benefited from a glossary, which could also have included what I referred to as "Biblical references obscure to the non-Jew," not what Fiamengo implied I called "biblical obscurities."

Not only am I fairly well versed in what she calls "Jewish lore" but I have been a student of Kabbalistic doctrine, with all its implications of intense intellectualism. I am equally a student of structurally related areas of spiritual discourse in other religious traditions. I have, moreover, received my poetic initiation in direct line from A.M. Klein by way of two his apt students, both of them anthologized in *Essential Words*. However, I still have a mind of my own and can judge for myself whether or not a book achieves its stated aims.

Callousness on my part concerning the Holocaust is insinuated. Having co-authored a children's play for a Montreal Synagogue — Samson in modern dress as the hero of a Jewish freedom movement in Russia — and having written a poetry course for a Montreal school program, subsequently used by special request as part of a children's educational project on the Holocaust in some Massachusetts elementary schools, I think I am very far from being callous.

As for Jonas's poem, I did not misread it. I quoted the passage that typifies its attack on the specifically Christian Canadians it calls "murderers" of the Jews. Fiamengo must be fooling herself if she thinks that an author is incapable of expressing his own intolerance (however understandable or uncharacteristic) in some of his work; or that once such expression has been put into print, it can be rationalized away with elevated and elasticized exegesis. Contrast with Jonas's poem, for example, the work of Abraham Sutzkever, in superb translation by Seymour Mayne and others. I am persuaded that Sutzkever, poet and Holocaust survivor — who was on the one hand persecuted by murdering gentiles and on the other befriended and saved by gentiles — would have more sensitivity than to hang them *all* from the same gallows for a *poetic effect*!

POETRY AND PEACE

PERHAPS SUSAN YATES (letter, January/February) should have been given the job of reviewing Kevin Roberts's fine book of poetry, *Nanoose Bay Suite*. It would have provided her with an even wider platform from which to wax eloquent about the "handful of stoic souls" she describes lovingly and at length in her letter. One gets the impression that the purpose of her letter was not so much to criticize me as it was to publicize her cause.

Clearly I misunderstood. I thought I was reviewing poetry: Yates expected me to nuke the nukes. Yates writes, "Perhaps Carpenter thinks, as I expect readers of the review would conclude, that Roberts has forsaken literary integrity to include in his suite of poems the war-*angst* theme because it is a current topic of common concern and can be slotted easily into literary works." What a self-serving and irresponsible accusation! At no point in my review do I make such a suggestion.

Reader, a moment of your time. Find your back issue of *Books in Canada*, October, 1985. Turn to page 26. Read my review. Am I unjustly slandered? Am I out of line to suggest that Yates be more judicious; that she be less bloody in pursuing her goals; that she take a long walk off a short pier? I would of course love to cover the event she refers to for *BiC*, but I don't think it likely that it would fly me out. I'd like to go. I've never been to Nanoose Bay.

J.D. Carpenter
Toronto

RECOMMENDED

THE FOLLOWING Canadian books were reviewed in the previous issue of *Books in Canada*. Our recommendations don't necessarily reflect the reviews:

NON-FICTION

Milestones II: The Life and Times of Miles Davis Since 1960, by Jack Chambers, University of Toronto Press. As in *Milestones I* (which surveyed Davis's career from the mid-1940s to 1960), Chambers combines sensitive musical analysis with a literate and exhaustive biographical study of one of the most enigmatic figures — and certainly one of the most important musicians — of our time.

POETRY

No Feather, No Ink, Thistledown Press. Against the considerable risk of redundancy, this compilation successfully gathers poetry, illustrations, photographs, and the occasional folk song into what is and what will quite possibly remain the literary hallmark in dealing with Louis Riel and the North West Rebellion.

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:

Albert Perlin: A Biography, by Francis G. Hollohan, Jesperson Press.

Atlantic Fisheries and Coastal Communities, edited by Cynthia Lamson and Arthur J. Hanson, Institute for Resource and Environmental Studies/Dalhousie Ocean Studies Program.

The Best of Crocus Coulee, by Betty Kilgour, Detselig Enterprises.

Birds of Ontario, by J. Murray Speirs, Natural Heritage/Natural History.

Birds of the Cottage Country, by William C. Mansell, McBain Publications.

blind zone, by Steven Smith, Aya Press.

The Brave Never Write Poetry, by Jones, Coach House Press.

Caught in the Act, by Corey Reay, Simon & Pierre.

Cheap Sentiment, by Justin Lewis, Lean Hunter Publications.

Corrections, by Victor Coleman, Coach House.

The Creating Word, edited by Patricia Demers, University of Alberta Press.

Double Standards, by Lola Lemire Tostevin, Longspoon Press.

Dylan Thomas: The Collected Letters, edited by Paul Ferris, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

The Economic Analysis of Taxes, by Vladimir Salyzyn, Detselig Enterprises.

Éditer Hubert Aquin, Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa.

Emily Murphy: Rebel, by Christine Mander, Simon & Pierre.

Encounter with the Self: A Jungian Commentary on William Blake's Illustrations of the Book of Job, by Edward F. Edinger; Inner City Books.

Essays on Chaucerian Irony, by Earle Birney, U of T Press.

Financial Times of Canada RRSPs 1986: The Authoritative Guide, by Steven G. Kelman, Methuen.

Forgotten Soldiers, by Fred Gaffen, Theytus Books.

Four Went to the Civil War, by Lois E. Darroch, McBain Publications.

Fragile Moments/moments fragiles, by Jacques Brault, translated by Barry Callaghan, Exile Editions (1985).

From the Dark Wood, by Victor Coleman, Underwhich Editions (1985).

Gas! The Battle for Ypres, 1915, by J. McWilliams and R.J. Steel, Vanwell Publishing.

The Great B.C. Alphabet Book, by Nicola Morgan, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

Great Canadian Lives: Portraits in Heroism to 1867, by Karen Ford *et al.*, Doubleday.

A Guide to Canadian Diplomatic Relations, 1925-1983, by Linwood DeLong, Canadian Library Association.

Headframe:, by Birk Sproxton, Turnstone Press.

Intermetropolitan Migration in Canada, by R. Paul Shaw, NC Press.

Jetset: The North Atlantic Route, by Mark Clark, Jet Lag Publications.

Law for Professional Engineers (2nd Ed.), by D.L. Marston, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Leap of Faith: The Macdonald Report, by Rod McQueen, Cowan & Company.

A Light Character, by Judith Copithorne, Coach House Press.

The Light in the Piazza, by Elizabeth Spencer, Penguin.

Lumbering Songs from the Northern Woods, by Edith Fowke, NC Press.

The Merchant-Millers of the Humber Valley, by Sidney Thomson Fisher, NC Press.

Misguided Missiles: Canada, the Cruise and Star Wars, by Simon Rosenblum, James Lorimer.

More French, s'il vous plaît, edited by W. Russ McGillivray, Canadian Parents for French.

Mother and Daughter Relationships in the Manawaka Works of Margaret Laurence, by Helen M. Buss, University of Victoria.

1986 Writer's Handbook of Canadian Markets, Canadian Writer's Journal.

No Fixed Admission, by Jacquie Smyth, Turnstone Press.

Non Hystron Proteron, by Clive Fencott, Underwhich Editions (1984).

Nothing By Mouth, by Karen MacCormack, Underwhich Editions (1984).

Origins, edited by J.R. Struthers, Red Kite Press.

Other Names for the Heart, by David Wevill, Exile Editions (1985).

Parisian Novels, by Richard Trahlar, The Front Press (1983).

Picking the Morning Colour, by Kevin Roberts, Oolichan Books.

The Picture on the Wall, by Percy Janes, Creative Publishers (1985).

The Play of Language and Spectacle: A Structural Reading of Selected Texts by Gabrielle Roy, by Ellen Reisman Babby, ECW Press.

The Prosperous Years: The Economic History of Ontario, 1939-75, by K.J. Rea, U of T Press.

The Rainbow Warrior Affair, by Richard Shears and Isobelle Gidley, Irwin.

Regional Economic Development: Canada's Search for Solutions, by Donald J. Savoie, U of T Press.

Robert Kroetsch, by Robert Lecker, Twayne Publishers (U.S.)

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The Sherlock Holmes ABC Book, by Andy and Bill Paton, Simon & Pierre.

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Student's Dictionary of Music, compiled and edited by Wayne Gilpin, Frederick Harris Music.

Studies in Literature and the Humanities: Innocence of Intent, by George Whalley, McGill-Queen's University Press.

This Won't Last Forever, by Colin Morton, Longspoon Press.

The Traders: Inside Canada's Stock Markets, by Alexander Ross, Totem.

Voyage to the Other Extreme, by Marilú Mallet, translated by Alan Brown, Véhicule Press.

Waiting for Saskatchewan, by Fred Wah, Turnstone Press.

Who's Afraid of Sigmund Freud?, by T.P. Millar, Palmer Press.

Women and Politics in Canada, by Janine Brodie, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Working Lives: Vancouver 1886-1986, by the Working Lives Collective, New Star Books.

Writers of Newfoundland and Labrador, by Lisa de Leon, Jesperson Press.

You Can't Rely on Dreams: The Education of the Physically Handicapped in Metro Toronto, by Patrick Donahue, Learnxs Press.

CANWIT NO. 109

Avoid run-on sentences they are hard to read.

Don't use no double negatives.

THE ABOVE are examples of what William Safire, language columnist for the *New York Times Magazine*, refers to as "fumblerules" — perverse rules of grammar that violate themselves in the course of being stated. Contestants are invited to lay down similarly misguided strictures (being careful to never, ever split their infinitives) for a prize of $25. Deadline: April 1. Address: CanWit No. 109, *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 3X9.

Results of CanWit No. 107

OUR REQUEST for TV listing-style summaries of Canadian books prompted (as we had hoped) some misleadingly oversimplified plots. The winner is Jane Parker of Vancouver for the following less-than-stirring fare:

The Tin Flute: The first rung is always the hardest when climbing the social ladder in Montreal.

Obasan: A family's move from city to country life as seen through a young girl's eyes.

Honourable mentions:

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz: A young businessman finds true love hard to reconcile with profits.

Fifth Business: When an old tramp comes to town, nothing is never quite the same again.

— Barry Baldwin, Calgary

Anne of Green Gables: The story of a young woman coping with discrimination in a close-knit community, as told by L.M. Montgomery, who lived there.

— B. McLorg, Nanaimo, B.C.

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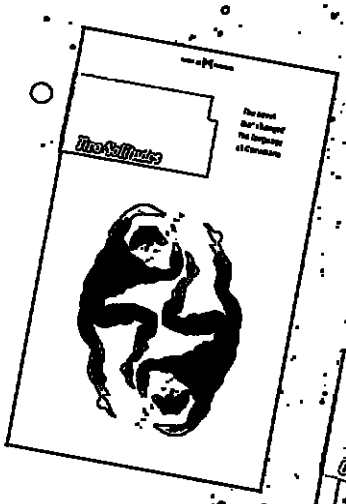

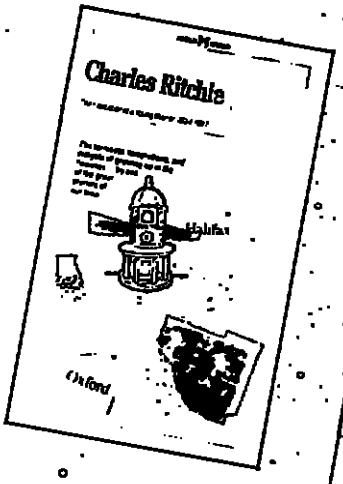

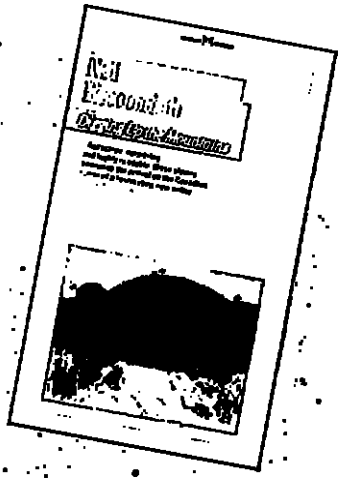

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