

BOOKS

I N C A N A D I A

THE MAN BEHIND THE MIKE

An interview with Peter Gzowski

A profile of
Governor-General's
Award-winning novelist
M. T. Kelly

WHAT IS A
CANADIAN LITERATURE?
An excerpt from a new book
by John Metcalf

George Woodcock on Hugh Garner, Norman Smithe, and the Trade, and
reviews of new books by Pierre Berton, Jeffery Martin, Daphne Marlatt,
Diane Francis, and J. McInerney



FEATURES

bpNichol 1944-1988 7
George Grant 1918-1988 8

INTERVIEW

The Man **Behind the Mike**
Peter Czowski offers some candid insights into his public and private selves.
 By Paul Stuewe 13

ESSAY

What is a Canadian Literature?
John Metcalf casts a critical eye on cultural nationalists in an excerpt from his latest book. 17

PROFILE

Spirit wrestler
 M. T. Kelly is athmed to the beauty of legend and land.
 By Nancy Wigston 21

REVIEWS

FEATURE REVIEWS

The Storms Below The Turbulent Life and Times of Hugh Garner.
 by Paul Stuewe 2 5
The Free Trade Deal, edited by Duncan Cameron; *Free Trade, Free Canada: How Free Trade Will Make Canada Stronger*, edited by Earle Gray; *Knocking on the Back Door: Canadian Perspectives on the Political Economy of Freer Trade with the United States*, edited by Allan Maslone and Stanley L. Winer 2 6
Spoils of Power: The Politics of Patronage. by Jeffrey Simpson 28

Brief Reviews

Short notices on recent fiction, non-fiction, and poetry 9
The Arctic Grail: The Quest for the North West Passage and the North Pole 1818-1909, by Pierre Berton; **Frozen in Time: Unlocking the Secrets of the Franklin Expedition**, by Owen Beattie and John Griger 3 0
Hello Sweetheart . . . Get Me Rewrite: Remembering the Great Newspaper Wars, by Val Sears 3 0
The Wreckage of Play, by John Steffler, *Music at the Heart of Thinking*, by Fred Wah 3 1
Old Wounds: Jews, Ukrainians and the Hunt for Nazi War Criminals in Canada, by Harold Troper and Martin Weinfield 3 2
Gross Misconduct: The Life of Spinner Spencer. by Martin O'Malley 3 3
Ana Historic: A Novel, by Daphne Marlatt 3 3
Story of My Life, by Jay McInerney 3 5
Contrepreneurs, by Diane Francis 3 5
Unholy Terror: The Sikhs and International Terrorism, by Ian Mulgrew 3 6
Great Heart: The History of a Labrador Adventure. by James West Davidson and John Ruge 3 6

DEPARTMENTS

Field Notes. Newfoundland from A to H: Joey Smallwood's Newfoundlandia: Moon Men.
Notes from the Toronto film festival; Canadian Writers go Dutch; Holland falls for Alice Munro and Matt Cohen 1
The Written Word, by I. M. Owen 5
First Novels, by Douglas Hill 38
Received 39
Classifieds 39
Letters 40
CanWit N o. 133 by Barry Baldwin 40

CONTRIBUTORS

Barry Baldwin teaches classics at the University of Calgary Pat Barclay of Thunder Bay, Ont is a former syndicated book columnist and CBC Radio reviewer. Plauke Boyce translates the work of Alice Munro and Norma Levine among others into Dutch With this issue Barbara Carey joins *Books in Canada* as managing editor David Cayley is a writer/broadcaster with CBC radio's "Ideas" program Matt Cohen's latest book is *Living 0" Water* (Penguin) Victor Coleman is a Toronto poet Poet Mary di Michele recently returned to Toronto after a year as writer-in-residence at the Regina Public Library. Brian Fawcett's *Cambodia: A Book for People Who Find Television Too Slow* is published this month by Grove Press John Goddard is a Montreal freelance writer Tom Grieve teaches English at Simon Fraser University Phil Hall's latest book of poems is *Old Enemy Juice* (Quarry) Tim Halstrom is a Toronto artist and illustrator Brian Henry is a Toronto freelance writer Douglas Hill is a novelist and critic living in Port Kirwan Newfoundland Artist Dawn Hood whose drawings appear throughout this issue recently left on a world tour Lawrence Jackson is a writer living in Labrador Royce MacGillivray teaches in the history department at the University of Waterloo Novelist and political scientist Jack McLeod edited *The Oxford Book of Canadian Political Anecdotes* which was reviewed in the October issue John Metcalf's *What is a Canadian Literature?* is published this month by Red Kite Press Peter Moon is an investigative reporter with the *Globe & Mail* Historian Christopher Moore regrets he has never been north of 55 latitude Don Nichol teaches English at Memorial University Paul Orenstein's photographs of literary personalities frequently appear in these pages I. M. Owen is a regular contributor to these pages Marlon Quednau was the winner of the W. H. Smith/Books Canada First Novel Award for 1987 Bruce Serafinis is a Vancouver freelance writer Norma Sigurdson is a Toronto freelance reviewer Carolyn Smart's most recent book of poetry is *Stoning the Moon* (Oberon) Norma Snider's *Dark Kingdom* is soon to be published by Random House Paul Stuewe's *The Storms Below: The Turbulent Life and Times of Hugh Garner* is reviewed in this issue Marilyn Westlake is a Toronto photographer Nancy Wigston is a freelance writer and reviewer in Toronto Morris Wolfe is the author of *Jolts: The TV Wasteland and the Canadian Oasis* George Woodcock is a Vancouver writer, critic, and translator

CGVERPHOTOGAAPHGY
 Paul Orenstein

EDITOR Dons Cowan
 MANAGING EDITOR Barbara Carey
 ADVISORY EDITOR Brian Fawcett
 EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Ward McBurney
 LAYOUT Art Marie Aldighieri
 GENERAL MANAGER Susan Traer
 CIRCULATION MANAGER Susan Athosht
 CIRCULATION ASSISTANT Tracy Shepherd Matheson

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER Beth Bruder
 CONSULTANTS Linda Crawley Robert Farrelly, Jack Jensen, Mary Lu Toms
 CONTRIBUTING EDITORS K G Robert (Prairies), Eleanor Wachtel, Shirley Knight Morris Don Nichol (Newfoundland), Ray Filip (Quebec)

Books in Canada is published nine times a year with the assistance of the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council by the Canadian Review of Books Ltd., 366 Adelaide Street East, Suite 432, Toronto, Ont. M5A 3X9. Telephone: (416) 363-5426. SUBSCRIPTIONS: Individual rate in Canada: one year \$15, two years \$28. Libraries and institutions: one year \$20, two years \$36. For delivery outside Canada, per year, additional \$3 surface mail, \$11 airmail to U.S.A. \$15 airmail to other countries. Please direct subscription inquiries to the Circulation Department. Back issues available on microfilm from McLaren Micropublishing, PO Box 872, Station F, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2N9. Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index. Member of the CPPA. Material is commissioned on the understanding that both parties are bound by the terms of the standard PWAC contract. The editors cannot be held responsible for unsolicited material. Second Class Mail - Registration No. 2593. Contents © 1988. Typesetting by Colour Systems Incorporated. ISSN 0045-2564.

Newfoundland from A to H

ENCYCLOPEDIAS can be useful things to own if you never have to move. Among the bigger blackbusters of knowledge — anthologies, bibliographies, concordances, dictionaries — encyclopedias are probably the most agonizing to produce and then flog. Shelf space and backache seldom concern compilers, sellers and buyers; you'll still find incurable antiquaries and mental weightlifters in an age of microfiche and laser dii.

The desire to peruse all printed matter begs to be called the Pascal Complex after the last man rumoured to have read everything. In recognition of Pascal, the British Library culled its massive computerized automated information system BLAISE, although its fire-breathing homonym is the enemy of all paper.

The modern encyclopedia as we know it got under way with Harris's *Lexicon Technicum* of 1704. Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* (1728) was translated into French and adapted by Didot and d'Alembert who fell out long before their *Encyclopédie* (1751-80) reached completion. Tristram Shandy's father

Walter, hoping to yide bis son through "a North West passage to the intellectual world," planned a *Tristra-paedia*, which soon became so vast as to be unworkable. In this lies a warning to all megalomaniac fact-addicts who get carried away. There followed *Britannica* (1768), *Americana* (1829) and *Canadiana* (1957).

Encyclopedia salespeople perform an essential if sometimes thankless task. The last one to come to our door looked like a faith-peddler, then seemed like a day-care organizer (complete with floor-mat game) and finally suggested that for 50 cents a day our newborn could have the wisdom of the ages at her future fingertips. Fifty cents a day, she pleaded, looting at our bundle, less than the price of a candy bar. Every day for the next 10 years. I countered.

With apologies to John Crosbie (who recently likened the Free Trade Agreement to the encyclopedias he used to sell insofar as he read neither all the way through), Canada's most illustrious encyclopedia salesper-

son has got to be Joey Smallwood. Not only did he sell his volumes off the back of a camper, he oversaw the project from conception to its present partial fulfilment.

The recently wised edition of Mel Hurtig's *Canadian Encyclopedia* has received ample attention, but what of Joey Smallwood's Newfoundlandia? As it now stands, the *Encyclopedia Of Newfoundland and Labrador* (ENL) exists in two volumes. The first volume, published in 1981, runs from A to E; the longer second volume (1994) covers F to H. Such exponential growth suggests an infinity of volumes, although Joey reckoned the entire ENL would take five. And five volumes is still the objective of the J.R Smallwood Heritage Foundation, which hopes to raise \$2.5 million. The Foundation also plans to start the Institute for Newfoundland Studies.

Volume 1 of the ENL gets off to a somewhat frustrating start. The first entry, "A FOR APPLE," refers the reader to "WAR MEASURES." The same goes for the second entry: "ABANDONED SETTLEMENTS. See RESETTLEMENT." As "Resettlement" is probably the first place you'd look for the kind of community-shifting that took place in *John and the Missus*, you'll wonder at the dangling of articles that might not see print for a considerable time. Yet back in 1991, the last volume perhaps seemed much more of a reality than it does at present. Perhaps it was felt that loading the first two volumes with cross-references to later volumes would help expedite their publication. Yet all encyclopedists must start with their finish in mind.

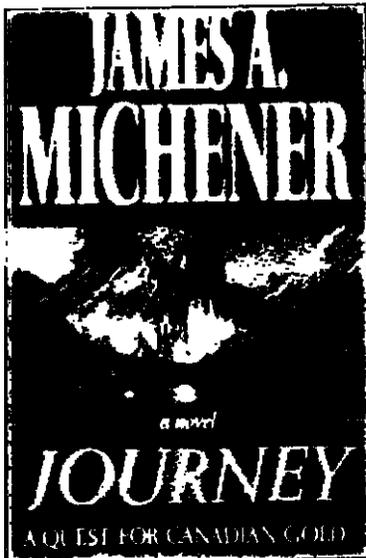
With the third entry, "ABATTOIRS," we finally face some facts: 51 of them in 1979. When copy is not forthcoming, shrewd cross-referencing becomes necessary. Under the entry for "EDUCATION" (a complex matter in a province with three separate school boards), it says "See SCHOOLS." At the end of volume 1, there are over 100 pages of advertisements. When it came to finding sponsors, Joey didn't mind giving them value for their money.

SINCE the publication of volume 2, there have been a number of items crying out for inclusion or revision: COME-BY-CHANCE, CUCUMBERS, DOUBLE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME and HIBERNIA can presumably be accommodated under OIL REFINERY (\$1.00), SPRUNG (see MIDNIGHT SUN, TIME CHANGES (cf. YABBA-DABBA-DO TIME) and PIPELINES (or PIPE-DREAMS).

Newfoundland is full of small stories, and the ENL has attempted to tap at least part of the anecdotal tradition. When asked about some of the quirkier items, the original managing editor, Robert Pitt, pointed out "ACROSTIC, CELEBRATED." There you'll find poetic lines in praise of a recently departed governor, Sir Gordon MacDonald, the first letters of which spell out "THE BASTARD." Joey has kept his vision of the ENL alive over twenty years, writing countless items and notes. Some of his original stories were more eccentric than others. "BAD BACK," for one.



INTREPID



James Michener, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Hawaii*, *The Source*, *Chesapeake*, *Poland*, and other critically acclaimed bestsellers, here turns his attention to a riveting story set closer to home—a story about Canada's own dramatic Gold Rush. Rich with historical detail, profound insights into human nature, and the exciting quest for gold, *Journey* is a gripping saga of adventure and derring-do. No fan of Michener will want to miss.

\$24.95 cloth
0-7710-5865-9



McClelland & Stewart
The Canadian Publishers

Where good books
are always in.

meaning the most frequently offered reason for absence from work, was omitted.

On the more serious side, the ENL translates the province's veneration of learning into a monumental work. The full bibliography is intended for the last volume, but volume 1 contains a critical apparatus and longer articles are well documented. Selection is a problem: some figures might better have been left to slumber in archives, others deserve the lustre of broader biography.

Back in January 1987, the ENL had its dark night of the soul. Its fate reached crisis level when a sheriff issued (in front of a television camera) the aged Joseph R. Smallwood with a writ for an unpaid publisher's bill. This wasn't surprising as Joey expected the first two volumes to sell at a loss; but then it seemed subsequent volumes would never get the chance to turn a profit. Canada's only surviving father of Confederation faced personal liability for investing in his dream. Help came from an unexpected source: Tommy Hunter responded to news reports of the sheriff's knocking at Joey's door. Canada's country gentleman promised to sing for a subvention.

Long before he ushered Newfoundland and Labrador into Confederation in 1949 and became premier of the new province, Joey Smallwood was a writer and publisher. In fact

he has been known to claim that politics was a sideline and what he really hopes to be remembered for is his stack of books. If his economics have been askew, his vision and persistence have been admirable. Precious few individuals have been quixotic and industrious enough to pull off a production like this.

So this year's Patron of Newfoundland Arts and Letters award ought to go to Tommy Hunter, who came this fall to St John's and gave the promised benefit concert — 'Joey Aid' — with friends. In an era where popular performers have devoted considerable effort to worthy causes like ending starvation or apartheid and easing the burden of embattled farmers, Mr. Hunter has come to the aid of an ailing encyclopedia.

Entry-writers as well as sign-painters are waiting for the latest controversy to die down: is St John's really the oldest city in North America (as the sign proclaims as you come in from Torbay Airport)? With Mr. Hunter's help, the ENL should reach beyond S and give us the final word on the subject. Never in the annals of publishing history has anything like this occurred. Only in Newfoundland will you find such eccentricity and scholarship mixed with the foot-stomping support of human kindness. Z is now in sight.

— DON NICHOL

Moon men

Notes of a Toronto film addict
during eight hectic days in September

September 9: Spend helping register first-year students at Ontario College of Art, where I teach film history. Eager to get to Festival of Festivals, where I'll focus mainly on Canadian films, partly because I'm doing this piece, partly because I teach Canadian film. Why does the Festival have to be held an inconvenient First Canadian film I see — *Milk and Honey*, directed by Rebecca Yates and Glen Salzman — is a disappointment. It's about the immigration difficulties of a Jamaican nanny in subject, or crummy s c r i p t.

Then off (you'll excuse me) to *Urinal*, video artist John Greyson's first feature film. Made over three and a half years for \$35,000, the film deals with police video surveillance of gays in public lavatories in Ontario. *Urinal* is a bit long, but delightful. Greyson makes the point in the film, and in person afterwards, that we don't want the state in the bedrooms of the nation, in its urinals or anywhere else that consenting adults choose to do their thing. Overheard at end of screening: one gay man telling another, "I probably won't vote for this as best film but Greyson gets my vote as cutest filmmaker."

Saturday, September 10: See Finnish director Aki Kaurismäki's first film, a loose adaptation of *Crime and Punishment*. *Hi Raskolnikov*, a slaughterhouse employee, captures the spirit of Dostoevsky's original

remarkably well. Attend Soviet press conference. (Fifty Soviet films were shown at the Festival.) Especially impressed by Aleksandr Askoldov, director of *The Commissar* (1967). His film, which is sympathetic to Jews, was suppressed and is finally opening in Moscow this fall. Askoldov, who hasn't been allowed to make a film since 1967, was less hopeful than other Soviet filmmakers present and more biting in his comments. The victims of Soviet repression, he said, have been and are being identified; but what about those who did the victimizing? When will they be named? He's not so sure the situation of the artist in the Soviet Union can be turned around all that easily. Repairing broken souls isn't as simple as pushing a button on a production line.

Sunday, September 11: *Mysterious Moon Men of Canada* is quite fun. Canadians, it turns out, were the first men on the moon. Two guys from Owen Sound got there in 1939 in a rocket they slapped together in a farmer's field. Given Canadians' intense dislike of self-promotion, they didn't make a fuss. Director Colin Brunton, ho-, is one of a new breed of Canadians, sad he's determined to bring the event out of the closet of history. Rudy Buttignol is a space nut; his *Space Pioneers* is an affectionate documentary about the role played by Canadian scientists in the development and launching of Alouette and other satellites. Jean-Pierre

Lefebvre's *La boîte à soleil* is an enchanting wordless fable about children who capture the rays of the sun in little black boxes and release them as needed. As Geoff Pevere suggests in his catalogue notes, the film is reminiscent of Wim Wenders's *Wings of Desire*, about a melancholy world redeemed by innocence. Lefebvre, whose work is still largely unknown in English Canada, never ceases to amaze. Walking *after Midnight* by Winnipeg filmmaker Jonathon Kay is a documentary about reincarnation starring such heavy thinkers as Martin Sheen. It's full of shots of Sheen lying on his back superimposed on clouds, talking about his past lives. At the point that he announced that the woman he is now married to was his mother in 1800, my crap detector went off. Fearing the sound would disturb the rest of the audience, I got up and left.

Monday, September 12: First meeting with my Canadian film class. As usual, although I've had to turn away students from my German, French and Italian classes, the Canadian course is under-enrolled. Students assume Canadian film is boring. I screen *Dreamland*, Donald Brittain's wry look at Canadian film to 1939. We talk about the differences between Canadian and American culture as they can be seen on our television and film screens.

Tuesday, September 13: OCA. Attend premiere of Francis Mankiewicz's new film *Les portes tournantes. Les bons débarras* was so well written and so uncompromising in its honesty that it's hard to believe this film is by the same director. The idea isn't bad; it's about a silent film pianist and her estranged son and grandson. But the resulting script is flabby and implausible. A woman is a free spirit one moment and incapable of standing up to her in-laws the next when they take her baby away. Her own family disappears from the script without explanation. Her grandson, Antoine, is one of those too-good-to-be-true icky kids who don't exist this side of TV and movie screens.

Wednesday, September 14: Meetings at OCA and Italian film class. Screen Rossellini's *Open City* and talk about neorealism. These filmmakers were determined to explore the world as it was, rather than as we would like it to be; they would portray the everyday lives of ordinary people. In other words, these films would be everything American film wasn't.

Thursday, September 15: *La ligne de chaleur* by Hubert-Yves Rose is about the painful relationship between a single father (whose own father has just died) and his 10-year-old son. Script by Micheline Lanctot and Rose is for the most part courageous in its honesty. This child is much more complicated and believable than Mankiewicz's Gabriel Arcand, who also plays the father in the Mankiewicz film, is more assured and interesting here. The film's biggest problem is the boring man who won't go away played by Gerard Parkes. I don't believe him for a moment. *Crossing the River*, a documentary by Camelia Frieberg about the horrors of Salvadoran death squads, is so heavy-handed that I tune the film out and scribble my gro-

cery list. Judith Doyle's *Neguaquan — Lac La Croix*, is a thoughtful, beautifully shot film that illustrates the point that environmental issues aren't simple. The Lac la Croix Indian band of Quetico Park banned alcohol on their reserve and to create work at home, decided to become guides to American hunters and fishermen. But in order to do so, they needed to use small outboard motors that had been banned in the park as a result of the lobbying of environmentalists. Doyle's film was partly responsible for the lifting of that ban.

Friday, September 16: *The Wash*, by Mid Uno, is a quiet American film about a Japanese-American couple in their 60s. She leaves the marriage because she feels unloved but returns weekly to do his laundry. Along comes a gentle widower who treats her with respect and affection she's never known. Lovely scene of them in bed for the first time. Her husband now pleads with her to return, but she refuses. Mauritz Stiller, the Swedish director who discovered Greta Garbo, made the sexual comedy *Erotikon* in 1920. The subtitles are in Swedish, but we get a voice-over translation. About 80 minutes into the film, the wife has decided to run off with her husband's best friend. They embrace and declare their undying love. The subtitle "slut" appears, and the screen goes blank. My first thought is that "slut" is an editorial comment. In fact, it's the Swedish word for "the end." *The Last Days of Contrition* by Canadian Gary Popovich is an "experimental" film. But as Marc Glassman reminds us in a recent *Vanguard*, that term is inadequate; we really need to find a better one. The film uses barren landscapes (urban and rural) in the U.S. to symbolize ren of ideas and compassion. American society is. That description makes the film sound banal. But it's oddly compelling. Michael Snow's *Seated Figures* is the ultimate in road movies. A camera is attached underneath a moving vehicle and we watch the road go by. Snow's exploration of "madness" here is, for me, much less engaging than his exploration of "roomness" in *Wavelength* and I leave before it's over. Looked forward to William MacGillivray's documentary about conceptual artists at the Nova Scotia School of Art and Design. Loved MacGillivray's *Life* Classes also set, in part, at NASCAD. But this film is a bit of a bore. MacGillivray has an interesting mind and I would have liked to know more about what he thinks.

Saturday, September 17: Go to *Tadpole and the Whale*, the sixth in producer Rock Demers's French-Canadian series of features for children. "Tales for All." Good to be in a theatre filled with children. But the script and acting are smarmy, the kids are icky and the film is saved only by a superb performance by Elvar, a dolphin. *Mr. Jolly Lives Next Door* is a wonderful black comedy by Stephen Frears. (He directed *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*.) Unfortunately, it's only 52 minutes long and probably won't get the distribution it deserves.

Sunday, September 18: On the ninth day he rested. Slut. — MORRIS WOLFE

Erdrich's prose is rich;
her imagination,
remarkable...
Kirkus Reviews



TRACKS is the stunning new-novel by Louise Erdrich, author of the previous bestsellers LOVE MEDICINE and THE BEET QUEEN.

Set in North Dakota early in this century, TRACKS is a tale of passion, a tale of unrest, of clashing cultures and sacred mythologies. This richly characterized novel follows the struggle of Native Americans to preserve their identity and land in the teeth of the white man's encroaching 'civilization.'

A people are pushed to the brink of their endurance-yet their pride and humour prohibit surrender.

Selected by Book-of-the-Month Club
Quality Paperback Book Club

\$25.95 dotb

Fitzhenry & Whiteside
Publishers of Funk & Wagnals
Canadian College Dictionary

INDISCREET



Edward Phillips' deadly wit has struck again in *Hope Springs Eternal*, a comedy of manners in the best tradition of Waugh, Wodehouse, and E.M. Forster. This delightfully wicked send-up of Nestmount society, by the acclaimed author of *Buried on Sunday* (winner of the prestigious Arthur Ellis Award), *Where There's A Will and Sunday's Child* will take you on a high-spirited, satirical romp through the *grande drama* of opera.

\$19.95 cloth
0-7710-6990-1



McClelland & Stewart
The Canadian Publishers

Where good books
are always in.

Canadian writers go Dutch

ONE OF the friends who met me at Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam was Edith van Diik. Margaret Laurence's Dutch translator. A few years ago, Edith fell in love with *The Stone Angel* and succeeded in finding a publisher for the complete Margaret Laurence: An Dekker, who has so far published van Diik's translations of *The Stone Angel* and *A Jest of God*.

I had brought a big parcel of Canadian books for Edith, for although Margaret Laurence remains her first love, she is fiercely interested in all Canadian writing. One of her recent discoveries is Jack Hodgins, and she had written to ask me to bring anything by him. I might have — some of his books are available in Holland, but they're hard to come by.

Canadian writing has taken a long time to reach Holland (where I do believe people read more than just about anywhere else in the world). The first Canadian writer to be published in Dutch translation (to the best of my knowledge) was Farley Mowat, whose *Never Cry Wolf* came out in 1966. Then, in 1971, a well-known Dutch poet, Remco Campert, published a book of translations of Leonard Cohen's *Selected Poems 1956-1968*. Cohen, because of his records and concerts, had been a media star in Holland for a number of years by then.

The year 1979 proved something of a watershed, the beginning of what now appears to be a genuine and increasing interest; there was a proliferation of translations, and many more Canadian books became available in the original. Translations of Timothy Findley's *The Wars*, Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*, and Aritha van Herk's *Judith* appeared. Still, it cannot be said that these publications created a *furor* — on the contrary, they were hardly noticed. But now, nearly 10 years and two "Canadian Specials" by Dutch literary magazines later, apart from more Findley and Atwood, a Dutch reader can also buy work by Alice Munro, Michael Ondaatje, Guy Vanderhaeghe, Jane Role, Matt Cohen, Robertson Davies, David Gilmour, Sarah Sheard, Brian Moore, and, of course, Margaret Laurence — in Dutch.

Matt Cohen is the first Canadian writer to have taken Holland by storm. *De Spaanse Dokter* (*The Spanish Doctor*) was published last year by Ambo and has become a best seller. A full-page interview with Cohen in a prominent Dutch newspaper is an indication of his status in Holland. A few months ago *The Spanish Doctor* was followed by a translation of *Nadine*, which is now prominently displayed in most bookstores.

I made it my habit to check each bookstore (I visited many, in many different towns) for the Canadian books it carried. Apart from the Dutch *Nadine*, only translations of *Who*

Do You Think You An? and *The Moons of Jupiter* (just out) by Alice Munro were fairly visible. Less visible, but still practically everywhere, was Margaret Atwood's *Boven Water* (*Surfacing*) — it had recently appeared as part of the reasonably priced (f.10 per book) Rainbow Pocketbooks. But there was more on most shelves and when I checked the English sections I would often find a fair selection of works by Timothy Findley, Margaret Atwood, Marian Engel and Howard Engel, Jane Role and Robertson Davies.

Kees Goossens (of Goossens Publishers) can be credited with discovering Alice Munro for Holland. His is a fairly small publishing house that specializes in translations. (Other titles on his list include Italo Svevo, Marguerite Duras, Simone de Beauvoir, and John Hawkes). The two Munro books he has published so far (*The Progress of Love* is scheduled for next spring, to be followed by at least one more book) are offered at a very low introductory price: f.14.50 each (a Dutch guilder is about 67 Canadian cents, and the average price of a new book is f.30). They are selling "fairly well," according to Goossens, considering that Alice Munro is a "new" writer (for Holland). He has a long-range commitment to her work and thinks it will eventually reach a large public. His greatest wish is for Alice Munro to visit Holland. "Her books speak for themselves, but people need to know they exist. One radio or newspaper interview, but especially a television interview, would do wonders!"

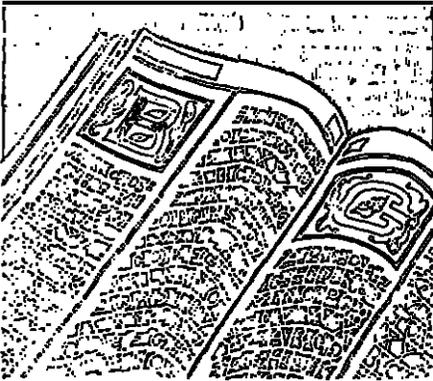
But the publisher most genuinely interested in Canadian writing is Rob van Gennep of Van Gwep Publishers. Until the early '70s, he published politics books (Mao, Che Guevara); then, as he says, "those books just didn't sell anymore." New Dutch writers were hard to find, and Van Gennep turned to translations and soon discovered Canadian literature, which until then had been practically *terra incognita* in Holland. Starting off with Guy Vanderhaeghe's *My Present Age* and Jane Role's *Desert of the Heart*, he has begun to create a Canadian list that he hopes will grow for many years to come. Norman Levine is one of his most recent discoveries and his *Selected Stories* is scheduled for publication next spring. Mordecai Richler's classic novel *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* is also to appear soon, as is an anthology of Canadian short stories. Van Gennep showed me the dummy of Vanderhaeghe's *Man Descending* and over lunch told me that the addition of Audrey Thomas's *Songs My Mother Taught Me* is just about certain. "I wish I had Alice Munro as well," he sighed, "but then, one can't have everything."

— PLEUKE BOYCE

Subjunctivitis

The subjunctive has been crumbling away for a long time. Perhaps we should feel free to help the process by avoiding it when it doesn't feel wrong to do so

By I. M. Owen



ACQUISITIONS: WHO MAKES THEM? I inadvertently introduced a new word the other day, or at least reintroduced a disused one. These days, the main preoccupation of business leaders is not building better mouse-traps, or even marketing them better, but acquiring controlling blocks of shares and organizing mergers. So much of this activity goes on that it now has its own name. Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A), and there are squads of brokers and lawyers who specialize in it to the exclusion of all else. What, then, do we call the people and firms that make these acquisitions? A writer on the subject used *acquirer*. This seemed an unfamiliar word and awkward to say: without much thought I changed it to *acquisitor*. I could have sworn that this was a word I'd seen often. However, an associate — who liked it — questioned whether it was to be found in a dictionary. "Of course," I said, and opened his office dictionary to show him. It wasn't there. Neither was *acquirer*, though; and we agreed to let *acquisitor* stand. Later I found that it wasn't in any of my recent dictionaries. It is in the *OED*, which stigmatizes it as "rare," and gives no citations but contents itself with a dismissive "(In mod. dicta)." The dicta, that were mod. in 1884, when the *A-Ad* section of the *OED* was published, are no longer with us. And the *OED Supplement* doesn't list the word. But it's a good word, crisp and clear and with appropriate overtones of acquisitiveness. So if everybody will kindly start using it the mod. dicta, of the future will include it and I'll be justified.

ANTICIPATE: This is not simply a grander way of saying *expect*. To *expect* something is to think it likely to happen; to *anticipate* it is

to act as if it had already happened. I *expect* to be paid for this column; if I went out today and incurred a debt for the amount on the strength of it, I'd be *anticipating* it. Thus, when Doug Fetherling writes to Quill & Quire to announce changes in the book-review section of the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, and adds: *We anticipate an increase in the number of review pages following installation of a new printing press*, he ought to *mea* that enough reviews are being commissioned now to fill pages that don't exist at present. But he probably doesn't. By the way, so good a writer as Fetherling shouldn't use that pompous *following* for *after*.

SUBJUNCTIVE: When I was hesitating whether to undertake this department, one of the arguments against was that, if I did, sooner or later I'd have to deal with the subjunctive mood. Later, I hoped. But now I have to face it: a reader rebukes me for having said in the August-September column, of Lamont Tilden, *I wish he was still broadcast language counsellor*. All right, according to the rules it should be *were*, not *was*. And yet...

The subjunctive, alive and well in French and German, has been moribund in English for a long time. In 1904 Henry Bradley, one of the creators of the *OED*, said:

Perhaps in another generation the subjunctive forms will have ceased to exist except in the single instance of *were*, which serves a useful function, although we manage to dispense with a corresponding form in other verbs

Three years later the Fowler brothers agreed with Bradley, but were a little less friendly to *were*:

The instinct for using subjunctives rightly is dying with the subjunctive, so that even the still surviving *were* is often used where it is completely wrong. . . *Were*, however, is often right and almost necessary; other subjunctives are never necessary, often dangerous, and in most writers unpleasantly formal.

And in 1926 the surviving Fowler brother, H.W., classified uses of the subjunctives as *Alives*, *Revivals*, *Survivals* (both to be avoided), and (clearly incorrect) *Arrivals*. He gives two examples of *were* among the *Alives*: the *if . . . were* construction, "expressing a hypothesis that is not a fact; *were*

and not *be*, and *not a fact*, are essential"; and *I wish it were over* — the construction I failed to use.

This certainly supports my reader against me. And I think that if I had noticed the *was* in rereading my typescript I would probably have changed it to *were*. Yet three editors I spoke to on the day the rebuke arrived said they wouldn't have changed it; one, in fact, had had the opportunity to do so, paused over it, and decided not to.

What I think we're seeing here is a further stage in the decay of the subjunctive. It survives strongly in clauses that describe either the impossible (*if I were* yea) or something not now a fact that might reasonably be expected to become one. For instance, if I were a *Conservative* (*not a fact*) I might in 1983 have said *I wish Brian Mulroney were prime minister*. But this year, surveying the consequences of my dream-come-true, I would perhaps say *I wish Joe Clark was still prime minister*. That would be wrong (grammatically, I mean) but would somehow come naturally, perhaps because it would refer to something that was "a fact."

So what I'm tentatively saying is that, as the subjunctive has been crumbling away for a long time, and it's a bloody nuisance, we should perhaps feel free to help the process by avoiding it when it doesn't feel wrong to do so; that we can be allowed to be subjective about the subjunctive.

I'd welcome other opinions. □

A whimsical twist
to the detective-story tradition.

*Suns for
Fowler Knox*

BY JOSEF
SKVORECKY

Translated by Kaca Polackova Hanley

Ten double-barrelled mysteries
that pick up where *The Mournful
Demeanour of Lieutenant Boruvka*
left off.



LESTER & ORPEN DENNIS

BOOKS BOUND TO BE READ



The Greenpeace Book of Antarctica \$29.95
by John May

This spectacular book is an authoritative source on the environmental concerns of this beautiful wilderness, filled with colour photographs that inform and inspire. "It offers an insight into the remote and often forbidding sixth continent." *The Globe and Mail*



The Gold Crusades: \$35.00

A Social History of Gold Gushes, 1849-1929

by Douglas Fetherling

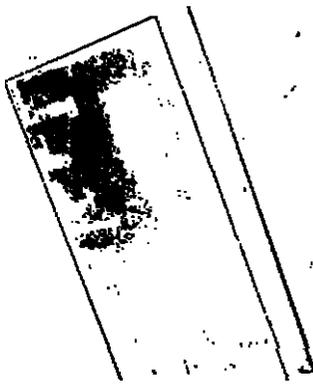
The author of *Goldiggers of 1929*

sheds new light on the personal and political connections between the various gold rushes in North America, Australia, and South Africa. "... In this fascinating social history, ..Fetherling makes it clear why the mass movements to the gold fields were known as stampedes." *Pierre Berton*



Contrepreneurs \$26.95
by Diane Francis

The exposé on white-collar crime, by bestselling business author, Diane Francis, that captures the fascinating world of boiler rooms, stock-market manipulations, and money-laundering. A must-read for brokers, investors, regulators, and anyone interested in Canada's economic future.



Living the Part: \$27.95

John Drainie and the Dilemma of Canadian Stardom
by Bronwyn Drainie

An opinionated biography of one of Canada's greatest actors and a close-up look at the early days of radio, television and theatre in Canada, by well-known broadcaster and journalist, Bronwyn Drainie, John Drainie's daughter.



Mob Mistress 524.95

by James Dubro

A mob mistress tells all! Shirley Ryce long-time playgirl! with the help of award-winning crime journalist, James Dubro, reveals how a fateful meeting with a notorious Hamilton mobster turned a bored housewife and mother into a mob mistress.



On Trial \$24.95

by Jack Batten

Batten continues, in his friendly, entertaining style, to chronicle the Canadian legal profession, choosing three outstanding legal landmark trials: the intriguing case of musical plagiarism, the rights of a mentally handicapped student, and Canada's longest-running drug-conspiracy trial.



Macmillan of Canada

bpNichol 1944-1988



bpNichol

(ONE OF Barrie Nichol's contributions to "the life in writing" was as a healer of souls. As his grieving friends and colleagues met at the Coach House Press on Monday evening, September 26, to mourn his passing the afternoon before and to celebrate his life among us, stories began to emerge of Barrie's deep effect upon everyone he touched. He was a man of immeasurable compassion, and his love for his fellows was completely unassuming. If he ever felt a twitch of greed it was merely for evidence of creation. His grasp of literary history was vast, and his international reputation in sound and concrete poetry extended throughout Europe and the Orient, but he simultaneously and tirelessly followed with care the work of his own generation and the new work of the next.

He was blessed with a prescient visual sensibility. His own drawings (modestly self-characterized as "doodles" or "cartoons") are, in my opinion, equal to the work of such wealthy graffiti artists as Keith Haring. He was a avid collector of comics, proudly exhibiting framed original works by Winsor McKay and Chester Gould in his home, a firm believer that these manifestations of popular culture brought him closer to the "human universe" (Ron Mann's recent documentary, *Comic Book Confidential*, is dedicated to

bp). There were no guilty pleasures for this extraordinary man who blithely held forth, exegetical on the Flintstones.

His work as a lay therapist with Therapfields throughout the '70s brought him into contact with the full gamut of human frailties, foibles, and extreme anxieties. I can personally attest to his effectiveness at a time when I was at a particularly low point in my own struggle with maturity. He gave generously of himself in such situations, never expecting anything in return.

My first contact with bpNichol was as the editor of *Island*, a modest mimeo mag I produced in the mid '60s. He often joked with me about my rejection of what he called his "trad" poetry; I suspected there was more to this lower-case poet, and eventually published some of his earlier "concrete" work. The culmination of that phase of his art was the elaborate production of *&m&g & the returns* at Coach House in 1967, which included a "trad" poem sequence, a sound poetry recording, and a envelope full of individually designed and printed visual pieces; all of which was assembled in hand-fashioned boxes during marathon production bees.

Barrie "ever really lost his boyishness, the mark of assured innocence. When we first recited our works together, at Le Hibou in Ottawa, I was startled to hear his

22-year-old voice break and crack like a young teenager's what I had failed to realize until a few years later (with the advent of *The Four Horsemen*) was that he was challenging his own range, to the extent of breaking, in an attempt to bring the voice back into language.

His own personal grapple with the exigencies of the corporeal was constant as long as I knew him. In the early 70s he sometimes fasted for as long as 30 days in a attempt to cleanse his system; his weight fluctuated wildly. When I had the pleasure and honour to join him and the other Horsemen as part of the Music Gallery's presence at the 1984 Holland Festival in Amsterdam. Barrie was lame to such an extent that he had to be either wheeled from place to place or carried by shifts of pairs, with much good will and hilarity along the mute. At the time, we were collaborating on a mock '40s-style radio serial starring bp as "Gil Evans: the Lone Arranger." Amid the laughter generated by our writing alone together, he would every once in a while let out a blood-curdling yell in abject complaint against the discomfort and pain he was feeling. And then he would lapse again into the creative process, with just as much enthusiasm as before.

As a teacher of writing, Barrie Nichol was magnanimous to a fault. I met a number of his York University classes in the past few years when he was off on one of his many reading junkets and I substituted for him. His students respected, even revered him, for his careful weighing of their struggles with the nuts and bolts of writing of the imagination.

As an editor and promoter of new writing bp recognized no restrictions, no boundaries; "or was he in the least dogmatic about the plethora of approaches to the page or soundscape that he urged into existence. He worked as hard on other writers' works as he did on his own.

There wasn't a cynical bone in his body — again, a mark of innocence — and maybe that made him more vulnerable to the poisonous curse of life in our half of the century. One of the few of whom it could be said that "he had no enemies," Barrie Nichol was a man of enormous spirit, a spirit large enough to have touched most of the major and minor writers of the past quarter century. To say that he will be missed is like saying that water — or light — would be missed.

The loss of bpNichol leaves a gap in our total culture that won't soon be filled. As Jack Spicer wrote in his *Letters to Garcia Lorca*: "As things decay they bring their equivalents into being." We can only hope that bpNichol's example will be a beacon for future generations of writers striving for a new voice. Until then, until our grief has subsided, we are encompassed by silence.

-VICTOR COLEMAN

George Grant 1918-1988

ON THE NIGHT of February 4 1963, the minority government of John Diefenbaker was voted out of office because it would not bow to American pressure and accept nuclear warheads for the Bomarc missiles it had already acquired from the United States. The head of NORAD had already taken the singular step of coming to Ottawa to denounce the Canadian government. The leader of the Liberal Party, Lester Pearson, had reversed his opposition to nuclear arms for Canada in order to press a political advantage. Diefenbaker, after months of vacillation, dug in his heels, and his government fell.

Diefenbaker, by this time, was already an embarrassment to the cosmopolitan élites of central Canada. Next to the dashing! dynamic John F. Kennedy, he seemed a bit of a hick Few seemed to object to the unprecedented American interference in Canadian affairs. Then in 1965 George Grant published his *Lament for a Nation*. The book wasn't exactly a vindication of John Diefenbaker — Grant was too aware of Diefenbaker's personal and political flaws for that-but it did treat Diefenbaker's flaws as tragic, not comic, and his fall as the fall of a hem. To Grant, the defence crisis of 1963 represented the end of Canada, the symbolic moment when a process that had been under way since the First World War reached completion. Canada had ceased to be a distinct society founded on its difference from the United States and had become instead an accomplice.

Grant's hook had a paradoxical effect. To his own generation it made very little diince. But among the young it was a bombshell. Poet Dennis Lee says to&y that "it spoke to parts of me that I didn't know existed." For many who had been raised in the suburban enclaves of postwar affluence it was the first suggestion that there might be something in Canada worth defending. They grasped at the very possibility that Grant claimed was disappearing. And they saw in Grant himself the embodiment of that possibility: a public man who managed to combine in his own person radicalism and conservatism.

The '60s were a time when enthusiasm held many contradictions together, and for a time they held George Grant and the New Left together. Grant shared many positions with the popular movements of the time — he was an early opponent of the Vietnam War, which he denounced unequivocally as genocide, and he saw the modern university as soulless technological rationality incarnate. "His method of teaching.." recalls novelist Matt Cohen, "was to make people take what they thought seriously . . . To him the business of living and the business of philosophy were the same. And I think that was one of the things which made him so attractive to students." But Grant never really shared the hopes of the New Left: he

saw their protests as noble but not particularly promising. When he spoke to a teach-in at the University of Toronto in 1965, he warned against "easy hopes." "Hope in the future has been the chief opiate of modern life. If people have vast expectations about a society such as ours, they are going to be disappointed, and then their moral fervour can turn rancid and bitter." Grant and the New Left had a brilliant and fruitful crossing during the '60s, but their trajectories were very different.

George Grant began his life in Toronto on November 13, 1918. His paternal grandfather was George Munro Grant, the principal of Queen's University and the epitome of the expansive Protestant liberalism that believed ik vocation was to rule the world. His maternal grandfather was Sir George Robert Parkin, knighted in 1939 for his services to the British Empire. Grant's father succeeded Parkin as the headmaster of Upper Canada College, where George grew up. By the time war broke out in 1939, the 21-year-old Grant already knew himself to be a pacifist, but that made him all the more eager to be involved to show "that it wasn't from fear that I rejected the war." He ended up in charge of a section of the London docks where he felt the fury of the bombing and the agony of the dying at first hand. The war, he said later, "just broke the great sane secular liberalism in which I was brought up." After the bombing of London, and a short stretch in the merchant marine, he was forced out of action by tuberculosis and ended up working on a farm. It was there that Grant experienced the conversion that would change his life and provide the foundation for all his future work. "I remember going off to work," he said, "I got off my bicycle and walked through a gate, and I believed in God." I asked him once what he knew at that moment "I think it was a kind of affirmation," he replied, "that beyond time and space there is order. . . that . . . ultimately the world is not a maniacal chaos."

After the war Grant studied at Oxford, and then returned to Canada, eventually joining the philosophy department at Dalhousie. A colleague recalls the Dalhousie of the 1950s as "an enchanted world" and the Grants' home as a kind of "salon for philosophy students."

Grant's thought of the '50s found expression in a book called *Philosophy in the Mass Age*, published in 1953. The book shows the strong influence of Hegel on Grant at that time; and in it Grant states at least a provisional belief in history as progress. The overcoming of scarcity and the dissolution of tradition, he wrote, have produced in the young "a state of high self-consciousness. They are immensely open to both good and evil. In such a situation the best of them turn to the life of

philosophy. They herald in some sense the dawn of the age of reason in North America."

Grant never rued this remarkable prophecy of the '60s — he continued to have confidence in the young — but he would soon recant his belief in progress. His return to Ontario in 1960 was a revelation. He began to see the destructive effect of progress on places and traditions that he loved. And, at the same time, he encountered the thought of the German-American political philosopher, Leo Strauss, who convinced hi that ancient political philosophy is superior to modern political philosophy. Instead of founding political thought on an ultimate good by which everything else can be measured, modern political philosophy since Machiavelli and Hobbs had substituted the shifting sands of self-interest. Once he saw it, Grant rejected this "lowering of the sights" as Strauss called it And he began to think the daunting thought that was at the heart of the rest of his work, "that perhaps the Western experiment has been a mistake."

Grant thought this through in his books of the '60s and '70s, but it was only in his final book, *Technology and Justice*, published in 1936, that he began to reveal the positive side of his thought In the major essay of the book, "Faith and the Multiversity," he took as his theme a sentence from the French writer Simone Weil, "Faith is the experience that the intelligence is enlightened by love." Grant believed Simone Weil to be a saint, and her sanctity gave him absolute confidence in her as a teacher. Weil gave Grant a way to think about his faith without endorsing the type of triumphalist, missionary Christianity that he thought was the seed of the modern secular religion of progress. For Simone Weil, God was untouched by history. She founded her thought on Plato's distinction between the order of necessity, which is history, and the order of the good, which is eternal, and she claimed that only love could cross the infinite distance between the two. Grant accepted this, and he bustled that Christianity would outlive the civilization that had deformed it

In the days after Grant died, I was struck by how many times I heard terms like "pessimism" and "nostalgia" in connection with his name These words do not do hi justice. Through his rejection of the modern West, Grant taught many of us to attend to what he called our "intimations of deprival" and to foster these stirrings and whisperings of our desire for a better way of life. His work was iconoclastic in the best sense: he broke the idols which he thought were unworthy of our faith. And he did it not in order to foster nostalgia or despair but in order that we should someday be able to build again on the ground he helped to clear.

-DAVID CAYLEY

BRIEF REVIEWS

CRITICISM

THE CALLISTO MYTH FROM OVID TO ATWOOD

by Kathleen Wall

McGill-Queen's University Press,
227 pages, \$29.95 cloth
(ISBN 0 7735 0640 3)

SO HERE'S the plot: a young girl, alone in the woods, is raped by a stranger who has gained her confidence by pretending to be her friend. The girl discovers that she is pregnant and seeks the support of her community, but is ostracized, as if she were to blame for being raped. Sound familiar?

According to Kathleen Wall, variations on the myth of Callisto (in the classical version, she was a nymph who was raped by the god Jupiter and then punished by his jealous and vengeful spouse, who turned her into a bear) have enduring resonance because they deal with women's position in society and portray "a patriarchal culture's control and definition of women's sexuality."

Wall's analysis of the myth's transformation pays scrupulous attention to the literary texts surveyed. But it has a strong sociological bent too; she argues that "the circumstances of modern women's lives continue to reflect the patterns of the ancient myth" and adopts the stance that literature mirrors the attitudes and values of the prevailing culture (though it can subvert those values). Moreover, she extends her discussion to include an earlier version of myth in which women's empowerment, rather than victimization, is represented, thus providing "a legitimate sense of a mythic tradition." Works by Milton, Charlotte Brontë, Hawthorne, George Eliot and Hardy are among those examined.

The Callisto Myth From Ovid to Atwood operates within the conventions of orthodox scholarship to challenge "the patterns of traditional male criticism [that] were insufficient when it came to dealing with literature by and about women." (There are, of course, other feminist critics who reject the form of conventional academic discourse and seek an alternative

way of writing about these texts.) It's clearly written: soundly argued, and methodical in its approach. But I must admit, as a nonacademic interested in the issues that Wall raises, I found myself wondering why lively ideas most be bricked up in dry, scholarly discourse. Exploring an alternative tradition should surely be a little more stimulating, at least if a wider audience is intended. — BARBARA CAREY

FICTION

TEARS OF THE MOON

by Gary Ross

Penguin, 317 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0670 81819 4)

THIS NOVEL of psychological analysis follows its protagonist as he emerges from the dark night of the soul into emotional and physical freedom. First introduced as O (as in zero), Owen Wesley is in prison for murdering his wife, though whether he did it is a mystery, perhaps even to himself.

The physical prison is a metaphor for Owen's, and Everyman's, psychological prison: anger and fear paralyse him. His upbringing seems to doom him to repeat his father's emotional failures, to replicate his parents' failed marriage. His image of himself as victim, as powerless, cripples him most of all.

Owen begins a journal and starts seeing the prison psychiatrist. Very soon, he begins to emerge from the depths — at first too quickly for belief, but perhaps just quickly enough to save the novel. *Tears of the Moon* opens in the first person, and features an emotionally stunted hem with a point of view restricted to the immediate present of his stunted environment, and its form seems to mimic its content: just as its hero is imprisoned, the novel itself is knotted in technical restraints.

Owen's journal and his visits to the psychiatrist are the devices the author uses to free his novel, but until Owen is well on his way to self-discovery, the novel lacks power. It is merely technically interesting. Once the story does begin to move, all the characters begin to take on substance, engaging the reader's

sympathy. As for Owen himself, when the different streams of his life begin to come together, the reader is carried along the emerging river, wanting the ride to go on for a long time.

— BRIAN HENRY

THE DEAD PULL HITTER

by Allison Gordon

McClelland & Stewart, 222 pages,
\$19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 3421 0)

ALISON GORDON would appear to have had some fun writing this book, a game enough attempt to turn to commercial account all those dues she must have paid covering the *Toronto* Blue Jays for the *Toronto Star*. This reader had some fun reading it — especially whenever the author's need for vengeance (or catharsis) gets in the way of the novel's need for believable characterization. The result is some deliciously nasty thumbnail sketches of the jocks and flakes who make up the "Toronto Titans," the book's debunking version of Anglo-Canada's perennial pennant hopes.

Baseball and murder mystery: Harry Caray meets Dashiell Hammett. The hybrid suggests intriguing possibilities. Too bad *The Dead Pull Hitter* leaves most of them stranded. We tend to get Don Chewier for the play-by-play, and a too frequent, clever and self-conscious manipulation of the Chandler/Hammett/Leonard voice and ambience. Gordon exploits with evident glee the cliché-ridden language, stock situations, and stereotyped characters from the diamond and private-dickdom, but one can't finally get very enthralled with a book that is mostly written in between invisible quotation marks.

There's the no-nonsense.

handsome, unmarried cop. There's our narrator and just-vulnerable-enough heroine, Kate Henry, the "tallish, prettyish" baseball reporter. She tells us off the bat that she's "a lot more interesting than most of the people I write about," and we have to agree. There's a pennant race. The Titans do finish in first place. They mow down Yankees and Tigers in spite of murders and drugs and our collective memories of George Brett and winds blowing out to right field and Doyle Alexander and Ernie Whitt and Tony Fernandez.

Ah, fiction; ah, wish fulfillment! I suspect that deep in the hearts of all of us poor, beleaguered Blue Jays fans the desire lurks to terminate a few Titans.

— TOM GRIEVE

BAUMGARTNER'S BOMBAY

by Anita Desai

Lester & Orpen Deunys, 230 pages,
\$22.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88619 201 3)

HUGO BAUMGARTNER, an ageing German-Jewish businessman whom fate has deposited amid the kerning tenements of Bombay, at first seems an unlikely as well as 8.5 unpromising protagonist. Although he is reduced to roaming the streets in search of scraps for his collection of stray cats, Baumgartner is contented. His disputation and cheerful ignorance of India's realities initially mark him as a rather dull nonparticipant in the game of life.

But this unremarkable present conceals a turbulent past, which saw him escape the Nazi gas chambers only to spend six years in a British internment camp for German citizens. Anita Desai alternates eventful scenes from Baumgartner's youth and middle age with downbeat vignettes of his retirement years in Bombay, and in the process constructs a compelling portrait of a person who has done little more than endure — and has to that extent triumphed over the 20th century's penchant for agonies and atrocities. Unlike those "grave men, near death" of Dylan Thomas, however, Baumgartner is not one to "rage, rage against the dying of the light"; his acceptance of the small pleasures of his declining years rep-



resents an affirmative, perhaps even holy embrace of the unprepossessing hand life has dealt him.

Desai's treatment of his German and Indian experiences is masterful, as she affectionately evokes the colours, textures and smells that trigger Baumgartner's nostalgic recollections. Proustian in her conception of how it is associations-rather than logical connections — that bind us to the past, she takes an analogous approach to the exploration of character: there are no confident summations in evidence here, but rather a sensitive awareness of how others are at least as great a mystery as ourselves. *Baumgartner's Bombay* is a delicately nuanced and ultimately extremely powerful depiction of a life for our times, and it should particularly delight readers who have already discovered Desai's fine novels *Clear Light o/Day* (1980) and *In Custody* (1984). — PAUL STUEWE

THE PAST

AFTER THE REBELLION: THE LATER YEARS OF WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE

by Lillian F. Gales

Dundurn Press, 413 pages, \$29.95 cloth
(ISBN 1 55002 025 0)

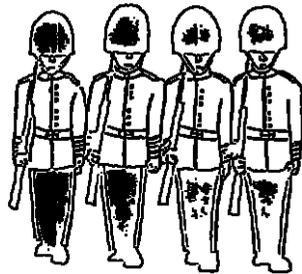
AFTER William Lyon Mackenzie had served his 18-month prison term in the United States for violating the neutrality laws of that country he received a patronage appointment as clerk in the New York Customs House. There instead of attending to the duties of his occupation he scribbled political tracts against corrupt American politicians.

For Mackenzie, who had once idealized American democracy, the squalor of American politics in the 1840s was one of the intolerable discoveries of his exile after the 1837 rebellion. Always, he was short of money; sometimes his numerous family was short of food. "Last winter," he lamented, "tamed me and mine." Yet when Mackenzie resettled in Canada in 1850 he refused the government jobs his friends were anxious to arrange for him in favour of continuing his career of agitation.

Lillian F. Gales's excellent, detailed, and well-researched book argues persuasively against the view that Mackenzie in his post-exile years in Canada was merely a crank, out of touch with

his times and dedicated to quirky personal causes at the expense of the public and of his family. Instead, we see Mackenzie as a sensible and humane campaigner against political corruption in a rising democracy — as a defender of the small man against the "interests." He was, for example, one of the few people in Upper Canada willing to speak out in defence of the hated squatters. But if this new view of Mackenzie establishes him as a more respectable and significant figure, it also establishes him as a man whose character was contradictory to the point of absurdity. Seldom in Canadian politics has there been a more improbable mixture of hysterical unreasonableness in dealing with individuals and of unillusioned clear-sightedness in dealing with issues.

— ROYCE MacGILLIVRAY



THE NORTHWARD EXPANSION OF CANADA, 1914-1967

by Morris Zaslow

McClelland & Stewart, 423 pages, \$39.95
cloth (ISBN 0 7710 9071 4)

NOT ALL northern history was determined by Mounties, explorers and misfits, as Morris Zaslow shows in his thorough, scholarly study of the expansion of the northern frontier from the outbreak of the First World War until 1987. Homesteaders on the Peace River, oil workers on the Mackenzie, and miners on the shore of Hudson Bay all contributed to northern development through periods of public apathy and periods of intense public interest, which perhaps peaked with Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's "Northern Vision" of 1958. *The Northern Expansion of Canada, 1914-1967* examines the northern advance of agriculture, the industrialization of the subArctic, the political maturation of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, and how all these changes affected the native Inuit and Indian peoples.

The book is a companion volume to Zaslow's much-quoted *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914*, published in 1971. Both works are comprehensive and valuable.

— JOHN GODDARD

MEMOIR

THE LETTERS OF MALCOLM LOWRY AND GERALD NOXON

edited by Paul Tiessen

UBC Press, 182 pages, \$27.95 cloth
(ISBN 0 7748 0287 1)

THERE IS ample literary justification for this book as editor Paul Tiessen points out, it "dramatizes a period which . . . has so far been presented only in bare outlines elsewhere." These letters between Lowry and his Cambridge friend Gerald Noxon, beginning in 1940 and continuing for more than a decade, describe the Lowrys' happy and hopeful early years in the beachside shack at Dollarton, B.C.; reveal their turmoil after the disastrous fire in 1944, in which they lost most of their belongings and several manuscripts; and chart the progress of *Under the Volcano*. These letters also prove that the friendship was a stroke of good fortune for Lowry who, notes Tiessen, "desperately needed an editor and a brother in 1940. . . [when] . . . Noxon became. [his] . . . connection with the world beyond the wilderness"

Gerald Noxon had returned to his native Canada to work for the National Film Board but became a radio dramatist, most notably for Andrew Allan's CBC Radio "Stage" series; it was Noxon who wrote the acclaimed adaptation of Conrad Aiken's story, "Mr. Arcularis." His letters to Lowry reveal a perceptive literary critic whose advice and support for *Under the Volcano* were "invaluable."

Though some will welcome this collection for the new information it provides, it is also of interest as a correspondence between two literary men who were not writing here for posterity but out of love and care for each other. Beading the Lowry-Noxon letters is like eavesdropping on a remarkable conversation that one was not part of, but was lucky enough to overhear.

— PAT BARCLAY



POETRY

IF SUMMER HAD A KNIFE

by Beverley Daurio

Wolsak & Wynn, 70 pages, \$3.00 paper
(ISBN 0 919 897 07 X)

LYRIC POETRY has been defined as the metaphor of a feeling. *If Summer Had A Knife*, Beverley Daurio's first poetry collection, seems often to strain for such effects. The title misrepresents the book, which is for the most part restrained and subtle. "There Is a Cold Wind" is an example of Daurio working at her best. All the details in the poem are concrete: the day, the church, and the people are described economically, and any significant weight such details might have is implied in a way that is diise and disassociated, like the lens of consciousness through which we view the scene. It's a wide-angle lens and seems to include everything. The "mother in the coffin" is imbedded in the text, and isn't central to the picture as it is to the emotion. The shift from the scene described to the scene experienced is achieved by the form of the poem, a sonnet (unmeasured) that locates itself structurally, like the church, in an older world view, one which the poet questions Daurio's concluding couplet is not a resolution but a transition from scene to experience. The extremes of perception and feeling are essentially deflected and denied: "pure black would make you blind, pure white/ would make you blind." Daurio herself describes best what she's trying to do in this collection in the poem "Artificial." She appreciates the body of language, the texture of words: "artificial/ lovely word/ it tinkles," but she doesn't want language sealed off from the world. The body of language is no substitute for the body in the world:

the word points to itself
will never Lava the brooding
right
of trees and rivers
to remind us of our smallness
and our deaths

I think poets need to remember this: those who are so in love with language that they deny all other relationships; those who would allow our "technologies" to blot out or to replace the natural, the real world. As if the binoculars of the birdwatcher were more valuable, more real than the bird itself. We need, perhaps, a closer, simpler relation-

ship, where our written language is closer to our speaking: "poems like this, contrived/ to be so specific they close on themselves like clothes pins."

— MARY DI MICHELE

'SOPHIE

by Lola Lemire Tostevin

Coach House Press, 80 pages, \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 88910 323 2)

WHEN LOVE is part of thinking, it ain't called logical. What Lola Lemire Tostevin offers in *'sophie* is an alternative erotic philosophical tradition. She does not ignore the male tradition, she spars with it: "the very act of naming will prove the very/ act of loving to be true thinking you love/ therefore I am."

The first word in the book is "listening", which suggests a different kind of thinking, a receptiveness. It may be, as Wittgenstein noticed, a strange admission for poets that their greatest aim is to convey thoughts by themselves without words. But that is exactly the effect most strived for, what Tostevin describes and finds in the timbre of Billie Holiday's voice, outside and beyond the lyrics: "the mystery of voice trace is time a space between/ the lines one note above one note below the melody/ flowers beyond measure too marvellous for words. . . ." The exquisite image Tostevin presents is Billie's own listening, as if through the flowers in her hair: "on a postcard on my desk gardenias/ stuck out from the side of her head like antennas/ no sound must have gone past her."

Much of the writing in this collection is finely tuned in spite of the author's claim that she writes because she can't "sing." Less successful are the critical pieces placed in the centre of the book, as if such analytical thinking were at the heart of these poems. Her criticism of Derrida's thinking, in the poem "by the smallest possible margin," is not illuminated by another kind of thinking. Tostevin sticks to the deconstructive methodology, which always leads to certain kinds of conclusions, so that the questions and answers are *obvious*. The critic in Tostevin (not the poet) seems to swallow the jargon, the method, hook, line, and sinker, even though she sees the sexist contradictions in the philosopher's teaching, observes how the women students are "seminally divided." I guess I want her to

say, "C'mon, get real," to Derrida — like the "you" in the poem beginning "when the pleasures of the mind keep dwelling/ on the pleasures of the body." I want her to acknowledge, as do some thinkers in other disciplines, that if we stick too closely to a reductionist methodology of science we shut ourselves off from a larger view of reality.

— MARY DI MICHELE

THE MAD HAND

by Robert Priest

Coach House, 122 pages, \$10.95 paper (ISBN 0 88910 366 6)

ONCE (NOW) in a land with a stupid flag and the worst anthem ever; where the true colours of hypocrisy went unrecognized, there lived a Priest with a crooked hand.

His hand had been bent by the usual cripples: love, parents, machines, outrage. . . .

But with this hand he made song, in the Romantic sense that all designed expression is song. He wrote poems, prose poems, songs, kids' books, aphorisms. He sang on MTV, chanted madrigals, strummed rock-and-roll to tykes.

Kenneth Patchen, a dead poet in an enemy country, would have loved him. Locally he was known as "our joyous Cohen." No one else was writing poems of such secular, committed, unembarrassed worship; no one else was, out of joy, naming their lovers in their poems. No other male was voicing such forthright non-interventionist solidarity with the powers of women. (At that time, in that land, in most male poems the object of desire got lost in the thousand flashing swords of post-technique.)

When followers gathered to hear him read, they would roar, "Ebullient! Ebullient!" till he appeared. But, generally, because he was so multitalented, his words were not accorded the weight they deserved.

Then, in an unlikely year numbered 1988, the Priest published a book about his crazy and angry hand. He told autobiographical nightmares, industrial atrocities, space-cadet jokes. He listed his brief quips as confidently as old Auden. He confessed to brimming with the joy of fatherhood and husbandhood, wrote praises to the labours of mothers. And once more he said, "These things tick me off unroyally!" He said: "If William Blake were here, I'd call him up on stage to play harp solo!"

This time the citizens of the dumb-flag country listened — that

is, those few who banked on song.

They realized that the Priest's hand was bleeding and singing like a wounded bird, calling out one of the few songs that might save us.

— PHIL HALL

MAGELLAN'S CLOUDS — POEMS 1971-1986

by Robert Allen

Signal Editions (Véhicule Press), 97 pages, \$10.95 paper (ISBN 0 919890 81 4)

AN EARLY "selected poems" is like a brusque spring cleaning of the poet's study, an admission of errors and failures in previous books, a pruning, a salvage, and a chance for poet and readers alike to survey the progress of themes and skill.

This new selected serves all of those functions. It also, I hope, points up Robert Allen's merits and gains him new readers. His early work is in careful, precise set-pieces. His poems exhaust their subjects. You can feel the texture of their slow development, and hear their tumblers click as they proceed. Some books of poems leave an after-impression of rapid word-processor typing sounds and the easy genius of facility. Others, like this one, leave only the image of a person somewhere thinking long and hard.

Allen has real wit, not the anecdotal yuck or news-item irony that is more common. For example, on academic poets:

*But alas, inside
each suave, sane one of them
— posing as a passion —
lives an old provincial biddy,
full of gas.*

The only fault I find with this book is its lack of balance. The last section comprises 54 units of a much longer poem called "Voyage To The Encantadas." I think it is a wondrous poem: dense, lush, hypnotic. On a dream-loom Allen weaves ocean and farm images into a story of survival that is narrative and lyric at once. The sample leaves me eager to read the rest. And almost everything else in the book pales beside it.



*Death catches their stare, all
fawn-unblinking,*

*picks a shawl with timeless
care, to drape
on scrimshaw shoulders. No
colour in the galaxy. Even
the dreams run black and
white in this cold water flat.
Perhaps
a slight nostalgia, faintly gold
or rose —*

If "Voyage To The Encantadas" is any indication, Allen is changing and improving rapidly.

— PHIL HALL

CAFE POEMS

by Norm Sibus

Oberon, 72 pages, \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 715 8)

NORM SIBUM'S collection of poems reads like a tired monologue at the end of a boring party. The persona is, one hopes, far from being the creation of "one of us," as Sibus is described on the back cover. This narrator is self-absorbed, self-conscious, and tedious to the point of absurdity: on an outing with his girlfriend Jocelyn, he climbs to a "grotto in Vancouver" whereupon he re-enacts the "events of Gethsemane." Good grief! If I were Jocelyn, I'd be tempted to say more than "speak to me . . . you're in a stupor again." The guy would be history for me.

And in fact it's history and philosophy that seems to be Sibus's preoccupations: while sitting in a café eating a cheeseburger, he's musing on the lives of Abraham, Joseph and Jeremiah; while in bed with Jocelyn our narrator's thinking of Jacob and Rachel. At one point he's Soren Kierkegaard, at another, Augustine at Cassiacum.

The blurb states "His words are grainy and plain and he pulls no punches," but the language here lacks any dimension that "grainy" might suggest: it's flat and long-winded. But perhaps Sibus says it best himself in a section from a poem called In Laban's Field:

*You've often wondered what I
think about
when I bury myself in your
hair.
And always I answer it's not
interesting —
the interesting smudged, the con-
tent tiresome,
that coming up short against
one's mortality
is nothing an aspirin or bullet
couldn't cure.*

Exactly. — CAROLYN SMART

TALON Books

AUTUMN 88

MIMOSA



MIMOSA
a novel by
**BILL
SCHERMBRUCKER**

ISBN 0-88922254-1



STEIN: THE WAY OF THE RIVER

by **MICHAEL M'GONIGLE**
and **WENDY WICKWIRE**

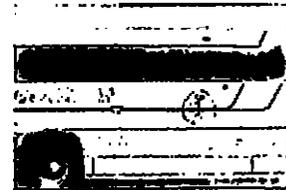
"This book is a crucial document
for a society desperately in need"

-from the foreword by
DR. DAVID SUZUKI

ISBN 0-8892X58-4

**LIKE A CHILD
OF THE EARTH**

Jovette Marchessault



Translated by Yvonne M. Keir

**LIKE A CHILD
OF THE EARTH**

a novel by
**JOVETTE
MARCHESSAULT**

ISBN 0-88922261-4



**BONJOUR,
LA, BONJOUR**
a new translation of
**MICHEL
TREMBLAY'S**
favourite play

ISBN 0-889222525

what we have



bill bissett

WHAT WE HAVE
bill bissett
continues his poetic
spirit quest

ISBN 0-8892X62-2

**MIRRORS
ON UNCERTAIN
MORNINGS**

GRANT JOHNSON

**MIRRORS
ON UNCERTAIN
MORNINGS**
new poems by
GRANT JOHNSON
to be read aloud

ISBN 0-88922259-2

THE REAL WORLD?



Michel Tremblay

THE REAL WORLD?
The gripping new
play by
**MICHEL
TREMBLAY**

ISBN 0-88922-260-6

The man behind the mike

I'm tougher than I appear to be, since my politeness doesn't necessarily mean that there's warmth underneath it. I think that the tougher the question, the more politely it should be asked

By Paul Stuewe

IN HIS ROLE as the informally informative host of CBC radio's "This Country in the Morning" and "Morningside," Peter Gzowski has become a welcome presence in millions of Canadian homes. His deft interviewing style reflects his extensive background in print as well as electronic journalism, which began with a stint at the *Timmins Daily Press* at the age of 19. Only nine years later, he became the youngest-ever managing editor of *Maclean's*, where he was part of a stellar cast that included Ralph Allen, Blair Fraser and Peter Newman. After serving as the last editor of *The Star Weekly*, he in the early 1970s switched his attention to broadcasting. He was the host of "This Country in the Morning" from 1971 to 1974, and was associated with a variety of radio and TV programs during the ensuing eight years, and since 1982 has overseen the development of "Morningside."

The Private Voice: A Journal of Reflections (published this month under McClelland & Stewart's Douglas Gibson Books imprint) is Gzowski's seventh book. In it he interweaves biographical reminiscences and personal meditations with the unfolding of a year in the life of "Morningside," and offers his readers some candid insights into both his private and public selves. *Books in Canada* caught up with him recently on a busy afternoon at CBC radio's "Morningside" offices.

BIC: For a journalist, the assignment to interview Peter Gzowski is something like being a hockey player and having Wayne Gretzky turn up at the local rink to critique your stickhandling. What's the best way to begin an interview with someone whose knowledge and expertise far surpass your own?

Gzowski: Well, that applies to every interview I've ever done — I've never interviewed anyone who knew less about what we were talking about than I did. There are a hundred hicks you work out, and I spilled more of them in the book than I probably should have. It depends so much on the person; it depends on the mood

they're in, whether the atmosphere is confrontational or seductive, and on what I'm after. With authors, for example, I'm always trying to convince them that I've read their book and to do that as early as I can. You get a very different interview from a person who thinks you really have read his or her book. Suddenly, they lose



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL GREGG/STYL

Peter Gzowski

that sense of obligation to do all the flogging themselves that they get after they've done a bunch of promotional appearances. **BiC:** *That must be a real problem with authors who are just coming off a cross-country publicity tour.*

Gzowski: It is. Fortunately, we now have enough clout so that we can say "We want them first — please." You have to get them before the pitch gets canned, before they've heard all the questions and have worked up a set of standard answers.

BiC: *In The Private Voice you mention that you're to some extent conscious of being in control of an interview while it's going on. In the process of becoming an experi-*

mood of the interview just as he was at the point of becoming very emotional. That gave him something to climb back up on, and he was able to go on from there.

BiC: *I'll never forget an interview you did with Susan Musgrave about tea years ago. She was being incredibly open and forthcoming about the most intimate aspects of her life, and I kept thinking that pretty soon Gzowski's going to ask her about her new book or lower the intensity in some other way. But you didn't, you just let her talk and made an occasional encouraging comment, and I sat there for what must have been half an hour, mesmerized by what she was saying.*

count on your friends telling you what they've been up to.

Gzowski: Not only that. I know what information I already have if I'm the only listener, hot if there's a guy in Moose Jaw listening I don't know what he's got. So I have to fill in as much of the map as I can, and let him know exactly who it is he's listening to.

BE: *In terms of the types of people you encounter, would you say it's the average folks — who've probably never talked on the radio before — who are the most difficult to interview? Or is it the people who have some experience of dealing with the media?*

Gzowski: As far as "average folks" are concerned, there just isn't any average. Some are totally petrified. Some are perfectly fine until the mike goes on, and then all of a sudden they become petrified. With others, there's no problem at all.

BE: *Is there any difference between the way that you approach your experienced guests and those who've never been on air?*

Gzowski: I'd like to say that I don't do anything differently, but I do. The interview that we were just taping, which will probably use tomorrow, is a piece about free trade done with a woman who is a sew&-machine operator working in the garment industry. In a situation like that, I'm going to try to help her make her case more than I would help her boss make a case; and not because she's a worker or a woman, but simply because she's not used to being interviewed. So I don't ever snap at her or challenge her, whereas I might do that with her boss, regardless of whether I might agree or disagree with what she's saying. She needs more support to express her point of view on the radio, and so I'll do whatever is necessary to get her point of view across.

BiC: *In terms of the types of people who are more used to being in the public eye, have you come to any generalizations about those who are relatively easy or difficult to interview?*

Gzowski: You can't generalize about politicians or bureaucrats — they can be great or lousy or anywhere in between — but if I had to pick a category that would usually be disappointing, I'd pick diplomats. They're used to being bad interviews, it's what they get paid for; and they're very good at it.

BiC: *As far as your fellow interviewers are concerned, is there anyone you particularly admire or realize that you've learned from?*

Gzowski: I think Patrick Watson is a master craftsman. I've learned when to be silent from him, and I've learned when to lift my eyebrow. I've watched him just look at someone without saying anything and get another and better answer. I've

While doing whatever it is I have done for a living, I've made a kind of act of faith in democracy. The idea is that if you tell enough people what's going on, they'll do something about it. And since I'm full of questions, I think that's how I can best fulfil a political function.

enced interviewer, do you think you've become more dominant or perhaps even manipulative in your approach?

Gzowski: Oh, I'm sure I have. I've absorbed so many hicks of the trade that I'm probably not even "aware of all of them. I certainly am more in control now, and yet I'm also much less anxious about being in control. I've become much more comfortable with the unpredictable things that sometimes happen. When I first started in broadcasting, I was freaked out by the unexpected but, with a few exceptions, I think that I can now just relax and enjoy it.

BiC: *What do you do when you sense that the person being interviewed is, whether consciously or unconsciously, keeping something back? Are there times when you hold back from establishing a greater degree of intimacy because you're apprehensive about the uncharted emotional outbursts that might result?*

Gzowski: You have to make judgements about that all the time. And since the interview is taking place in public, you're going to seem pretty coarse if you just dive in there after them. You can rough up your friends in conversation, and then give them a hug or buy them a drink or change the subject and it will all be forgotten. But on radio, with a listener listening somewhere else, you simply can't do that.

I taped a" interview like that two days ago, and we taped it because we were afraid that the person might break down on the air. There were a couple of times when I had to pull back, because I didn't want him to break down, so I changed the

Gzowski: I was too, but I was also conscious of you listening, and so I had to worry about things gelling embarrassing. I didn't find what she was saying embarrassing, but I did have to consider that the audience might

BiC: *How does an interview differ from a normal conversation?*

Gzowski: It has a beginning, a middle and an end, for starters, and is therefore artificial. If we were doing this on the radio, the first words that the listener would hear about you would be some kind of introduction. It's like writing the lead for a magazine piece: you might want it to be anecdotal or expository or something else, but whatever it is it sets the scene for what follows. Also, from the beginning of a" interview, you're working toward peaks, valleys, moments of rest and, eventually, a climax, and I don't know anyone who does that in private conversation. I hope I don't — it would be a very objectionable habit.

It's the structure and formality that makes the difference. In private conversation, you never ask a question to which you know the answer. After we finish talking I'm going to have lunch with Bob Fulford, whom I haven't seen for about six months because we've both been writing books. But I won't go down and say "Have you finished your book?" or "When will it be published?" which is what I would ask someone on the radio. There you have to go through certain rituals that you don't have to bother about with your friends.

BiC: *So in interviews the onus is on you to elicit certain information, whereas you can*

learned from Jack Webster, too, although in general my style is the antithesis of his. I think I've also picked up helpful ideas from listening to Barbara Frum and Bill Cameron.

There are some I've learned from by not doing what it is that bothers me about them. I often hear interviewers not listen- &, and I want to yell "Didn't you hear what the guy just said? Go after him!" or "Don't be so sure of yourself!" I hear far too many people making the interview a platform for their own opinions, so I really try not to do that. I'm not good at not doing it, but I try. I'm on the radio so much that it's not hard to discern what I think, and if other people are going to be on for just a few minutes that time should belong to them.

BiC: To put the proverbial shoe on the proverbial other foot for a moment, what advice would you give to someone who was going to be interviewed by you for the first time?

Gzowski: Well, I'm sneakier than I look. Because I don't try to bully people, there are those who might assume that I'm saccharine or sucky; and sometimes I am, and that bothers me about myself. But I'm also tougher than I appear to be, since my politeness doesn't necessarily mean that there's warmth underneath it I do think that even the toughest questions should be phrased politely, to the point that the tougher the question, the more politely it should be asked.

BiC: So you'd advise them to watch out for Gzowski when he starts getting polite?

Gzowski: Definitely. And then there's the good old "I don't understand." Watch it when I say that, because the chances are I understand what you said perfectly well, and I just want you to say it again and make sure that everybody gets it. I'd also suggest that they look out for sentences beginning with "I may be pretty naive, but . . ." because that really means "As any fool can see . . ."

BiC: "This Country in the Morning" and "Morningside" have been the two major radio projects on which you've worked. How would you compare them?

Gzowski: Each was a function of its time, or at least I'd like to think so. "This Country in the Morning" was a program made out of and for the early '70s, so it was full of crunchy granola and informality and looseness. Very little was prepared. When we walked into the studio each day, we had a rough plan for what we were going to do, but to a large extent we made the program up as we went along.

"Morningside," on the other hand, is planned within an inch of its life. This is my seventh year on the show, and we're trying to pull back a bit from that. The pre-planning is its strength, and it's a much better program than "This Country in the

Morning"; but sometimes it's also too slick, too ironed out in advance, and not loose or responsive enough. It's also far too issue-oriented, and isn't close enough to what people really believe in and think about.

BiC: Which "This Country in the Morning" surely alas.

Gzowski: Well, I think so. In writing about it, I've tried not to fall into the trap of praising it uncritically, but it was a wonderful radio program. Then again, it probably wasn't as good at the time as we now think it is. It was quite self-indulgent, and often we pleased ourselves without worrying about pleasing the listeners. But we opened up a lot of things, we took a lot of chances, and I wish "Morningside" could take more chances.

BiC: Those differences are certainly noticeable in the books of excerpts that you've put together out of each program's contents.

Gzowski: I really tried to have the books reflect what was special about each one. The two "Morningside" books [*The Morningside Papers*, 1985; *The New Morningside Papers*, 1987] are more organized and have a lot more in them, but where are there things like the pickle recipes that went into Peter Gzowski's *Book About This Country in the Morning* [1974]? We'll never get that kind of radio back, but maybe we can find elements from it that we can still make use of.

BiC: Toward the end of *The Private Voice* you describe how you put out feelers to the federal government about becoming involved in their literacy programs. Do you think that after so many years of talking to those who possess political power, you're more receptive to the idea of exercising it yourself?

Gzowski: Probably not in my heart. I didn't go into this business to change the world, and yet any change I've been a part of has come about through my being a journalist and therefore being able to cast some light upon things. While doing whatever it is I have done for a living, I've made a kind of act of faith in democracy. The idea is that if you tell enough people what's going on, they'll do something about it. And since I'm full of questions, I think that's how I can best fulfil a political function: My attraction to the literacy program was more in terms of seeking a change than in wanting to become a politician or a bureaucrat, and when I looked at it closely, I discovered that I really didn't want to do it.

BiC: To the extent that you ever can took at a book strictly for pleasure, what do you read?

Gzowski: I read books by Americans and dead people, because I know I won't have to interview them. I consume a lot of junk in my free time, because it's so much eas-

er on the mind and I really enjoy it: mostly detective novels, John D. MacDonald, Robert Parker, quite a few of the new regional detective series that have come along recently. I'm also probably the world's leading fan of *The New Yorker*, so I'll get interested in anything it put-sues, and I love to read the Paul Theroux and John McPhees and other fine nonfictional writers it features. As you can tell from the fact that half of a chapter in *The Private Voice* is devoted to him, I'm fascinated by Tom Wolfe, and particularly his recent switch to fiction.

I read with no pattern. I read some Jane Austen over the summer, some of Mordecai Richler's earlier books, some 19th-century fiction, James Thurber's letters. I don't read much ambitious fiction; I find it work, because I have to deal with so much of it in my work, and so I don't pick it up in my free time.

BiC: One of the things that surprised me as I was reading *The Private Voice* was your position on free trade. I would have assumed that you'd be opposed to the idea, but instead you seem quite accepting toward the Mulroney government's efforts to strike a deal with the United States.

Gzowski: I wouldn't say "accepting" — "willing to consider," maybe. I remain in a show-me mood. I'm concerned, because I'm susceptible to being part of it, that the I'm-all-right crowd in Toronto is just talking to itself while rallying around its own cultural self-satisfaction. I have a lot of sympathy with people who feel preached at by them.

Instinctively, I'm opposed to free trade, but none of its strong opponents has been able to make a strong case against it. All I can say is that it's hard for me to believe that we can level out the old playing field without knocking down some of the things that I think are fundamental to who we are. But I can't say, for example, that Clause 42B gets rid of unemployment insurance, end neither can Ed Broadbent. If he could, he would, and he isn't.

At the same time, I'm not convinced that the economic benefits are real enough to outweigh what might be lost. The debate has been really lousy. My heart tells me that this direction is a threat to our social fabric, but I can't show you where that is in the free trade agreement I'm prepared to give up certain amounts of material benefits for the privilege of being a Canadian, but: I make a hell of a lot of money, I live in a condominium in the middle of a booming economy, but I'm not going to go to someone struggling to hold on to their prairie farm and say "Why don't we each give up 20 per cent of our income so we can be Canadians?" I want to know what that person thinks, and I'm concerned that their point of view isn't being taken into account. □

BOOK NEWS

AN ADVERTISING FEATURE

The Social Impact of the Chernobyl Disaster

David R. Marples

Introduction by Victor G. Snell

The events following the April 1986 explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant are examined, including the controversial clean-up campaign around the damaged reactor and the repopulation of surrounding villages.

\$29.95 cloth; \$18.95 paper

The University of Alberta Press
141 Athabasca Hall, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E8

CHERNOBYL

The Women's Press

IMAGINING WOMEN

SHORT FICTION

Seventeen writers challenge traditional representations of women, relationships, culture, community, marriage, family and more in this dynamic fiction anthology.

ISBN 0-88961-124-6
\$9.95 pb

SHORT FICTION

Two writers you'll remember... Two novels you won't forget!

THE TASMANIAN TIGER

JANE BARKER WRIGHT

a multi-layered novel about motherhood; mystery & murder

\$10 AND A DREAM

HAZEL JAMESON

a novel of courage and dignity in Alberta during the 1930s

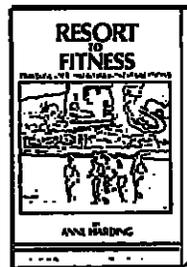
Represented by Stanton & MacDougall

POLESTAR • FIRST • FICTION

R.R. 1, Winlaw, B.C., V0G 2J0,

“RESORT TO FITNESS”

COMPLETE TRAVEL GUIDE TO HEALTH & FITNESS VACATIONS



Just \$12.95!

INVEST IN YOURSELF FOR THE RETURN OF A LIFETIME!!!

M& FIT PRESS INC.

455 HENRIETTA AVE. S.W. #111
TORONTO ONTARIO M6H 1N6
CANADA

What is a Canadian literature?

'There are many reputations our heated cultural nationalists have boosted and inflated — and all need cast ova them a cold and critical eye. There are many lies to which we have consented with our silence and we will have to repudiate every last one of them.'

By John Metcalf

IN 1982 I PUBLISHED a collection of essays and literary memoirs called *Kicking Against the Pricks*. In these essays I advanced with perfectly innocent intent four main claims. These were:

A) That successive Canadian governments have subsidized the arts in the hope that they will shape and define a national identity. That this pervasive identification of art with nationalism is pernicious and stands in the way of artistic and critical maturity.

B) That "modernism" in fiction did not really arrive in Canada until, roughly speaking, the publication of Hugh Hood's story collection *Flying a Red Kite* in 1962. That the prose written in Canada prior to this — apart from a few isolated and atypical examples — was grimly bad then and is now unbearable.

C) That fiction in Canada had, therefore, no native tradition on which to draw and that the explosion in Canadian writing in the 1960s inevitably drew on the tradition of international modernism — a tradition which was by then some 40 years old.

D) That most of the best writing in Canada since the early 1990s has been in the story form. That the emphasis has shifted from 'story-as-thing-to-be-understood' to 'story-as-thing-to-be-experienced,' 'story-as-performance.' That to be able to understand stories in this way, the reader has to be more aware of style — of technique and rhetoric.

These points — with a few jollities

thrown in by way of amplification and example-seemed to me simple and reasonably unexceptionable so I was rather surprised by some of the epithets that came my way in reviews — petty, vindictive, vitriolic, vain, poisonous, pathological, elitist, snob, and — to cap it all — Englishman.

The most recent reactions to the book have come from Professor Sam Solecki of the University of Toronto. In an ambiguously titled piece "Some Ricks Against the Prick: John Metcalf in His Essays," which I courteously, and perhaps masochistically, accepted as a contribution to *The Bumper Book* (1986), Professor Solecki advances a variety of objections to my ideas. I'd like to make a few comments which might help us to desecrate CanLit's real shape.

The idea that literature should serve what is essentially a political function, the defining of the Canadian identity, is pervasive. It underlies most government thinking on the arts and is a concern of far too many critics. Intelligent critics and bureaucrats tend to wince when the idea is put baldly, so they disguise it with euphemisms. They talk of fiction and poetry as "introducing us to ourselves and to each other": of Canada's literary 'map': of "filling in the white spaces" on that map. But they're still talking about using literature to promote national identity and unity.

What a dreadful burden of self-consciousness for the Canadian writer and reader to drag around! Am I in this novel standing sufficiently on guard? Do writers in England, I wonder, sit down each day agonizing over how best they can manifest Britishness? Or Americans how they

best can illustrate The American Way? Are British and American writers penalized if they set their fictions outside their respective national boundaries?

It's comic but true — sadly true — that Canadian writers who give their books non-Canadian settings are regarded by many reviewers as having committed treasonable acts.

A few years ago I published an anthology of stories by seven writers I considered the country's best. The book was called *Making It New*. There was an outcry from reviewers. Three of the seven had been born outside Canada and two had lived away from Canada for years. Seven of the 14 stories in the book were set outside Canada — one of them in Budapest, a location which seemed to particularly enrage one reviewer.

The Montreal *Gazette* headlined its review "Short and Sweet but Hardly Canadian."

I. M. Owen in *Books in Canada* in a moaning review entitled significantly, "To See Ourselves," said:

Doesn't the reader in another country who buys or borrows a book of specifically Canadian stories want to learn from it something of what it's like to be Canadian?

Well, I. M. Owen, the answer to that is: I hope not. If I were an intelligent reader in another country, I don't think I'd look to imaginary characters in a story for such information. Readers in another country would end up with an oddly skewed view of contemporary Quebec if, for example, they relied on the works of Marie-Claire Blais or Hubert Aquin. Most writers and most stories don't set out to convey what it's like to be Canadian. How

would you convey it? What is it like? I wouldn't read a book of **Brazilian stories** to see what it was like to be Brazilian: I'd read it to see what pleasures good Brazilian practitioners of the **form** could give me. I" other words, I read **literature** as **literature** and I don't "se **literature** as sociology, history, anthropology, or travel guide.

The **point** of my quoting from these review is this: they reveal an emphasis and a criterion of criticism found **only** in Canada. "Polish-born Joseph Conrad Sets New Novella in Congo." No one in Canada remarks on this emphasis. It is profoundly anti-literary and militates **against** our achieving a literary culture of any sophistication.

Cultural nationalism comes in cycles in Canada. The strange thii is that, the enthusiasm over, nothing much is left behind. The wave crests. **runs down, flat-**tens, and the sea is level as before. Earlier flood periods of literary enthusiasm left little in the way of deposit—certainly not a" audience. It seems that **we** have to start afresh each time. My own career has coincided with one of these cycles and I can report confidently that the enthusiasm was "early always for some ill-defined nationalist vision and only rarely for a novel, a **story**, or a poem which had lodged itself in someone's heart

The enthusiasm for the Group of Seven is an illustration of the same phenomenon. It was never a genuine **enthusiasm** for and engagement with **paint**. Had it been. **our** legacy today would be an **active**, informed audience. The reality is suggested by a remark made to me by the owner of one of Toronto's most **prestigious galleries**; she said that among her clients she has only seventeen private **individuals** who buy **paintings**.

Because the paintings of the Group of Seven were viewed not as paintings but as icons of "**Canadian-ness**," painting in Canada is still seeking an audience. Exactly the **same thing** is true of **our** literature. We must stop viewing Hugh MacLennan, say, as a" icon and instead we must start asking ourselves if his novels are good novels. And if we decide that they are **not**, we must have the courage to stop inflicting **them** on hapless students. We cannot build a **literature** on a foundation of lies.

We must stop presenting E. J. Pratt, that composer of forced and **trivial** epics, as a great Canadian poet. We must stop teaching students that **The Farm Show** and **On the Job** are plays worthy of their attention or that they are indeed plays. There are many reputations our heated cultural nationalists have boosted and inflated — and all need cast on them a cold and critical eye. There are many lies

to which we have consented with our silence and we will have to repudiate every last one of them. Only by **presenting** to students the best of **all** literature in English **can** we rear up a generation with the equipment to appreciate Canadian writing and to make it better by their informed critical response as readers

THE SECOND REMARK that upset Professor Solecki was that "modernism" in fiction did not **arrive in Canada until about** 1962 and that most **prose prior** to this was bad then and is now unbearable.

I can't really see what's **upsetting** about this assertion. If Professor Solecki can **name** any modernist novels and stories published in Canada **prior** to 1962 other than Sheila Watson's insufferably **con-**hived **The Double Hook**, I'd appreciate the **information**. But perhaps **it's** the assertion that much of the **prose** is bad that disturbs hi. He **writes**:

... in dismissing "most Canadian writing up until 1960" as "rubbish" ... and by **characterizing** the best work of the past **twenty-five years as modern** or international in style Metcalf, **co-**sciously or **unconsciously**, leaves the Canadian writer and critic without a Canadian tradition.

(Professor Solecki's "se of the words 'Canadian tradition' begs, as we have seen", many questions but I wish to postpone for a moment discussion of "tradition" and "modernism.")

I would assert again that most **prose** fiction in Canada up to, say, 1962 was, at best, dreary. Most of Professor Solecki's "Canadian tradition" is the handiwork of **academic resurrection-men**. **Literary nationalism** has boosted and bloated the reputations of such figures as Major John Richardson, Frederick Philip Grove, Morley Callaghan, Hugh MacLennan, Sinclair Ross, Ernest Buckler, and W. O. Mitchell. The academic CanLit establishment has stamped them as "Classics." They are, of course, nothing of the sort Their books are, in the main, dull and flawed. They were old-fashioned when they were **wit-**ten and are now antiquated. Is to say **this** to deprive anybody of anything? Is to draw attention to their quite **awful in-**adequacies of language to leave the Canadian writer and **critic** without a Canadian **tradition**? And if it is, does it matter? **Who** would wish to identify with a tradition of **mediocre writing**?

Never mind the Canadian writer and critic: what about the poor Canadian reader?

I" their indecent haste to **invent a tradi-**tion, the scholars have cemented these and eve" lesser writers into the curricula and reference books. The **cement** is hardening and if **we** don't **dii** it out **now** it will be too late. The process of **canonization** is

picking up speed. The appetite grows by what it feeds on. Some literary nationalists **can scarcely** wait for the **obsequies** to **end** before indulging in hasty **hagiogra-**phy — witness the **sloppy, sentimental treatment** accorded the reputations of **Marian Engel and Alden Nowlan**.

Maria" Engel wrote one **good** minor novel, **The Honeyman Festival** — a book I frequently recommend. She was a **serious** writer but she was not a major **writer**. Few of **us** are. **Alden Nowlan** was a **writer** who started strongly and declined in **abili-**ty and taste as his reputation increased. I expressed **this** opinion once to a teacher of **English** in a university who replied that he didn't think it was a" appropriate **thing** to say about a ma" who had **cancer**.

THE ASSERTION which most upset Profes-
sor Solecki was "that fiction in Canada had no native tradition on which to draw and that the explosion in Canadian writing in the 1960s inevitably drew on the tradition of international modernism—a tradition which was by then some forty years old." Professor Solecki complained that, with this assertion, I left the Canadian writer and critic without a Canadian tradition. He also wrote:

... if we agree that our major tests — those which constitute or determine our field of study — are written in a modern or international style ... then we have no theoretical basis on which to constitute a **canon** that is specifically **Canadian** — unless we want to do it on the **basis** of place of publication.

It is important to put Professor Sol&ki's essay and these quotations from it — into a context The essay was printed in **The Bumper Book**, an anthology of contentious essays and **squibs** about **Canadi-**a" writing edited by me and published in 1986. (I urge the entire thing upon you; it is doubtless unobtainable at most good bookstores but copies of the book and of its splendid successor, **Carry On Bump-**ing, may be had from the proprietors of ECW Press in Toronto.) It was part of Professor Solecki's intention to paint me as, in his words, Canadian literature's "resident curmudgeon." He also asserts that my **conscious** or **unconscious motiva-**tion for claiming

that "lost Canadian fiction prior to 1962 is glumly bad.

that most Canadian prose since that time has been in a" international style,

that most of the best writing in Canada since the early 1960s has bee" in the story form,

is that I'm an immigrant to Canada and I don't fit into the Canadian tradition and I'm saying these things to 'recast Canadi-

an tradition" in such a way that, as a writer of stories, I'll "have a place in it"

All this is, so far as I'm concerned, warfare of the most genial kind. But the opinions of curmudgeons are often token to be cranky and eccentric and so I'd like to make clear that my claim that most writing in Canada since 1962 is international in style is not peculiar to me. It is a topic explored as early as 1967 in *The Modern Century* by the much respected Northrop Frye. Frye states that there is an international style common to all industrialized democracies and that "complete immersion in the international style is a primary cultural requirement, especially for countries whose cultural traditions have been formed since 1867, like ours."

That noted, let us return to the lists.

Professor Solecki's position doesn't seem to me to exhibit a firm logical grip. Does he mean to say that I'm wrong in characterizing the best work of the past 25 years as international in style? Presumably this is what he's saying because he states that I'm trying to "recast Canadian tradition." But if the best work isn't international in style, in what style is it? If modern Canadian writing isn't international in style, it must be, by definition, markedly unlike any other writing in English. Is this the case? In what kind of style does that most Canadian of writers, Alice Munro, write?

And turning to the more distant past, what Canadian tradition in prose exists prior to 1962? What are this tradition's distinguishing marks? Has it invented new forms peculiar to Canada? Did it use language in new and distinctive ways? What are some of its monuments? What are its inter-connections? Whom did it influence? What is the line of descent?

Professor Solecki writes:

... Metcalf's revisionist recasting of the idea of a national literary tradition, with the short story as its focus, makes room for writers like himself who weren't nurtured on *Wacousta* and back issues of *The Canadian Forum*.

Does Professor Solecki really imagine that a young Canadian writer getting ready to write 25 years ago in 1962 looked to Hugh Gammer or Morley Callaghan or harked back to the earlier volumes of Mazo de la Roche?

No young Canadian writer was ever nurtured on *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Forum* and that is the central weakness in Professor Solecki's objections to my assertions. I realize that Professor Solecki is being humorous here and I can quite understand why he feels the uneasy need to be. He humorously cites *Wacousta* and *The Canadian Forum* to stand for the "Canadian tradition" because there are so few titles he could cite with any serious

ness and Professor Solecki — even if somewhat confused-is an honest man.

The point is that a young Canadian writer in 1962 was likely never to have heard of *Wacousta* but was likely to have been in vital contact with, say, Joyce, Beckett, Faulkner, Hemingway, Eliot, Pound, Celine, Sartre, Camus, Kerouac, etc. Fill in your own blanks. Only a writer doomed before beginning wouldn't have read these-and more-and digested them.

There was no Canadian tradition available to a young writer of prose. There were no great texts; but, more to the immediate point, there were in 1962 few available books. I suspect that what we now think of, vaguely, as "the Canadian tradition" is largely the McClelland & Stewart New Canadian Library series which was started in 1956 — the brain child, and selections, of one man. This collection of texts cannot be called "a tradition," cannot be called "a literature." Now that Malcolm Boss has retired, a part of the great work is being carried forward by John Moss of the University of Ottawa who with a band of helpers is busy designating this or that volume a Canadian "Classic." I cannot feel that this has much to do with a tradition. It is rather like a motel owner digging an ancient wishing well and instituting folk customs

There was no tradition available to a young Canadian writer in 1962 and I very much doubt if there ever will be — at least in the sense in which Professor Solecki seems to be using the word "tradition." Writing in English is not contained by national boundaries — Ezra Pound, for example, crossed many frontiers. Canadians do not live in a culture which is hermetically sealed off from outside influence. Young writers are a part of international movements — inescapably. It isn't possible for a young Canadian writer to receive "the Canadian tradition" in pure and unadulterated form and it wouldn't be desirable if he or she could. Culture has been international for centuries. The only kind of society which still has the kind of tradition that Professor Solecki seems to be implying is tribal society.

Professor Solecki knows all this as well as I do. I suspect that with his uneasy defence of "the Canadian tradition" we are dealing yet again with cultural longing rather than with cultural reality. But part of our difficulties here may result from a far too casual use of the word "tradition." □

This excerpt is from *What Is a Canadian Literature?*, by John Metcalf, published this month by Red Kite Press, P. O. Box 30, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6J6.

A Countercultural Adventure Story

LITERARY OUTLAW

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS



William S. Burroughs has been in jail, he's killed his wife, he's been a junkie in exile, he's spent his life on the run. This is the story of William S. Burroughs—a true renegade, an outlaw in every sense.

This LITERARY OUTLAW is an extraordinary personage of our time. In his first biography, Burroughs neither hides nor sanitizes the details of his life, a life often wilder and more improbable than his own inventions.

This book is the history of the American Avante-garde.

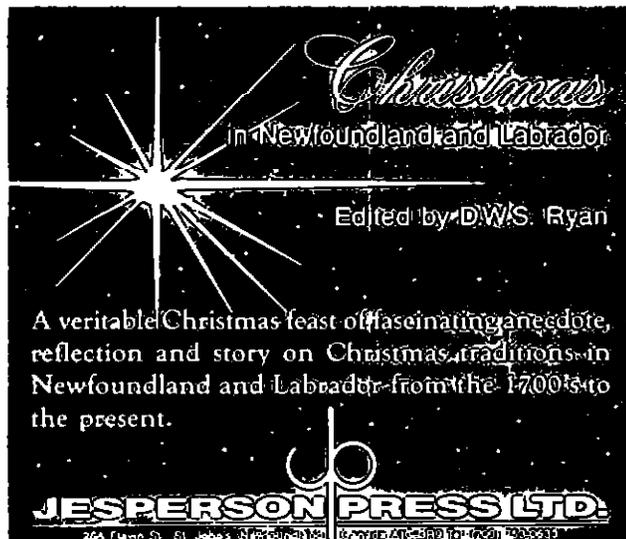
Ted Morgan is a Pulitzer-prize winning journalist and the biographer of FDR, Winston Churchill and Somerset Maugham.

\$36.00 cloth

Fitzhenry & Whiteside
Publishers of Arts & Warlock
Canadian College, Ottawa

BOOK NEWS

AN ADVERTISING FEATURE



Christmas
in Newfoundland and Labrador

Edited by D.W.S. Ryan

A veritable Christmas feast of fascinating anecdote, reflection and story on Christmas traditions in Newfoundland and Labrador from the 1700's to the present.

JESPERSON PRESS LTD.

MIZZLY FITCH:
The Light, The Sea, The Storm

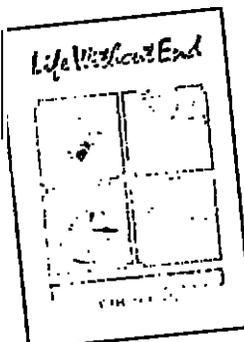


by Murray Pura

Fog-quiet, deadly; raging winds; stormy seas: the drama of life as a fisherman and lighthouse keeper parallels the struggle within Mizzly Fitch to reconcile his inner turmoil against his perception of a malevolent God.

ISBN 0-88924-201-1, 160 p., 6 x 9, \$19.95 cl.

— Established 1972 —
Simon & Pierre P.O. BOX 280 ADELAIDE ST. POSTAL STY
TORONTO ONTARIO M5C 2A4, CANADA



Life Without End

LIFE WITHOUT END

The Transplant Story

P. J. Houlihan

A controversial and anecdotal examination of the contentious issues surrounding organ transplantation, including: the use of living donors, legal and ethical complications and the role of the media. \$12.95, Paper, 1-55021017-s

NC Press Limited (416) 593-6294
260 Richmond St. W., Ste. 401, Toronto, ON M5V 1W5

MIND CHILDREN

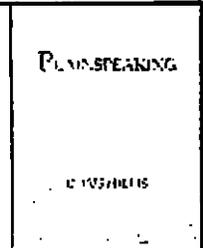
The Future of Robot and Human Intelligence

Hans Moravec

Written by the world renowned roboticist, Hans Moravec, *Mind Children* offers a mind-boggling glimpse of a world we may soon share with our artificial progeny. Moravec argues that within fifty years we will achieve human equivalence in our machines not only in their capacity to reason, but also in their ability to perceive, interact with, and change their environment.

Harvard University Press
79 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

PLAINSPEAKING



Interviews with Saskatchewan writers by Doris Hillis

An excellent companion volume to *Voices & Visions* (1985) and an important resource for readers of Saskatchewan literature. Thirteen writers explore the craft of writing, literary influences, and much more.

0-919328-87-8 paper
0-919328-88-X cloth
\$13.95 pb/\$21.95 cl

colec books Box 239, Sub. #1, Moose Jaw, SK S6H 5V0
(308) 693-5212

Blue Windows

New and Selected Poems

by Catherine *Buckaway*



Enjoy a thoughtful selection of the best of Catherine Buckaway's lyric poetry, edited by Patrick Lane. This prairie writer explores the astonishing power of the natural landscape and the strength of the human spirit.

0-919926-88-4 paper
0-919926-88-8 cloth
\$8.00 pb/\$16.00 cl

colec books Box 239, Sub. #1, Moose Jaw, SK S6H 5V0
(308) 693-5212

Spirit wrestler

For M. T. Kelly, the past seems in constant collision with the present. "All we have in this country is landscape' . . . a promise of happiness in a line of light," he wrote in a recent collection of poems. Redemption, he says, is there if we will claim it

By Nancy Wigston

A SEPTEMBER MORNING in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood: gracious oaks and maples shade the ample verandas of turn-of-the-century houses, a park resplendent with the latest in playground accessories is alive with preschoolers, and pensioners enjoy the warmth of the late summer sun.

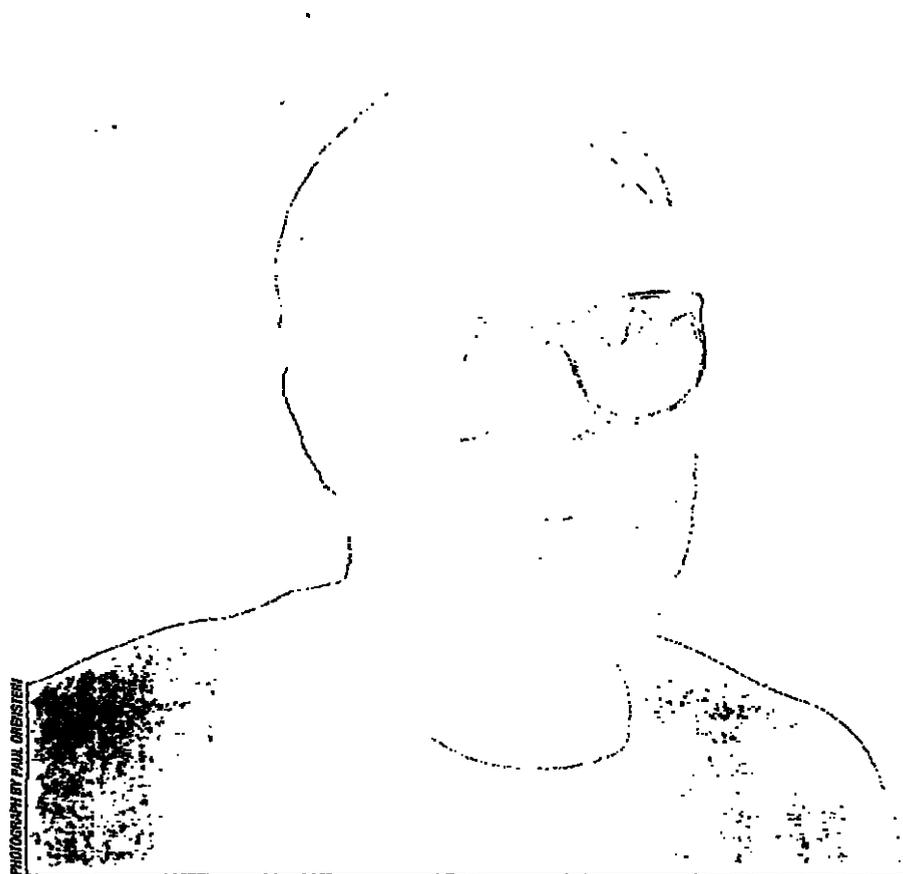
M. T. Kelly, winner of the 1988 Governor General's Award for his novel, *A Dream Like Mine*, is at home this morning, as he is most days. A full-time writer and committed househusband. Kelly shares his roomy, resolutely unrenovated house near the park with his wife, family court judge Lynn King, their sons — Jonah, 5, and Max, 16 months — and a small collection of endangered reptiles. A vocal critic on many topics, including the plight of native peoples, the rape of the environment, and the abysmal state of publishing and the arts in Canada, Kelly nevertheless seems decidedly optimistic — even buoyant — in person. Bearded and bespectacled, he grins a lot.

We meet baby Max and the babysitter who comes three times a week. Next, Kelly happily presents a painted turtle, medium-sized, basking in the sun that streams through the windows of the second-floor den. Supposedly a protected species, the rare turtle (*terrepina ornata*) was discovered for sale in a Toronto pet shop, languishing from ill treatment. The Kellys bought her, and nurtured her back to health; they reported the pet shop owner. Jonah named her "Living Long." "Shell reach sexual maturity at 25," says Kelly, and smiles — "no wonder they're endangered." Fit once more. Living Long enjoys star status in their household. We have just settled down to talk when Kelly remembers Sparky, the "red-eared slider" in Jonah's room. We get up to have a look. Sparky turns out to be another,

smaller turtle, with, naturally enough, red ears.

Things have certainly changed for Milton Terence Kelly. As a youngster growing up in Toronto neighbourhoods "full of toxic pollution," Kelly was a long way from the pastoral version of city life he now enjoys. He lived first in the Junction

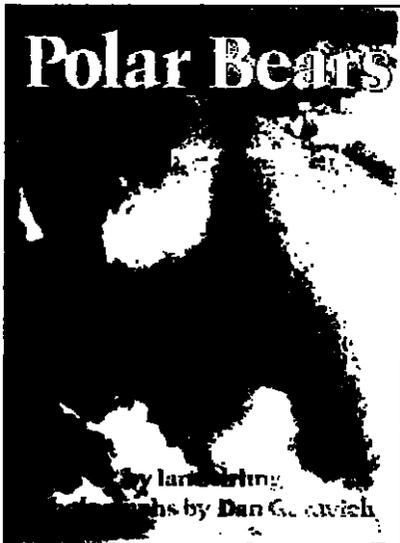
(near Dundas and Keele streets in Toronto), and then — after the death of his father when Terry was just eight — shared an apartment with his mother in Parkdale, in one of the city's first high-rise blocks. He was well aware of being a kid without a cottage. The love of nature and of Indian ways that culminates in the



M. T. Kelly

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL GREISTERN

A masterful combination
of Photos and Text,
Art and Research



POLAR BEARS casts its readers completely into a harsh polar world, where ice and snow and freezing winds are mastered by one mighty animal, the polar bear. Considered an endangered species in 1965, now the most successful conservation story of the century, polar bears have been the focus of extensive international study, championed by Ian Sterling.

POLAR BEARS is simply THE most complete work on polar bears published to date—a unique combination of superb photographs and biological information. Dan Guravich's 291 full-colour photographs and Ian Sterling's meticulous text answer all the standard questions, but delves much further too, revealing the polar bear's ingenious seal-catching techniques, their evolution, their unique relationship with indigenous native peoples and current conservation management programs.

POLAR BEARS.

The definitive book on polar bears.

\$49.95 cloth

Fitzhenry & Whiteside
Publishers of Funk & Wagnals

howl of outrage and violence of *A Dream Like Mine* had its mots in the heart of a child of the city, inexorably drawn to what he lacked. "I had no nature at all," he remembers, "just the light on cinders in a railway yard:

Kelly's 1982 novel, *The Ruined Season*, features a Kelly-like protagonist, Michael Leary, who is glad to leave Toronto. "a city that didn't change, no matter what was altered." He has lived all his life by the lake, but "hardly crossed the expressway to get near it. When he had, the water hardly moved, and stank." Enchanted to hear, from a friend, Champlain's description of Georgian Bay as "the sweet-water sea," Leary heads north with no regrets.

Lots of kids grow up in the city without developing a love for the north and the Indians. What happened? "I went to a horrible Catholic school, and all we were allowed to read was the Hardy Boys. I remember finding *The Old Man and The Sea* in the library, and reading 'the rope bums in his hands were like erosions in a fishless desert.' It was like — ziiiiing! the real thing! And we had stories about the Jesuit martyrs, and how they suffered; I was putting my hand in the snow, and suffering, hoping that if I prayed enough and burnt myself I could get my Dad out of purgatory — all that Catholic stuff. But when I read the Jesuit book, my sympathy was for the Indians; the fathers thought my faith was in danger. And it was. I hated that school. There was a lot of physical violence against the boys: a kid in grade nine was punched in the face for going steady. Even as a kid I knew that was extreme. James Joyce talks about it. We had those same sermons, like the one in *Portrait of the Artist*, about the torments of hell. From there I went to a public school, and what a change: it was like 14th-century Florence. Instead of football, we had track and field—which I was really good at — and we had swimming and gymnastics. All those individual sports. There were girls, which was really civilizing and human. Here's this school in a supposedly tough neighbourhood — Parkdale Collegiate — and I had wonderful teachers who helped me start writing. John McMurtry, a brother of the former attorney general, who now teaches at Guelph, and Al Steele, a history teacher."

Still, few boys at Parkdale in the mid-'60s were headed in the direction of the arts. Kelly joined the Young Tories. Political clubs had just been allowed at the school: Kelly was reading books like *Power*, by Howard Fast, hying to plot his route out of the neighbourhood. On his mother's advice, he decided to become a corporation lawyer. He went to Glendon College, where another "wonderful teacher," Bob Simmons, let him write a novel for a second-year course. "My Vegetable

Love was the title." says Kelly, "and it wasn't about organic gardening." (The title refers to Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress"). Kelly also wrote for the Glendon student paper, interviewing such diverse types as B. B. King, George Chuvalo, and Joni Mitchell. "I knew then I wasn't going to be a lawyer," he says. "I wasn't calm enough."

Calm isn't the word to describe Kelly, even today. As if tired with talk of his own past, he abruptly changes course, bouncing up to fetch some photos of a hip he took last June to northern Alberta. He partially retraced the steps of Samuel Hearne, an Englishman who in 1769 began a walk of some 3,900 miles from Prince of Wales Fort (now Churchill) to the mouth of the Coppermine River on the Arctic Ocean — in high-heeled shoes and a wig, according to Kelly. "He writes as beautifully as Boswell. I think some thing happened to English prose after that period, around 1820, with Macaulay and Dickens."

So Kelly went there, where no one goes, to those so-called gloomy regions, drawn by the enchantment of Hearne's great prose. With a guide, he explored part of the area east of Great Slave Lake. A set of photos on his lap tells the story: "Here I am, just off the plane, totally neurotic, wearing a what-have-I-done? look. And here I am a few days later." Palpably relaxed. "See why I go there?"

As well as seeing for himself these lands where nomadic Indians once roamed, Kelly discovered projectile points marking graves from who-knows-how-many thousands of years ago, which he reported to the Royal Ontario Museum. A photo shows a smiling Kelly at an ancient grave site. How did he find it? "Imagine you're camping, with your children in the canoe. Look for sites where you'd bury your own child. Somewhere where the wind would keep the mosquitoes off its spirit, overlooking water. All megaliths overlook water. There is something in our consciousness . . ." Kelly seems able to imagine the feelings of both the vanished Indian and the European explorer, about places that are light years away from Parkdale.

In *A Dream Like Mine*, a stunning evocation of the world the Indians lost and the spiritual power and vision they still possess, Kelly's obsession with native peoples, their lands and legends, found direct expression. But the theme of the lost paradisaal wilderness, hinted at in his earlier work, took time to emerge. His first novel, *I Do Remember the Fall* (1977), was a sexy satire about an exiled journalist living in a town called Elk Brain, where he gets involved in a strike at the newspaper where he works. The town, the strike, and a love affair combine to create increasing enervation. We leave

our hero "looking for a way out, and that's something." Critics' response to Kelly's first novel was excellent. One recalled *Candide*, shortlisted the B o o In Canada

"*The More Loving One*," (its title taken from a Auden poem) was a long novella followed by three stories. The novella was a tough, intricately structured meditation on a marriage breakdown, and not in the least like the satirical romp that preceded it. In one of the stories, however — "Eloise" — a refugee from the sexual wars finds comfort in an afternoon excursion to the Indian graves at Serpent Mounds near Peterborough. Here he runs into his former lover and her new husband. Wanting to handle the encounter in a civilized fashion, the narrator almost pulls it off, only to have Eloise flare up in anger from nowhere, just as she always did. Discomfited, he returns to the city, consoled by the memory of sitting by the lake and imagining hearing voices from thousands of years ago. "The inhuman light of Canada wasn't frightening. It was comforting."

If that sounds like a "oblique comment" on the wounds endured by the sexual revolutionaries of the '70s, it may be that by 1980 Kelly was something of an expert in this field. For several years he'd written the "Between the Sexes" column in the weekend *Globe & Mail*, taking on such topics as sadomasochism, the treatment of women under Islam, and why women fall for worthless "ten."

In his second novel, *The Ruined Season*, Michael Leary escapes the city for the country around Sudbury (Kelly spent a year teaching there), is attracted to the landscape, but fails under the influence of a rotten friend, Charlie, who first shows him the mystery of the lakes and wilderness. Charlie is a woman-punisher, like the men Kelly wrote about for the *Globe*, and by the time Michael frees himself from his influence, it is too late to save his own happiness. His wife, Bev, has been killed in an accident, ironically after fleeing her own house where the obnoxious Charlie is holding court. But Bev is, nevertheless, a wholly realized woman. And *The Ruined Season* shows us a man who no longer romanticizes the wilderness as a male preserve, a place to escape the complications of real-life relationship+.

Why then, are there no women to speak of in *A Dream Like Mine*? "It's not a" exclusion. I wanted to write this story as fast as I could, and bring in the history, the archetypes, the land, and the incredible anger people feel about the destruction of the environment. And the other side of it, too—Bud (the kidnapped manager of the mill) is not inhuman. But if you have women, there are always some

sexual undercurrents, and you've got a whole different issue."

When *A Dream Like Mine* was finished, it got enthusiastic responses from everyone Kelly showed it to. A work of dazzling economy, thrillingly dramatic, it would later be compared to James Dickey's *Deliverance*. A movie version is almost certain. But strangely, Kelly — well-known journalist, poet, playwright — was unable at first to find anyone who'd publish his most masterly achievement. Finally, with Margaret Ahvood championing the book — although she couldn't get her own publishers, McClelland & Stewart, interested — a movie version was optioned. Once the book was certified as at least potentially popular, it was accepted for publication (by Stoddart).

A year later, in his acceptance speech for the Governor General's Award for fiction, Kelly addressed the problem of the place of the arts in Canada, that often leaves "writers feeling so marginal that they become half mad with bitterness. . . . Although the literary presses remain the spirit of the country, a whole generation of writers has been rendered mute. They can't get to their audience."

Many who were moved by Kelly's obituary (in the *Globe & Mail*) of writer Gwendolyn McEwen will make the connection between his speech and that example of the decline and death of a gifted writer. She was his friend and neighbour, and a fellow winner of the country's highest award for her work. Kelly's words mourned her with honesty and affection. One of the country's most esteemed artists lived in a tiny apartment, and died there in mean circumstances.

Kelly endured his own "furnished-room time," when he rented a series of places near Carlton Street in Toronto, where he kept his canoe suspended from the ceiling. And yet, during those years, when he was invited to make a writer's visit to the Soviet Union, he got a glimpse of a different way of valuing artists. "There I was having dinner with Helmut Kohl," he remembers. "I had a car and a driver. I was basically a small-press author, yet there it mattered that I was a writer. Here you can say anything you want from a furnished room and nobody listens."

They're listening now. "Somebody wrote me about *A Dream Like Mine*, and said, 'Isn't it terrible to be ahead of your time?' But I'm not. I predicted violence in my book. It's been out for a year, and now George Erasmus, the head of the Canadian Native Centre, says there's going to be a revolt on the reserves." His voice rising, Kelly describes the renaissance to which he, like his journalist narrator, has borne exuberant witness. "Who'd have thought that Diamond Jenness would be proved so wrong? He wrote the seminal study in the 1930s, *The Indians of Canada*, and he

DOUGLAS & MCINTYRE NEW FALL BOOKS



THE ARCHITECTURE OF ARTHUR ERICKSON BY ARTHUR ERICKSON

An engaging text and beautifully printed images trace the evolution of the work of one of Canada's leading architects. This lavishly illustrated retrospective showcases his achievements both nationally and internationally. \$65.00

CAVES IN THE DESERT

Travels in China

BY GEORGE WOODCOCK

One of Canada's most respected men of letters, George Woodcock is also a perceptive travel writer and a connoisseur of Asian culture. These qualities combine in his elegant account of his journey to Buddhist centres — art-filled caves far off the beaten track along the ancient Silk Road. \$24.95



A LIFE IN THE COUNTRY BY BRUCE HUTCHISON

From the man known as "the dean of Canada's political commentators" come these quiet memories beautifully strung into a series of vignettes which reveal the private man and eloquently uncover a part of the Canadian soul. \$18.95

SALT WATER CITY

An Illustrated History of the Chinese
in Vancouver

BY PAUL YEE

Oral histories and wonderful photographs enrich this moving account which claims a place in Canadian history for Chinese Canadians and honours the pioneers of Vancouver's Chinese-Canadian community. \$29.95

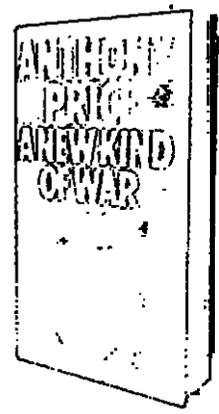
B
O
O
K
S

B
O
U
N
D
T
O
B
E
R
E
A
D



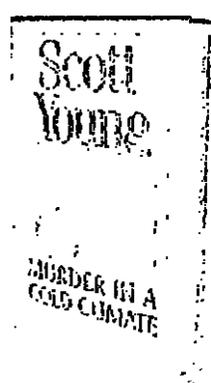
JACK
by Chris Scott
A gripping tale of a gruesome killer, a novel of Jack the Ripper, "...what Scott has done so well is demonstrate how his Cream, ... is the Ripper. He posits a convincing case." *Quill & Quire* \$19.95

A NEW KIND OF WAR
by Anthony Price
The story of spymaster David Audley in the Greece and Germany of 1945. The 17th intellectual thriller from the espionage author whom John Gardner has called "the best there is." Irving Kristol says, "Price is better than le Carré." \$24.95



SPLENDIDO
by Ron Base
A new thriller by the author of *Matinee Idol* and *Foreign Object*. full of suspense and romance. **SPLENDIDO** features the hero Tom Coward and his exciting adventures in Venice and the Italian Riviera. \$19.95

MURDER IN A COLD CLIMATE
by Scott Young
A brilliant new departure for veteran writer Scott Young: an action-packed murder mystery set in the Arctic-introduces Inuit R.C.M.P. Inspector "Mateesie" Kitlogitak, a brand new Canadian detective. The chase begins. \$19.95



 Macmillan of Canada

was as sympathetic as they come, but he said the Indians were doomed. Whoever would have thought possible this resurgence in art — Daniel David Moses, Thomson Highway, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias — articulate spokesmen who can play the game? Who'd have predicted Lubicon Lake? Look at the black irony of *The Spirit Sings*. All controversy aside, almost all those artifacts came from Europe. In the 1950s Mounties were going in end destroying ceremonial drums on the reserves — no search warrant thing."

One of the last things Gwendolyn McEwen wrote praised *A Dream Like Mine* as a venture into the "real, unexplored world that lies within the country we think we have conquered. It is brutal and beautiful — a gash in the flesh cauterized by fire, a dark wound in the mind which nothing will ever heal." Kelly believes that publishers stayed away from his book because "they thought people didn't want to hear about this psychotic, ex-alcoholic Indian with bad teeth who will cut your Achilles tendon." The book, of course, is more than that Kelly says he was trying to convey a sense of this ancient, echoing history of ours, and within the suspense and violence of the story, the beauty of legend and land emerges, pure and without preaching.

For Kelly, the past seems in constant collision with the present Champlain, of all people, has suddenly become a relevant voice. "All we have in this country is landscape," Kelly wrote in one of the poems in his 1984 book of verse, *Country You Can't Walk In*. He described 'spring's violent hollow, summer's breathing . . . a promise of happiness in a line of light' Redemption is there, if we will claim it

Even ugly modern Toronto is offered a chance in a recent poem, "The Water Was So Clear." Follow the Indian ways, Kelly counsels, the only roads that aren't grid-locked; find within the "crowded city with its diseased, frightened trees" the gentle wilderness. unthreatening, the garden the Indians called "Kistikani." Is it possible? Kelly would have us believe it. There is evidence of the connections everywhere, all around us, if only we would look. Three-toed black woodpeckers in backyard trees, ancient burial grounds beneath the mock-Tudor homes in this very neighbourhood. "There was a protest here a hundred years ago, when the buildings went up," he assures me.

While the baby naps, Kelly makes a cup of coffee, northern Ontario style, using condensed milk instead of fresh. Outdoors the sun shines, the traffic hums. It's lunchtime and the park is quiet A few ancient spirits offer a gentle, haunting reminder of the past. □

A curious kind of virtuosity

Hugh Garner has his place in Canadian literary history: as the author of a few good books, as an eccentric and tmgic personality and as one of the small but important group of our writers who were genuine members of the working class

By George Woodcock



Hugh Garner

THE STORMS BELOW: THE TURBULENT LIFE AND TIMES OF HUGH GARNER

by Paul Stuewe

James Lorimer, 225 pages, \$24.95 cloth
(ISBN 1 55028 150 X)

ONE OF the first books I reviewed in Canada was Hugh Garner's book of short fiction, *The Yellow Sweater and Other Stories*, and, as Paul Stuewe reminds his readers twice in *The Storms Below*, I remarked that "Mr. Garner is a man with a curious kind of virtuosity which enables him to write up and down the scale of fiction, apparently at will." The implication of my remark was that if one can write as well as Garner did at his best, there is not much excuse for writing as badly as he did at his worst; that was certainly the interpretation Garner put on it and retained in his elephantine memory, so that eight years later, when I encountered him for the first time, he turkeycocked up to me and shouted: "So you're the bastard who wrote that piece on *The Yellow Sweater* in *Northern Review*!"

Whether or not Garner was willing to admit the vast range of quality in his work — and sometimes in his essential honesty

he grudgingly granted the fact — it remains a problem for anyone attempting to write about him. One can offer the justification that, like Defoe, he was a professional who wrote many things for money and a few things of true literary merit and lasting importance and remark that when all those bad and boring things Defoe did for cash are discounted, there still remain *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*, just as there still remains *Cabbagetown*. Certainly one cannot dismiss Garner, as critics recently have been inclined to do, just because his work does not present the same kind of creative and stylistic consistency as, say, that of a Margaret Laurence or (to cite an author he greatly admired) an Ethel Wilson. Garner has his place in the record of Canadian literature as the author of a few good books, as an eccentric and tragic personality, and as one of our small but important group of writers who were genuine members of the working class and made their way into literature without benefit of university education.

Yet the disorderliness of his life as well as the unevenness of his writing make him a difficult subject, and my own feeling is that a really effective literary biography of him cannot be written so soon, only nine years after his death. And perhaps an underlying sense that he may be writing prematurely explains the curious tentativeness on Paul Stuewe's part, of which one is aware throughout *The Storms Below*. It is an account of a life rather than a real biography, lacking the kind of mature insight into Garner's works and the detached view of his life that make a late study — like Richard Ellman's of Oscar Wilde — so much more effective than lives written while memories of their subject and the feelings those memories evoke are still near.

Still, as an interim work, a kind of pre-biography giving one the actual essentials of the life of a writer in danger of being forgotten by the literary-academic establishment *The Storms Below* has its uses. And indeed it is in a utilitarian sense, as an informative account, that one appreciates the book. Its style is as study as the wooden palings of *Cabbagetown* vegetable gardens, but it lacks colour; the telling image, and one feels that

perhaps Stuewe has taken too much to heart Garner's remark in a note he wrote for himself about the characters in *Silence on the Shore*: "They should all come out tattletale grey, like the next-door neighbour's washing, for that is how people are." At the end of his book Stuewe rather oddly, and touchingly, identifies himself with his subject, having clearly gone through that strange process of the fusion of personalities that biography often involve. He concludes with a last revealing sentence.

Both Hugh Garner and his biographer approach life with a sometimes awkward combination of realism and sentimentality, and in our own different but comparable ways we have done our best to speak directly to our contemporaries and descendants

Stuewe, who has kept aside from the critical establishment in Canada and who is clearly alienated from the various avant-garde attitudes prevailing in recent decades, has found in Garner the kind of creative writer who accords with his own critical attitude, and so he has produced a book whose most positive aspect is perhaps its empathetic understanding of Garner's predicament.

Yet there is a thinness to the book that appears not only in its critical shallowness but also in a failure on the author's part to follow all the possible avenues of inquiry. I have a specific instance to offer, in which I was directly involved with Garner

In 1961, as Stuewe tells us, Garner flew to Vancouver for a television interview with George Woodcock about his Spanish civil war experience. The interview was to feature in a documentary program celebrating the 25th anniversary of the outbreak of the civil war. Stuewe tells us that "Things went well enough when the interview came off successfully," and then goes on to tell how Garner went on a binge, got rolled, fought with a taxi driver, and ended in the RCMP lockup at Richmond. True in part, but perhaps the most important aspects of that day's events are ignored.

Things did not begin as well as Stuewe suggests. Garner had been on the wagon for some weeks, but on the plane he had slipped off with a vengeance, and when he rang me in the morning from the airport it was obvious that he was already quite drunk. I asked him up to my house for lunch so we could discuss the interview. When he arrived he staggered out of the taxi and up the steps, far gone and cantankerous. Something my wife said amused his anger; he shouted, "I'll break your jaw, you bloody broad," and then vomited over the table. Somehow I got him into another taxi and back to the hotel. I immediately telephoned the producer, Alex Pratt, to tell him of Garner's condition, which was alarming, because if we failed to do the interview that evening we would have to wait until the following week for studio space. We agreed to give ourselves plenty of time to pick him up at the hotel, and it was a good thing we did, since we found the door to his room ajar and Garner passed out on his bed with an empty mickey beside him. We managed to awaken him by dragging him into the bathroom and

INIMITABLE

W.O.
Mitchell



Ladybug,
Ladybug...

*Ladybug, Ladybug,
Fly away home
Your house is on fire
Your children alone.*

It's just a child's rhyme - or is it?

W.O. Mitchell, the acclaimed author of *Who Has Seen the Wind*, *How I Spent My Summer Holidays*, and *Since Daisy Creek*, skillfully mixes the classical elements of comedy and tragedy in this unforgettable story - one that brilliantly weaves together the disparate lives of writer Mark Twain, a widowed mother, a college professor and a madman bent on murder. Filled with light and shadow, merriment and madness, a tender father's love, and the hatred of a psychopath, *Ladybug, Ladybug* is Mitchell's 'most bewitching and powerful novel to date. \$24.95 cloth 0-7710-6075-0



McClelland & Stewart
The Canadian Publishers

Where good books
are always in.

dipping his head in water; he then vomited again, and we plied him with black coffee. It was a sad hungover figure, with collapsing legs, whom we supported into the studio, and we had few hopes for our program. And yet, as soon as the lights were on him, old pm Gamer pulled himself together as if by a miracle, and gave a superb interview, coherent and full of sharp memories; I found the transformation extraordinary. Then, before we could halt him, he slipped away on the adventures Stuewe described. A few days later I was talking to Robert Weaver. "Garner's sheepish," he said. "He's under the impression he misbehaved himself at your house. I said I'd apologize on his behalf."

Stuewe obviously knew I'd played a leading part in the Vancouver incident. And yet he never got in touch with me for my recollections, which would have certainly rounded out his account of the episode and offered a curious instance of the extent of Garner's professionalism.

And this leads me to conclude that the thinness I feel in *The Storms Below* is one of substance as well as argument and might have been partly remedied if Stuewe had been a little more assiduous in following up possible sources of information. Still, the very incompleteness of *The Storms Below* leaves the way open for a fuller biography of Gamer later on, when we have seen how his work stands up to time. □

From nation to colony

The Free Trade Deal makes it *eminently* clear that Brian Mulroney's deal is a covert way of *shifting an astonishing amount of power to the private sector in exchange for a few insubstantial promises about cheaper goods and more jobs*

By No- Snider

THE FREE TRADE DEAL

edited by Duncan Cameron
James Lorimer & Co., 264 pages, \$16.95 paper
(ISBN 1 55028 074 0)

FREETRADE, FREE CANADA: HOW FREE TRADE WILL MAKE CANADA STRONGER

edited by Earle Gray
Canadian Speeches, 169 pages, \$9.95 paper
(ISBN 0 9693400 0 2)

KNOCKING ON THE BACK DOOR: CANADIAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF FREER TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES

edited by Allan Maslove and Stanley L. Winer
The Institute for Research on Public Policy, 233 pages,
\$20.00 paper (ISBN 0 88645 058 6)

WHILE IT IS just possible that the Free Trade Agreement with the United States represents the most honest arrangement since Confederation, give or take a world war or two, it's remarkable how little

in comparison, say, with the Ben Johnson affair. Of course, economics is a notoriously dismal science and parsing the clauses of the agreement is not everybody's idea of a good time. The public, it seems, would much rather focus on Brian's Guccis or Geills's toilet brush than consider the implications of a bade arrangement that might

well have some real and unpleasant consequences in their daily lives. At the same time, there are any earnest souls left in this country who wish to consider themselves informed on the issue — while they take a break from their deliberations on the three Rs of our epoch — real estate, renovations, and restaurants — they could do a lot worse than to have a glance at the three works under review.

The compilation edited by Duncan Cameron is an excellent representation of the anti-free-trade argument featuring such familiar nationalist writers as Stephen Clarkson, Me, Watkins, Daniel Drache, and Susan Crean. These writers make a fair case that the agreement, in present form, is an unmitigated nightmare for Canada. According to Cameron, the trade agreement will result in the loss of national control of the Canadian economy and its being handed over to American big business. In return, Canadian business will not receive the guaranteed access to American markets promised by the proponents of the deal. In worse, will still be subject to countervailing measures by American protectionists. That is to say, Brian Mulroney and his representatives have negotiated the worst of all possible worlds for Canadians.

According to Stephen Clarkson, even worse is in store. CUSTER — not the Indian-fighting general but the Canada United States Trade Commission and the organization that will supervise the terms of the deal — is a Trojan horse that will be used as a vehicle for American interference in domestic

Canadian political matters. According to Daniel Drache, Canadian regulating bodies such as the CRTC and the Canadian Transport Commission will be hampered in their activities and, furthermore, no Canadian legislation will be able to be passed without American consultation and approval. (One of Drache's more interesting points is that Toronto under free trade will become more important to North America but less important to other Canadians. This is one prediction that! if true, will come as a relief to Torontonians tired of their city's serving as the national whipping-boy. Let all those folks out there in the regions take their bees to Washington or New York. Let's see how much they care about Alberta in Manhattan. Let's see how much they care about "Quebec's distinct society" in D.C.)

The Free Trade Deal makes it eminently clear that Mulroney's deal is a covert way of shifting an astonishing amount of power to the private sector in exchange for a few insubstantial promises regarding cheaper goods and more jobs. What is most dispiriting about Cameron's collection of essays is that, after his writers have just about convinced you of the disastrous nature of the deal, pollster Donna Dasko reveals the substantial public support for the damned thing that exists across the country. (Of course, now that some of the specifics are being examined that support may well be dropping.)

It must be said that the blockers of the deal make a better intellectual case than the boosters. In *Free Trade, Free Canada*, a col-

lection of pro-free-trade speeches edited by Earle Gray, vague generalities are relied upon. Unlike Cameron's blockers, few of Gray's speakers seem to have actually read the document. Canada's ambassador to Washington, Allan Gottlieb, raises once more the spectre of protectionism. "There is only so much plonk I am prepared to drink for my country," says Mordecai Richler, doing his Evelyn Waugh impression. Somebody called Nicholas J. Patterson launches a shockingly ugly harangue against "overpaid, hell-raising union employees" and "loudmouth minority groups." One would think that the intellectually fastidious Richler would be more careful about the company he keeps.

The high point of *Knocking on the Back Door* is Glen Williams's essay, "Free Trade and Canadian Sovereignty." His analysis, as well as preserving a refreshingly dispassionate tone amidst all the howlers and chest-beaters both pro and con, is the only one that even approaches originality. Williams's point of departure is Harold Innis's remark that Canada has gone from "colony to nation to colony." Williams raises the question of whether Canada can really be considered a fully independent nation-state. All other liberal western democracies or better understood as "a geographically large zone within the American economy." Williams points out that Canada's foreign relations are essentially imperial relations: the only foreign tie that has any sort of consequence for this country is with that larger one to the south that accounts for three-quarters of our trade and

owns half of our production apparatus. During the 1970s, he maintains, three-quarters of the Canadian public was willing to buy back U.S. companies in Canada, even if it meant a lowering of living standards. In the 1980s, thanks in part to propaganda campaigns launched by such organizations as the Business Council on National Issues and the general Mammon-worshipping atmosphere, public opinion has become much softer. In other words, the idea of Canada as a proud, independent nation is not worth it — not if it means Canadians sacrificing an iota of personal comfort.

In conclusion, an anecdote. I was browsing through the racks in a record store on Bloor Street in my neighbourhood, Toronto's Annex, when in came a woman active in the anti-free-trade movement, asking the clerk to put one of her posters in the window. The clerk — one of those out-of-work-musician types-looked at her as if she were just one more religious nut, proselytizing for some small far-out cult. He wasn't going to have any political brochure in his window. But think how bad this deal's going to be for the Canadian record business, said the woman. The clerk didn't seem to know or care. He pointed to a poster of himself in the window, advertising a one-nighter he was playing. Free enterprise has claimed even the long-hair freaks. Across the street from the bookstore, a greedhead money magazine displayed a cover asking "Is it better in the States?" Hey, will the last citizen left up here please turn off the light? □

NEW FROM CORNELL!

THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History

JEFFREY BURTON RUSSELL

The Devil, Satan, Lucifer, Mephistopheles throughout history the Prince of Darkness has taken many names and shapes. Russell here chronicles the story of the Devil from antiquity to the present. After a compelling essay on the nature of evil, Russell uncovers the origins of the concept of the Devil in various early cultures and traces its evolution from the time of the ancient Hebrews through the first centuries of the Christian era, the Middle Ages, and into our own era. Along the way, Russell focuses on images of evil found in folklore, scholastic thought, art, literature, theology, and mysticism.

HERSELF BEHELD

The Literature of the Looking Glass

JENIJOY LA BELLE

What happens when a woman looks into a mirror? Does she see her face or does she see her self? Jenijoy La Belle finds that women-bath in literature and in life—regard their reflected images for reasons that far transcend the gratification of vanity. In this thought-provoking account of the role played by the mirror in women's self-conceptions, La Belle focuses attention on literature of the last two hundred years in which a woman confronts her looking glass and, through her perception of how she looks, begins to consider who she is.

Available at all fine bookstores throughout Canada.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS
ITHACA, NY 14850

C O R N E L L

Loud in their triumph

Anthony Trollope's novels about late-Victorian British politics often strike the 20th-century Canadian reader as curiously familiar: the Conservatives are never in office long enough to reward all their friends

By I. M. Owen

SPOILS OF POWER: THE POLITICS OF PATRONAGE

by Jeffrey Simpson

Collins, 116 pages, \$27.95 cloth
ISBN 0 00 217759 5

THE ATTENTION-GRABBING title seems to promise, or threaten, a muckraking exposé of patronage. This isn't that kind of book. Of course there's plenty of entertaining muck along the way, but what Simpson gives us is a history of patronage in Canadian politics, considered as an essential and not always malign element in this or any system of rep-

resentative government.

The press, and politicians while in opposition, have tended lately to assume that all patronage is sleazy, and — worse — to stigmatize any government appointment or contract as patronage. For instance, a front-page story in the *Toronto Star* announced the appointment of Donald Macdonald to be a high commissioner in London as a "patronage appointment." That's an abuse of language. Macdonald is a lifelong Liberal; more than that, while ambassadorial salaries are no doubt substantial, they are unlikely to compare with the income of a senior partner in an enormous law firm. Patronage may sometimes offer mere glory as a reward for party services; when real work is offered, it's patronage only if the recipient will actually bathe from the pay. And it's bad patronage only if the recipient is ill qualified for the job. Support of the party in power — or even friendship with the prime minister — shouldn't be regarded as an automatic disqualification for a government appointment.

Simpson states his approach in the foreword:

I like to think of a country's political culture as a prism subjected to a variety of beams of light which represent social, economic, political and cultural forces. These beams are then refracted by the prism to produce policy decisions, election results, new personalities, the ongoing warp and woof of the nation's political life. An essay about patronage, then, can be thought of as an attempt to trace one of those beams through the prism.

I make this point to avoid misunderstanding. I am not suggesting that Canada's political culture has been shaped only by patronage. Nor do I think that only the hunt for spoils and the power to distribute them are all that motivate those who participate in the nation's political life. Unidimensional explanations of individual or collective political behaviour are best left to ideologues and zealots.

There are moments, though, when Simpson seems to forget this and become as unidimensional as any zealot:

The long march towards responsible government in British North America was

largely the story of the elected representatives' struggle to wrest the right to disperse patronage from the British governors and their supportive cliques.

And in chapter 2:

Responsible government meant, above all, the transfer of patronage power from those who wielded it to those who wanted it.

I'd rather think there were other beams going through the prism — even, perhaps, convictions about liberty and justice?

The novels of Anthony Trollope provide, among many other things, a perceptive view of British politics during the long Liberal ascendancy of his time. It often strikes the 20th-century Canadian reader as curiously familiar, particularly in the repeated frustration of the Conservatives, whose brief interludes of office never give them enough time to reward their friends — too few bishops' thrones or stalls of the Garter or lord-lieutenancies of counties fall vacant before the Tory government itself falls. In *Framley Parsonage* he draws a metaphor from Greek cosmic myth, representing the Liberals as the Olympian gods, the new powers that have displaced the giants who used to rule the world. At a moment when the giants have just regained office he shows them,

terribly loud in their triumph. That is the fault of the giants, who, otherwise, are not bad fellows; they are unable to bear the weight of any temporary success. When attempting Olympus — and their work of attempting is doubtless their natural condition — they scratch and scramble, diligently using both toes and fingers, with a mixture of good-humoured virulence and self-satisfied industry that is gratifying to all parties. But whenever their efforts are unexpectedly, and for themselves unfortunately, successful, they are so taken aback that they lose the power of behaving themselves with even gigantesque propriety.

The triumph of the Canadian giants in 1934 wasn't altogether unexpected, though its extent was. Simpson's first chapter shows the elaborate preparations, starting two weeks after the leadership convention of 1933, for a wholesale distribution of patronage, until, well before the election,

the computer at Conservative headquarters could spit out some three thousand, five hundred order-in-council positions, with the name of the incumbent, a brief description of the position's responsibilities, and the duration and expiration date for the term. The data base, which the Conservatives simply placed in the Privy Council computers after the 1984 election, enabled the party to bow month by month how many positions fell vacant, the salary level, and the probable regional, linguistic or occupational background of the required replacements.

To use this information, the party planned a complete network of "provincial advisory committees" to recommend on the distribution of the 3,500 positions. The finishing touches were being put to the system during the election campaign, while Mulroney on the platform was exploiting the final flurry of

Saskatchewan Writers/Artists Colonies & Individual Retreats 1989

are held in serene picturesque locations where you can work without distractions.

HO per week covers the cost of meals and accommodation.

St. Peter's Abbey
colony June 4 - July 29
retreats as requested
application deadline April 1, 1999

Emma Lake
colony July 30 - August 13
application deadline April 1, 1989

Fort San, Echo Valley
colony February 11-25
application deadline Dec. 1, 1988

For more information write:

Saskatchewan
Writers/Artists Colony
c/o Box 3986, Regina, Sk. S4P 3R9
(306) 757-6310

Liberal appointments by adopting his holier-than-Turner posture. "He could have said no to the base instincts of the Liberal party. He could have said yes to Canada." "As political theatre," says Simpson, "little could top it; as political hypocrisy, nothing could best it"

After this prologue describing the refined computerized system of our own day, Simpson goes back to the beginnings, showing how systems of patronage were established in each of the British North American colonies as responsible government was established, and then how necessary it was at Confederation. John A Macdonald was creating both a nation and a national political party — a party whose lack of a unifying ideology was deliberately expressed in its name, Liberal Conservative. For both purposes, he had to bind voters to the party by the obvious means, and he did it thoroughly. He also had to form close ties with financial interests, and of course it was the blatancy of his relations with the railway magnates that caused his defeat at the hands of the Liberals under the pious Alexander Mackenzie in 1874.

Mackenzie couldn't possibly live up to his own standards of purity, but as he disbelieved in patronage he used it ineffectively, simply paving the way for 18 more years of Conservative government. It took Laurier, who by no means disbelieved in patronage, to make the Liberals into a second great national party.

In dealing with the last 20 years, Simpson shows how Pierre Trudeau started out with a genuine intention of non-partisanship in making appointments. He might have used the story, told by John Sawatsky in *The Insiders*, that explains why Judy LaMarsh in early 1968 suddenly switched from support of Trudeau for the leadership to vociferous opposition: as minister of justice he had appointed one of her Conservative constituents to the bench. She had a tantrum in the cabinet room and threw her support to Paul Hellyer.

But no prime minister can escape the necessities of patronage. I think myself that the explanation of the inconsistencies of the allegedly rigid Trudeau lies in his awareness of being a latecomer and an amateur among the party professionals; except in the constitutional and language matters closest to his heart, he tended to assume that the pros knew best and let them determine policy and practice, just as in October 1970 he accepted the picture of what was happening in Quebec presented by Jean Marchand, the veteran of Quebec labour politics — a picture that turned out to be wildly exaggerated.

Books on Canadian politics too often ignore or glide over provincial affairs. Simpson gives us a whole chapter on each province. You may not want to read them all, but of obvious interest are Quebec, and the really remarkable clean-up achieved by the Lévesque government; Ontario during its 42 years of Conservative rule; and Saskatchewan, where the advent in 1944 of a government ideologically very different from its predecessor made the appointment of sympathizers to top jobs inevitable.

There are many more points in this richly laden book that I had hoped to discuss, but I'm trapped in the space-time continuum. □



National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada



EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS

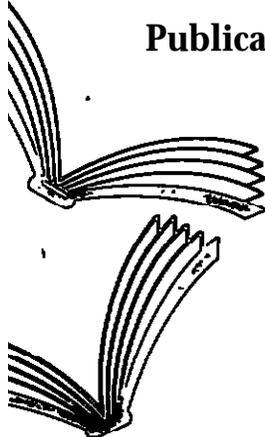
W hat is the National Library of Canada?

The National Library is a federal institution located in Ottawa, which acquires and preserves the published heritage of Canada, and makes it available to all Canadians. It also promotes the development of and access to library and information resources, and makes its services available to the entire library community in Canada.

W hat types of services does the National Library offer?

Some of the services you can take advantage of are:

- Cataloguing
- Information and Advisory
- Resource Sharing
- Publications and Cultural Programs



For information, write to:

The National Library of Canada
External Relations
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4
Telephone: (613) 995-7969

Canada

BOOK REVIEWS

Of ice and men

By Christopher Moore

THE ARCTIC GRAIL: THE QUEST FOR THE NORTH WEST PASSAGE AND THE NORTH POLE 1818-1909

by Pierre Berton

McClelland & Stewart, 672 pages, \$29.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 1266 7)

FROZEN IN TIME: UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE FRANKLIN EXPEDITION

by Owen Beattie and John Geiger

Western Producer Prairie Books, 130 pages, \$22.95 cloth (ISBN 0 89333 253 X)

THE NORTH WEST Passage, for all practical purposes, did not exist — that much was clear by 1700. But in 1818 the Royal Navy had run out of other navies to fight and it decided to take on the North. The pursuit of what Pierre Eerton calls the "Arctic Grail" began.

Seeking the elusive passage, the navy found a maze of ice-choked channels where the best naval vessels were the worst possible vehicle of exploration. Yet year after year, the navy sent ships and crews, with little or no special preparation, to bury themselves in the Arctic ice, then hope to get out before scurvy and starvation took over. Naval men refused to make any accommodation to the Arctic. They clung to their own brass-polishing subculture, and would no more take advice from Arctic whalers and northern tin traders than from the Inuit.

The navy's heroic stupidity culminated in Sir John Franklin's expedition of 1845. Franklin managed to bury two ships and 129 men more deeply than ever in Arctic ice — so successfully that no one ever saw them again. Franklin created one of those sentimental tragedies Englishmen loved, and it took ten h-antic years and 50 expeditions to find where he had gone.

When the navy had proved what everyone knew, attention turned to a new grail, the North Pole. Brash Americans and me-

thodical Scandinavians rushed in to compete, but the cold, distant pole defied them all. Finally in 1909 two separate American expeditions claimed victory. It now appears that both were frauds. No one, it seems, has ever reached the North Pole and returned unaided. The polar grail remains beyond reach, concludes Pierre Berton.

Berton's strengths as a historian are those that made him a master journalist: identifying the big story, getting the facts, and laying the "out" in clear, vigorous prose with strongly evoked protagonists and good common-sense judgements. All those strengths are evident in *The Arctic Grail*, and he needs them. Arctic exploration was often the work of vainglorious and incompetent men, but a Berton history needs heroes. With these the only heroes available, he has to steer a narrow passage between cautious debunking and qualified admiration.

There's another problem: most of the Arctic explorers turn out to be the same person. Question: which of the British explorers is a repressed, obsessed, middle-aged naval careerist with an odd marriage? Answer: all of the above. The Americans are all egomaniacal self-promoters, and the Scandinavians are, well, very Scandinavian. Berton uses all his narrative skill to guide us through their endless battles with cold, darkness, hunger, and each other. In a long book, a few sloppinesses have crept in. John Richardson could hardly have been a friend of Robert Burns, who died when he was nine. Surprisingly, there are lapses into jargon (*tripe-de-roche*, *polynya*), and the native people are mostly called Eskimo, sometimes Inuit, and once Inuit. The mute maps are excellent, but the murky illustrations are haphazardly chosen. Where is the Arctic Council painting that is discussed in the text?

"Whose Arctic is it?" asks Berton at the close. He calls the British *voyages* the basis of Canadian sovereignty, and cites all their names on the map to prove it. But Frobisher Bay is already Iqaluit, and Franklin District will one day be Nunavut. Real Canadian sovereignty in the North came with the laborious

imposition of Canadian policing and administration after 1900 — a sovereignty still challenged by foreign submarines and tankers, and by the reassertion of native title.

The Arctic Grail closes on a plea to include the Inuit in northern history. Sadly, Eerton has been almost completely unable to do this himself. He tells us the explorers failed to perceive the natives, but he notices only those few who played Sancho Panza to some explorer's Quixote.

Could he have done more? He tells how Robert McClure abandoned HMS *Investigator* at Banks Island in 1853, but not how the *Investigator* made the local Inuit rich. Coming so often to harvest precious wood and copper from the wreck, they wiped out the Banks Island musk-ox, which did not return for a century. McClure never knew that most lasting result of his voyage. Neither will Berton's readers. There is an ethnographic literature, not wholly valueless, that documents Inuit worlds. Who better than Berton to lead Canadians into them? But that might have meant challenging his readers — and Berton is cautious about that. He has given us an adventure thick with colour and drama. Are we asking too much to ask for more?

Frozen in Time is a different kind of Franklin Expedition book, a high-tech little research vessel compared to Berton's supertanker. It was Owen Beattie's expedition that exhumed and photographed those Franklin crew members whose frozen corpses became a newspaper sensation in 1984. Now Beattie

and John Geiger, a young Edmonton journalist, explain the reasons behind those horrific images.

Beattie, a "forensic anthropologist," & mined the bones and bodies from the Franklin expedition in hopes that an understanding of their cause of death might cast light on its fate. What he found was lead poisoning: lethal doses from the thick lead solder of their cans of food. Lead poisoning "mortally wounded" the Franklin crews, he concludes.

Berton objects, reasonably, that they all would have died anyway, of scurvy and starvation, but Beattie has added a new piece to the Franklin puzzle. His and Geiger's book is a clear, vivid, and sensitive account of a unique piece of scientific research. The colour photographs of the northern landscape are marvellously evocative. Those close-up portraits of the frozen dead may be a little too evocative. □

Getting the scoop

By Jack McLeod

HELLO SWEET-HEART...GET ME REWRITE: REMEMBERING THE GREAT NEWS-PAPER WARS

by Val Sears

Key Porter Books, 213 pages, \$22.95 cloth (ISBN 1 55013 112 5)

THIS BOOK lacks structure or intellectual focus. It does not have an analytic theme or thesis. What it does have is the best goddam yarns, the most enjoyable flow of wit, anecdotes, cynical asides and chuckly insights into journalism of any Canadian book in recent years. Sometimes touching, often snide, never dull, it's a marvellous romp.

If I tell you that this book will be compared to Waker Stewart's *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story* or even to Charles Lynch's *A Funny Way to Run a Country*, you'll know what league Sears is playing in. The best He plays the game hard, fast, and funny with no pretence of impartiality. Sears is the guy who, during the 1962 election campaign, climbed onto Diefenbaker's airplane with the press boys and snarled: To





work, gentlemen. We have a government to overthrow."

The springboard off which he bounces is the newspaper war in Toronto between the *Star* and the now defunct *Tely*, rivals for circulation and revenue and the sheer joy of scooping the opposition. Sears fondly recalls many of the top journalists and distinguishes between the mere reporters, whom editors seem to prefer, and the storytellers, the feature writers and yarners who put some snap and flash into their copy. Casually he drops the comment (at p. 5; you could look it up) that at present, "There is only one newspaper writer, of course: Joey Slinger at the *Star*." Of such stuff are legends born.

But the main focus is on the 1950s; nostalgia, with a lot of bite. These were the days when journalists drank and swaggered and spent and fought for the story, when the *Tely* and the *Star* clawed at the participants and at each other for "exclusives" and survival, before the *Sun* made millions with T and A or corporate chain ownership began to exalt blandness. Sears recalls the days when the Boyd gang robbed banks. Marilyn Bell swam Lake Ontario and the Springhill Miners were rescued. The reporting of Hurricane Hazel is vividly recaptured. If Sears leans heavily on some of the books written about those events, that's fair enough, because he was himself an important first source for much of that material, and he has an admirable knack for retelling the tales in brisk colourful prose.

It's regrettable that he does not give us a coda on the nature of the newspaper business today, his views on whether television news can be taken seriously as journalism, or on the findings and recommendations of the 1951 Kent Royal Commission on Newspapers. But that was not his purpose. Sears wanted to tell us about how it was when being a newspaperman was rough and

exhilarating, and in this he excels. It's a limited book, but it's a sweetheart.

In the pre-television age, he says, some newspapers were "cheeky, frolicsome, readable." So is Sears, and for that, many readers will love him. □

The words of life

By Phil Hall

THE WRECKAGE OF PLAY

by John Steffler

McClelland & Stewart, 101 pages, \$12.95 paper (ISBN 0 7710 8243 6)

MUSIC AT THE HEART OF THINKING

by Fred Wah

Red Deer College Press, 69 pages, \$8.95 paper (ISBN 0 88995 030 X)

FROM THE TWO ends of our map — British Columbia and Newfoundland — come these two books of poetry that are as different as their respective regions.

We think of the East Coast as poor, down-home, practical, and lashed by breakers from England. Conversely, we think of the West Coast as high, rich, distant, dreamy, and lapped by waves from Japan. I know that it's a shallow, popular notion to impute psychological traits to geography, but these two books, at least sustain it.

After the success of his book-length sequence, *The Grey Islands*, in 1985, John Steffler, from Newfoundland, offers a more loosely gathered collection: sincere or humorous realistic lyrics about work, home life and travel. And after winning the Governor General's Award in 1985 for *Waiting For Saskatchewan*, British Columbia's Fred Wah offers 69 theoms (prose poems devoted to language theory).

Steffler absorbs us into the voice quirks of personality. We read his "I" the way we read through our own old journals: quickly accepting or rejecting the self there.

I accept. I think Steffler is very good. I don't, however, think that *The Wreckage of Play* is as good as *The Grey Islands*. The scope of that earlier book casts a shadow upon the occasional nature of this new one.

But my response to Steffler's poems is immediate, like that of Joan Didion's daughter when she saw a Georgia O'Keeffe

painting for the first time: she studied it a while, asked who had painted it, and the said, "I have to talk to her." (John, I really like "On This Day of Sun and Shower," and "St. Laurence's Tears," and ...))

That is what such writing as this does best: initiate dialogue within the tribe. It also generates amazement and laughter. There are poems here that open my chest in awe, or guffaw, or both. In "Green and Modern," these careful words of complex dependency:

Holding your wife you fall into sleep in the bed where your father died, where I saw him last, gripped his wasted skin, the window gone white, and I dropped out the bottom of my brain while he wept, and we went together inside a single thought to the edge of whatever this beautiful thing is, where at least we can touch one another, so soon dead.

Or in "My Latest Invention," a bomb goes off that destroys everything except people and plumbing:

revealing the undreamt of

beauty, the plumber's art: breathtaking trees of naked pipes soaring and branching to bathtubs, sinks and urinals, all hanging in air like porcelain fruit.

In contrast, on his opposite coast Fred Wah says that the difficulty of his new theoms "is literal and intentional." He is "wary of any attempt to make it easy." (Don't worry, Fred. It isn't easy. Not for me, at least.)

Wah says that he is practising "negative capability and estrangement," and uses the example of a drunken tai chi master. So first I try to break his long non-sentences into phrases, mulling over each word. Then I try skimming along the surface, letting the imbalance of each shift of focus hit me like waves from Japan.

Here is number 45, complete

1. He raid it was made of stone.
2. Style, stick, car.
3. Japan, Massachusetts, or Bolinas.
4. There is this breastlessness.
5. Mud for guts. Now we know.

As best I can understand it this writing is supposed to be

UFOs...Poltergeists...
Sea Monsters...Lost Treasure...

MYSTERIOUS CANADA

strange Sights, Extraordinary
Events and Peculiar Places

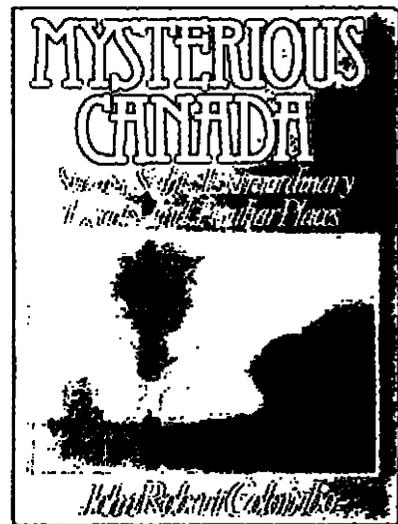
Here is the only complete account of the strange and supernatural events that have taken place in Canada.

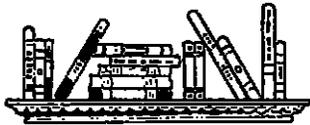
- More than 500 entries
- Fully illustrated

\$29.95

Available at your local bookstore

Doubleday





like fishing with your whole body underwater, tankless and blind. The spill of intent is the guide, not the reasoning faculty. Like when we get carried away writing a letter.

WAIT FOR THE MIND TO STOP FOR THE WRITING TO GO ahead into the rush for the hand to hold the head's waiting

The realists and 'work writers' say that the "language writers" are too egoistic, too full of cleverness and artifice; and the "language writers" say that the realists are too egotistic, too eager to absorb readers the way movies do. But surely there are many musics (from hoedown to highbrow) at the heart of thinking — at least as many as there are layers of thought. The wreckage after the party sounds surprisingly close to practising tai chi while drunk.

So Wah's book also pleases me — as a puzzle guide. Its difficulty is alluring. (I would also like to compliment Red Deer

College Press on their new series, *Writing West*. The books are well-made; the covers and logo are appealing; the type is spacious and inviting. All of which amounts to one of the most handsome series designs I've seen in a long time.) Two things bug me about Wah's book, though. Almost every piece is in response to a text that is not provided, or even listed. Also, almost every piece name-drops: Frank Davey, Nicole Brossard, Roy Kiyooka — as if all of these theoms were originally letter-fragments circulated within a small circle. If this is so, then what justifies sharing them with a wider audience, leaving in all the names, but leaving out all of the contexts?

I think that Wah and Steffler are equally sincere and devoted to the life of words and/or the words of lii Wah is more of a master — even what I don't understand sounds wise and fundamental.

Somewhere between the polarities of lyric and linguistics, a blend of absorption and artifice exists. If our (false?) East Coast/West Coast model holds, this blend should come from some poet near Winnipeg... □

What history teaches

By Norman Sigurdson

OLD WOUNDS: JEWS, UKRAINIANS AND THE HUNT FOR NAZI WAR

C - I - N - A

by Harold Troper and Martin Weinfeld

Viking (Penguin), 421 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 670 82168 3)

ONE OF the first things that a good historian learns is that the notion of historical objectivity is false. Seen from different cultural or historical perspectives events can take on profoundly different colorations. The Boer War, for example, is not the same to a white South African historian and a British one, and both their views are quite distinct from the perspective of a Black African historian. The historian's task, and it is a tricky one, is to try to reconcile those irreconcilable views while at the same time laying aside as many of his or her own personal, cultural, ethnic, sexist or linguistic biases as possible.

This basic dilemma is at the

heart of Harold Troper and Martin Weinfeld's scholarly study of the ethnic tensions at play between Canadians of Jewish and of Ukrainian descent. The authors examine the historical basis for the animosity between these two groups as it developed over the centuries in Eastern Europe, coming to a bitter climax during the Holocaust and being translated to Canada a generation later in the form of a debate as to whose interpretation of their shared history should prevail.

Troper, co-author of *None Is Too Many*, a critical study of Canada's flawed response to the immigration problems of European Jews during and after World War II, and Weinfeld, a McGill University sociologist, take as the central episode in their book the Deschênes Commission, a commission of inquiry set up by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in early 1985 to study the question of possible war criminals in Canada. The commission soon became an emotional battleground between Ukrainian Canadians, who as a group felt they were being falsely smeared as Nazi collaborators, and Canadian Jews who believed the Eastern Europeans who

— WINTER READING IN FEMINISM AND CHRISTIANITY — THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Infected Christianity A Study of Modern Racism

Alan Davies

"a succinct overview of the subject . . . such an overview would be welcomed by a mainline Christian readership"

D.J. Hall, Department of Religious Studies,
McGill University

"It is a valuable tool for the promotion of high ideals, a powerful argument against a certain form of barbarism, and a good example to readers of how scholarship can be put to the service of social and religious reform . . . Anyone who reads this book will be wiser and better for having done so."

Jay Newman, Department of Philosophy,
University of Guelph

CLOTH 0-7735-0651 -9 \$24.95

The Callisto Myth from Ovid to Atwood Znitation and Rape in Literature

Kathleen Wall

"I find the book fascinating from beginning to end. Wall's clear and graceful style brings back to life texts that I had never intended to read again and revives my interest in literary history. Her interpretations are always fresh . . . This is a first-rate literary criticism."

Estella Lauter, Department of Humanistic Studies
Literature and Language, University of Wisconsin

CLOTH 0-7735-0640-3 \$29.95

McGill-Queen's University Press
855 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2T7

Order from University of Toronto Press

aided the Nazi regime had been allowed illegal why to Canada at a time when their Jewish victims were being denied entry, and that the time had come for the guilty among them to be exposed and punished.

Being a nation of immigrants, Canada is no stranger to the importation of feuds begun far from its shores. The most recent of these is the Hindu-Sikh animosities that led to the bombing of a Canadian aircraft. The authors of the present book are at pains to explain that before these can be resolved the roots of the tensions must be clearly laid out. This book should be required reading for passionate advocates on either side of the question.

For two groups who share so much common history the historical memories of the two groups could not be further apart. Bohdan Khmelnytsky, for example, who led a peasant revolt in the 17th century against Polish domination of Ukraine, is hailed by Ukrainians as a national hero. But to Jews he is remembered as "Chmiel the Wicked" who instigated pogroms that left two-thirds of the Jews of the Ukraine dead. In Ukrainian narratives the Jews are linked with foreign subjugation of their homeland, first by the Poles and later the Soviets. They see Jews as the agents of the Soviets who made possible the Great Famine of the 1930s, "a focal point of modern Ukrainian history not unlike the Holocaust for Jews."

It is acknowledged by both sides that most Ukrainians welcomed the German troops early in the war, and that they saw the war against the Jews as an important part of the war against the Soviets, with whom they were linked in most Ukrainians' minds. For Jews Ukrainian collaboration — and the fact that 90 per cent of Ukrainian Jews were exterminated — is merely the final chapter in a long history of Ukrainian anti-Semitism: "What began with Khmelnytsky ended at Babi Yar and Treblinka."

In Canada the two communities have 'eyed one another across a gulf of mistrust so vast that few have tried to bridge it.' Apart from Winnipeg's ethnically diverse north end the two groups have had little contact, the Ukrainians being predominantly rural and Western, the Jew Eastern and urban. But the issue of wartime collaboration, and specifically the conduct of the Galicia Division, a Ukrainian division of the Waffen SS, has brought the two groups into open and bitter

conflict once again. With sympathy and admirable detachment the authors attempt to sort out the competing claims and conflicting fears of the two groups and examine closely how they were handled, both publicly and behind the scenes, by the Deschênes Commission.

They note some modest steps toward rapprochement but are generally pessimistic about the current stalemate. By giving equal weight to the attitudes and agendas of both groups, the authors may bring sensitive readers of this book from the two camps closer together. *Old Wounds* is a valuable contribution to understanding a flaw in Canada's ethnic mosaic and may go a long way toward healing the painful wounds on both sides. □

The sum of a life

By Brian Fawcett

GROSS MISCONDUCT: THE LIFE OF SPINNER SPENCER

by Martin O'Malley

Viking (Penguin), 240 pages, \$22.95 cloth (ISBN 0 670 82427 5)

ON a West Palm Beach, Florida, street on a balmy June evening in 1999, a black man named Lump Daniels stock a pistol through the window of a car containing two whites and said, "This is a robbery. Give me your money." One of the whites sensibly handed over what he had, but the other refused. Lump Daniels promptly shot him in the heart.

Years before, on a much chillier evening just before Christmas, 1970, an agitated 59-year-old man entered the CBC television affiliate in Prince George, B.C., forced the station staff into one of the studios with a pistol and demanded that the station manager change the *Hockey Night In Canada* broadcast, which was showing a game between the Vancouver Canucks and the California Golden Seals, to one being played simultaneously between Toronto and Buffalo. When the station manager explained that this wasn't possible, the man left. Outside the building, three police officers were waiting. The man fired two shots at them, and the police officers returned tire-killing him.

The victim of the first incident was 38-year-old Brian Spencer, a native of Fort St. James, B.C. 10-year National Hockey League veteran and twice-divorced father

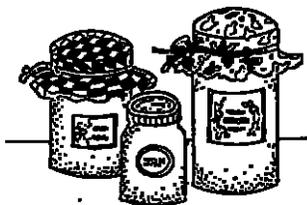
of five children. During his hockey heyday he was affectionately known as "Spinner." He played that way, with an almost frenzied aggressiveness that substituted for a lack of basic skill and talent. Recently he'd been acquitted of a first-degree murder charge in West Palm Beach. The victim of the second incident was Brian's father Roy, who had gone to the television station because his son was playing in his first *HNIC* game and was to be interviewed between periods. Quite simply, he wanted to see his son play and be interviewed between periods on national television.

Those two highly publicized killings, and the e-vents of the strange life to which they were the first and final exclamation marks, are the subject of Martin O'Malley's well-researched and altogether moving biography.

Brian Spencer's life is not an easy one to make sense of. In fact, it is much like his death and that of his father — it doesn't quite add up. Spencer lived much as he played hockey, without great natural skill or finesse, but with a kind of vitality that never achieved consistent focus. His best moments were on the ice, where a coherent rulebook gives vitality greater currency than it enjoys on the streets. Yet even there Spencer lived with a directness that made people consistently like him. He was eccentrically honest, tolerant and generous. But he was also chronically impatient, confrontational and directionless, and those three flaws led him into periodic episodes of petty crime, misogyny, and violence. Eventually he paid the ultimate price for his failings.

O'Malley, who first met Spencer in 1971, came to know him intimately, and obviously liked the man. Yet his affection has not led him to turn his subject into a hockey Harlequin. He has created a "unsentimental picture of a life that wouldn't add up; and even though his recounting of that life reads better than most detective novels, both for plot and for precision of detail, O'Malley doesn't once fake the addition.

The result is the hue *Life of*



Brian, a man who grew up in the wilds of northern British Columbia and died on the streets of *Miami Vice*. It isn't the life of Jesus, and it isn't funny. But it's one of our lives — a contemporary Canadian life — and it rings uncomfortably true. □

Acts of the imagination

By Marion Quednau

ANA HISTORIC:

A NOVEL

by Daphne Marlatt

Coach House, 152 pages, \$9.95 paper (ISBN 0 88910 364 X)

IT'S OLD NEWS to discover, along with Annie Torrent the reluctant wife and research assistant of a historian, that women are largely absent from the records that constitute history. But it's bad news to believe, as Annie does in Daphne Marlatt's novel *Ana Historic*, that even after the record has been set straight by an act of imagination, history will still be the measure of women's defeat.

While her husband collects facts, Annie is concerned with the "missing persons" of history, the women just out of sight. The scant mention of a Mm. Richards (Ana), a widowed schoolteacher who arrived in Hastings Mills, B.C. in 1873 and apparently merited no further mention after her remarriage, fuels Annie's imagination. She imagines the woman, defeated in her attempt to remain independent in a society full of hardship and men, giving in to marriage as a respectable respite — "history married her to Ben Springer and wrote her off" — thereafter falling silent as an individual of separate identity.

The musings of present-day Annie and the 19th-century Ana interface and often meld, suggesting that very little has changed in "woman's lot" — but it seems more a flaw in Marlatt's central character than a failure of history. Father than suggesting the universal defeat of women, the book is an account of a particular defeat; Annie is profoundly affected by her mother's predicament in the "hokey-pokey" of family that "holds together at the expense of one." Her mother's failure to come to terms with the '50s prescription for women of good housekeeping and playing second fiddle and her subsequent escape into madness, loom before Annie like a large intangible document of female

history. another "missing person." Annie, in fact, describes much of her thinking as a "bed-time story" for her mother: attempting to pay back what she owes to her mother's sacrifice. Unfortunately, one can sense she will never square the debt to a woman she considers "my fear, my critic." The book often reads like a dialogue between Annie and her mother, who is still struggling to be heard, still angry.

If Annie imagines her invented Ana as passively accepting of her female fate. Annie herself is fairly conventional in complaining of a typical '50s childhood full of warnings for girls. "Never go into the woods with a man. . . . and don't go into the woods alone." While it was likely that 19th-century Ana might have had real concerns about being "ambushed in the sudden arms of bears or men." Annie doesn't acknowledge that the dangers might have diminished. It is interesting to note that Annie imagines her schoolteacher persona in a rare moment of freedom in the forest and immediately un-

dermines her power by believing that two Siwash men (even one fairly weak and consumptive-looking) will harm her — "It was the sickness of fear and they knew it as they crowded past her as if she were a bush, a fern shaking in their way." Yet in the end, Ana walked alone and was unharmed, except by her own fear.

Annie on the other hand seems to accept the inevitability of the traditional limitations and fears inherited by modern women: confinement within a restricted role from childhood on, fear of childbirth, reluctance to be bound to a man, dread of being spiritually silent and ineffectual in a world dominated by men, the equal fears of independence and loneliness. The whole gamut of female experience is simply too terrifying to articulate, apparently, except in short, staccato fragments, as though Annie is hopped by her own acute sensitivity, hemmed in by her own perceptions. The book echoes her sense of dislocation, paying little attention to the ordering principles of punctuation, narra-



tive line, and characterization, betraying a lack of trust in any firm reality for women, and, much like her mother's "venting," scatters its power indiscriminately. Although the prose is often poignant and lyrical, it never transcends a bitter, dark vision. One is eventually tempted to agree with the suspicions of Annie's husband: she might be cheating by interpreting history to suit her feelings.

Marlatt mocks men throughout as wooden characters who buy pianos for their wives the better to entrap the female spirit, but it's never convincing that men have been the central force is confining Annie. It is neither her father's "reason," nor her husband's clinical approach to history that finally hold her back, but rather her own self-doubt. She is a woman desperate to de-

fine herself, rooting through her mother's "scribbles," retreating further into the past to her historic counterpart even imagining her own menstrual flow to be among the most certain marks of her existence, another "scribbling." Although she can imagine the hardships of a woman done in a rough-and-tumble early settlement, she falls short of imagining why Ana might have derived some strength from her relationship with a "good man," or from conventional ties to society in raising children or making a home.

The book staggers under the weight of this kind of personal judgement, and justice, when it comes late in the novel in the form of a liaison with a woman, does not save womankind or the book. Ironically, when Annie's friend Zoe appears, she enters the novel as a dogmatic voice that doesn't listen so much as fell: she is every bit as arrogant and patronizing as the men in the novel. What Zoe seems to give Annie is not recognition of her own power as a woman, but simply another way to blame history.

GREAT
CANADIAN
SHORT
FICTION

Penguin Books
Canada Limited



STONES

Timothy Findley

"... Findley writes with uncommon power and with chilling accuracy."
— Kingston Whig-Standard

In his second collection of short stories, Findley takes a compelling look at the vivid battlegrounds of family life, with all of the absurdities, braveries, loyalties and disillusionments that constrict family ties.

Viking Canada \$22.95

LIVING
ON WATER

Matt Cohen

"Cohen's previous collection *Cafe Le Dog* shows the talented Cohen can write stories similar to those of I. B. Singer, Mark Helprin, Mavis Gallant and others viewing the lonely and the displaced."
— Ottawa Citizen

These nine stories show the range and wit of Cohen's writing, highlighting the unexpected and on-easy possibilities of sexual relationships and observing the conflicts and unconventionalities of family life.

Viking Canada \$22.95

If Marlatt is indeed taking the well-worn and equally well-resisted position that history has never been fair to women or provided space for them to do anything but endure, she's wrong to assume she's the only one paying attention. That her readers need her process of dismembering words to remind us of their suggestive qualities; i.e. "(f)actual, or 'woman's lot; . . . one's fortune in life; fate (predictable as the five potatoes to peel every day at five o'clock)." As participants in the fictional act "of imagination, readers may resist what seems to be a form of punishment Marlatt should remember there are many women who have 'ever doubted their ability to survive, just as there are many men who have inherited a large measure of selfdoubt from the 'missing persons' of history. And that there is always some good news in the act of imagination. □

Hay fever

By Matt Cohen

STORY OF MY LIFE

by Jay McInerney

McClelland & Stewart, 188 pages, \$14.95 paper (ISBN 7710 5452 1).

LET ME JUST SAY that in general my feeling about reviews is, I can take them or leave them. Story of my life. But the other day I am in the Montreal restaurant having lunch with the editor of *Books in Canada* and she goes, "Would you like to review this book?" *Story of My Life*.

I'm like, To tell the truth I could "se some blow. Story of my life.

Here, she goes, reaching into her purse.

I'm like, Thank you, as I put the white to my nose. I go, I don't get hay fever like this every year.

Doesn't matter, she says. She's holding the menu forlornly in front of her as though it's an empty dance card. Story of her "": Theo she orders the quiche special.

I'm thinking, "ever bust people who order the special at lunch-time. Theo, if you know so much, I ask myself, why don't you speak up? Story of my life.

A few hours later I'm at home, reading *Story of My Life*. The telephone rings. Excuse me, I'm like, there's someone on the other line.

Speaking of lines, there's so many I want to mark for my review. Thoughts to write down before the next call comes. But I can't find a pen. Story of my life I should've saved the silver Hi-



Liters my Mom gave me when I said I wanted to go to creative writing school, but while writing a sonnet I had a stress crisis and had to pawn them all to buy Kleenex. What can I say? I'm an actor.

Meanwhile I'm still reading. After a while my six-year-old goes, I want supper.

I'm like, You ate supper. That was yesterday, he says. Story of his life.

We order in snack bars and diet pop from the deli. I'm still reading. The telephone rings.

I go, Hello.

Hello, my mother says. She talks like that.

I'm like, I was just thinking about you. If you can't be honest, what else is left?

Yes, she's like.

I'm like, When I Was a little kid, did people use Kleenex or handkerchiefs? There's a silence and I can tell she has no idea what I mean. I go, There's some one on the other line and hang up.

At two in the morning I am still awake. My wife is like, What are you doing?

Reading *Story of My Life*.

Let me know how it comes out, she goes. Like sometimes she thinks she's a living legend in her own mind.

I go, Thanks, Shakespeare. Maybe it's my imagination, maybe I'm just paranoid, but it seems to me she looks at me when I say this. So I'm like, Excuse me, the other line, and put my nose back in the book.

In the end I'm alone in the house. It's dark like a womb. I'm wired. I know I won't be able to fall asleep for at least ten minutes. Meanwhile something is nagging, tugging, trying to be remembered. I close my eyes the way they taught me in creative writing class before I got kicked out for sneezing during hay fever season. This time it works. I'm floating away on the infinite ocean of serenity and the fact I'm trying to remember arrives in a beautiful crystal bottle.

Fact: McClelland & Stewart paid \$50,000 for the Canadian rights to *Story of My Life*.

I pick up the book and look at the back cover. "This is New York in the 1980s and the city has reached a state of frenzy... Each night is a new adventure, sometimes catastrophic." *Story of My Life*. □

The boys in the bucket shop

By Peter Moon

CONTREPRENEURS

by Diane Francis

Macmillan, 320 pages, \$26.95 cloth (ISBN 7715 9915 3)

IN JUNE, 1986, Dutch police, accompanied by white-collar crime specialists from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who acted as advisors, raided several "boiler rooms" in Amsterdam.

The first of those boiler moms was opened in 1980, by Toronto businessman David Winchell, shortly after he paid a I million fine and was ordered to pay restitution of \$600,000 for theft in Toronto. He was followed by Irving Kott, a Montreal securities promoter, who was fined \$500,000 in 1976 for conspiracy to commit fraud in Montreal.

Other Canadians descended on Amsterdam like a flock of vultures as the word spread quickly that the Dutch had no meaningful securities regulations.

Boiler rooms, or 'bucket shops' as they are sometimes called, virtually originated in Canada during the 1920s and 1930s, when Canada had an unregulated securities industry. A boiler mom is nothing more than a "place from which unprincipled high-pressure hucksters use the telephone to peddle stocks of questionable or worthless value to gullible buyers.

The profits from a successful bucket shop, and most are successful, are huge. The Dutch police estimate, for example, that between 1980 and 1936 the 20 or so boiler rooms that operated out of Amsterdam bilked thousands of investors all over the world out of a staggering \$6 billion. A good salesman can make as much as 3400,000 a year in commissions. The manipulators who employ them make millions. When the Dutch police and the Mounties raided First Commerce Securities, which they linked to Kott the so-called brokerage house had no shifts of 40 salesmen each who were calling long distance all over the world to peddle their wares. The sales operation went on around the clock every day of the year. In 1936, First Commerce was the Amsterdam telephone company's largest single customer, with a monthly bill of 3400,000.

The Dutch called on the

Mounties for help because Canadians dominated the Amsterdam boiler-room scene. They tend to operate outside of Canada and the United States, because until recently only North America had any meaningful form of securities regulation. A month after the police tided the Amsterdam boiler rooms, the Dutch introduced their first securities laws.

The Canadians simply moved on and set up boiler rooms in Eire, Cyprus, Monaco, Spain, Belgium, Costa Rica, Mexico and Switzerland.

All of this is recounted by Diane Francis in her new book, *Contrepreneurs*, a coined word that Francis defines as "1. Perpetrators of stock market fraud. 2. Money launderers. 3. White-collar criminals (esp. in Canada)." Because of the leading role played by Canadians in economic crime on the world scene it is a book that has been crying out to be written and Francis, a leading Canadian financial journalist, is the first to attempt it.

The first third of the book traces the activities of Canada's infamous boiler-mom operators, around the world. The second third should convince any reader of the folly of investing in any company listed on either the Vancouver or Alberta Stock Exchanges, both of which specialize in junior resource companies. She calls the Vancouver exchange "a veritable sewer of skulduggery" and she says the Alberta exchange is even worse.

The last third of the book is an impassioned plea for currency control regulations that will stop Canada being used as a major centre for money laundering by the world's leading economic criminals.

The book certainly makes its point that economic criminals can steal more money and cause more harm to society through stock market manipulations and money-laundering than bank robbers can in a year of living dangerously. When and if white collar criminals are ever caught, the punishments they receive rarely amount to "lore than slaps on the wrist.



Unfortunately, the book tantalizes. It promises much hut in the end fails to deliver. Francis is a busy columnist for the *Financial Post* and the *Toronto Sun* as well as a frequent broadcaster on economic matters. The book leaves the reader feeling that it was dashed off during the few breaks in a hectic schedule. Too much of it is little more than a recycling of some of her former columns.

It is a pity, because she has tried to tackle her subject on a scale attempted by no other Canadian writer. But it seems in the end to have been too much for her, as it has for the law enforcement authorities and lawmakers she would like to see tackle more effectively the problem of economic crime. □

Many solitudes

By Bruce Serafin

UNHOLY TERROR: THE SIKHS AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

by Ian Mulgrew

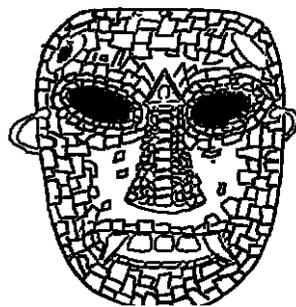
Key Porter Books, 256 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 1 55013 052 8)

ON JUNE 5, 1984, the Indian Army bombarded and then stormed the Sikh temple in Amritsar — the Golden Temple, the Sikh equivalent of the Vatican — and in the process killed hundreds, including women and children, and made martyrs out of the Sikh fanatics who were holed up in the temple. It was a desperate action, the culmination of increasing violence between Sikhs and Hindus in India and it was also unbelievably stupid. Within days, the mood of the Sikh community around the world turned murderous. Sikhs who had done well in the New World — comfortable, well-off Sikhs in New York and Vancouver — pounded their dining room tables and publicly called for the death of Indira Gandhi. And soon enough Indira Gandhi was murdered. But the violence continued, and not only in India Hindus were beaten up in Winnipeg; in Vancouver, a moderate Sikh named Ujjal Dosanjh was beaten one afternoon by a Sikh wielding a "iron bar. A Vancouver Sikh named Sarbjit Khurana was held at gunpoint for half an hour for sponsoring a Punjabi radio program that gave equal time to the Indian government's perspective. Several Sikhs in Vancouver were clubbed after being identified in the media as "moderate" Sikhs

who opposed extremism. The temples there is a large one in Greater Vancouver, designed by Arthur Erickson — had gradually been taken over by fanatics, Sikh fundamentalists who had immigrated from India as political refugees. They intimidated and denounced the more moderate Sikhs. For these fanatics, Canada seemed to be merely a place to make money, a place to conduct the war against India: it wasn't their home. They preached violence, and they continue to preach it. And the violence goes on. "August of this year, an editor of a Punjabi newspaper in Vancouver was shot and seriously wounded. The more moderate Sikhs, those for whom Canada is home, have been cowed: with a few exceptions, they are afraid to speak out, afraid of reprisals within their community.

This is the situation Ian Mulgrew describes in his book *Unholy Terror: The Sikhs and International Terrorism*. Mulgrew's book is a factual, prosaic piece of journalism: it doesn't interpret events and it doesn't take sides. As such, it is a necessary book, but only a beginning — the work of a newspaperman who tells us the story of the Canadian Sikhs, but doesn't provide a perspective from which to view that story.

Yet such a perspective is needed. The official policy of our country is multiculturalism. We believe that people from all over the world can arrive in Canada, maintain the traditions and ways of living of the countries from which they have come, and somehow get along together. Up to a point it works. Beyond that point, though, it is a disaster. A few years ago I was researching an article on garment workers in Vancouver. I discovered that female garment workers arriving from Hong Kong and mainland China were herded into small factories in Vancouver and treated like third-class citizens. Most of these women didn't know English almost "one of them knew anything about the Canada



Labour Code. Like mores governing their working life — giving bribes to their supervisors, being bullied by these supervisors, coming to work desperately ill for fear of being fired, being utterly subservient — were exactly what they had been back in China and Hong Kong. This is what "multiculturalism" can lead to. But we don't hear about this in the news. Only when there is violence — Vietnamese gangs, Chinese triads — does the uglier side of multiculturalism get aired.

Why? The answer, I think, is that Canada is by and large a homogeneous society, and like other homogeneous societies — Japan, for instance, or Australia — irredeemably racist. If people aren't like us, we ignore them. We don't build bridges to them. They live in their cell; we live in ours. So that we don't pay attention to the shameful treatment of newly arrived Canadian Asian and India women, for instance, just as we don't pay attention to the intimidation of Asia and Sikh communities by the thugs in their midst. Our standards, we say, aren't theirs: let them work it out. This is our "tolerance." But this "tolerance" is merely a subtle form of racism. And in the case of the Sikhs it has backfired. Canadian Sikhs may be responsible for the Air India disaster, for example, and beyond that there are wider issues. In our country we separate church and state: for Sikh fundamentalists such a separation is unthinkable. Fine, we say, but in saying that, we allow them an irrationality that we don't allow ourselves.

Ujjal Dosanjh was the man beaten with a "im" bar. It happened one afternoon when he left his law office, and it took eighty stitches to close the wounds on his head. His comments are passionate. "We're destroying our position in this society. We're giving all the arguments to the racists that they've always used. I feel really sad that freedom of expression in my country is being strangled and there is no outcry from the larger Canadian community. It's not just an issue that affects me and other Indians. It affects our whole life as a Canadian community. We have tended to form islands unto ourselves. Today we're seeing the results of that isolation. There aren't enough bridges to Canadian society. We told the federal government that the temples are being turned into centres of violence and hatred, hate-mongering continues there incessantly. Nobody listened. I believe there is a ten-

dency to say, 'Let the East Indians fight among each other as long as they don't hurt the main-s&emu, white Anglo-Saxon Canadian.' But, if tomorrow Canadians don't want to awaken to a violent ghetto, they'd better wake up now."

Ujjal Dosanjh is outspoken, but one man alone is too little. Others need to add their voices. I formed opinion, an understanding of what is going on, and above all a rejection of double standards — these are needed. And that is why a book like *Unholy Terror* is valuable. It provides the background and lays out the facts; it is up to us to go on from there. □



The Labrador triangle

By Lawrence Jackson

GREAT HEART: THE HISTORY OF A LABRADOR ADVENTURE

by James West Davidson and John Ruge

Viking (Penguin), 385 pages, \$24.95 cloth (ISBN 0670 81950 6)

THIS BOOK is the latest and probably the final book-length treatment of a wilderness tragedy that has been seizing the imagination of readers for most of this century.

Eighty-five years ago, a romantic American outdoor writer and two companions set out to cross the Labrador-Ungava Peninsula by canoe. Rushing to make up for a late start, they missed the mouth of the only river that could have taken them where they wanted to go, and set off up the only one they saw. It was a miserable, boulder-strewn trickle.

This was the age of Teddy Roosevelt and muscular Christianity. Leonidas Hubbard took the worst available route into pitiless country, with slender experience, inadequate supplies, and a kind of Hardy Bays pluck.

I three weeks of exhausting struggle the party made barely 30 miles. They soldiered on, driven by Hubbard's ambition and a crazed optimism and some stirring nonsense from Kipling: "Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!"

After five weeks, with winter approaching, they were down to 16 pounds of pea meal and some tea Scrawny and haggard, they still faced hundreds of miles of wilderness. Even Hubbard saw they must now turn back in a race against starvation. but he was too exhausted to make it. One of his companions reached a cabin. Trappers found the second man wandering delirious in the snow, and Hubbard dead in his tent.

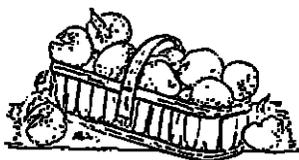
This pathetic adventure spawned three fine books in short order, and has now generated a fourth. Remarkably, there was room for a fourth, because this one explores what the others had elaborately avoided: the emotional complexity of relations between Hubbard's wife and the two survivors.

The first book emerged when Dilbn Wallace. Hubbard's older companion, drew on Hubbard's journal and his own to document the tragedy. *The Lure of the Labrador Wild*, published in 1905, was a huge success, with 11 printings by 1919. It was republished by Breakwater in 1979.

Though Wallace was almost worshipful in his treatment of Hubbard, Mina Hubbard was ap-

palled by the book Slightly deranged by grief, she convinced herself that Wallace had left her husband to die. then falsified the story of his dying. Wallace became the scapegoat for her loss, and when he planned to "finish the work of exploration that Hubbard began," Mina schemed to beat him to it. To guide her, she engaged George Elson, Hubbard's other companion "a the original journey. Elson was a Cree-Scot from James Bay, an earnest, capable man whose profound loyalty to Hubbard was soon transferred to his remarkable widow. Wallace, who had tried to recruit Elson, hired two of the local trappers who had saved the pair two years before.

After a bitter race to Labrador, both parties successfully journeyed up the Naskapi River (the one Hubbard missed), across the bih barren to Lake Michikamua, then over another watershed and down the George River to Ungava Bay. Wallace's harrowing and almost fatal voyage ended in humiliation: he finished weeks behind his rival. He spumed a chance to return to civilization on a supply ship, which he would have had to share with a gloating Miaa Hubbard. In-



stead he doggedly chose to come south by dog team.

He later wrote up his expedition in an aptly titled volume, *The Long Labrador Trail*, published in 1907. Mina Hubbard, still worshipping her husband's memory, published her story in *A Woman's Way through Unknown Labrador* in 1908. Absurdly, neither book even acknowledged the existence of the rival expedition.

Great Heart is tie modem diafillation of this story. ("Great Heart" was Mina's name for George Elson. The name could stand as well for Hubbard, who had much more heart than sense, and indeed for all the characters in this drama, who undertook great trials with a zest that seems bravely quaint today.) The book employs many of the techniques of fiction. The authors made "se of unpublished portions of the journals written by those involved, and, reconstructing dialogue, have written each

chapter from the perspective of one of the main characters. One casualty of this approach is the boundary between history and speculation, but the authors explain their assumptions in detailed notes at the back, out of the way of readers who simply enjoy a good yarn.

The authors are experienced canoeists, and have retraced some of the routes described. They write of canoe travel with much authority, but betray their ignorance of a Labrador winter when they refer to temperatures of -64° and a snow depth of eight feet in the woods. The first is absurd and the second most unlikely.

Nevertheless, *Great Heart* is a splendid book. Its portraits almost equal its adventure, and the web of relationships is as vivid as the landscape. The reader is tantalized, as the authors clearly were, by hints of a latent romance between the widow and her guide. But Elson was the least articulate of journal writers, and the most cautious, and the authors wisely leave this affair teetering "a the edge of possibility."

This is one of the finest northern books in years. □

LAWS OF MEDIA

THE NEW SCIENCE

Marshall McLuhan
and Eric McLuhan

The book Marshall McLuhan was working on at the time of his death, *Laws of Media* represents both the culmination of his work and groundbreaking view of human creativity. \$27.50



DEAR BILL

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF WILLIAM ARTHUR DEACON

Edited by John Lennox
and Michèle Lacombe

The dean of Canadian book critics from 1920 to 1960, Deacon exchanged letters with a wide range of writers and thinkers. Collected here are letters to and from the likes of E.J. Pratt, Laura Goodman Salverson, Hugh MacLennan, A.R.M. Lower, Gabrielle Roy, J.S. Woodsworth, Gray Owl, and Peter Newman. \$37.50



NORTHERN VOICES

INUIT WRITING IN ENGLISH

Penny Petrone

A wealth of traditional legends, myths, folk history, and poetry, along with contemporary Inuit writing — from essays and speeches to imaginative literature. \$27.50

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS

Young love in Toronto

All families are funny, viewed in the proper light. Joseph Kertes has an amusing perspective on a whole crowd of bizarre characters and crazy events

By Douglas Hill



A VERY MIXED bag this month. No one need worry that aspiring Canadian novelists feel pressure to conform to trends, to jump in the (American) fictional blender, to subscribe to the well-known marketing dictate 'safe sells.' I'm not unreservedly enthusiastic about any of the novels at hand, but they do offer the pleasures of variety and surprise, and each should find a" appreciative audience.

For an example, consider *Honour the Sun*, by Ruby Slipperjack (Pemmican, 211 pages, \$12.95 paper). This story of a" Ojibway girl and her family in a Native community along the rail line in northern Ontario is sensitive and honest, and avoids most of the available literary and sociological stereotypes. Slipperjack has found a structure that serves her intentions well: the diary form allows her young narrator, called The Owl (because "I a portent "t the time of her birth), to record her impressions clearly, without seeming to colour them by artifice or dogma.

The Owl's journal proceeds by seasons, from the summer of 1962, when she's 10, to the summer of 1968, when she returns to the village from a term at residential school. It records the progressive disillusionment of a perceptive child. Hardly a unique subject, only here the early happiness is family intim-

cy and the knowledge of woods and lakes and traditional ways; the encroaching pain is generalized alcoholism, physical abuse, and casual death. See" through The Owl's eyes, the world of these Native settlements is paradoxically nurturing and destructive. Her mother, for most of the book, is a figure of stability and competence and love; then for a few sad chapters at the end she's a drunk. The shock and frustration are The Owl's: they will be the reader's, too.

Sheldon Currie's *The Company Store* (Oberon, 133 pages, \$25.95 cloth, \$12.95 paper) also records a young person's confrontation with family and community. This time the setting is Cape Breton, specifically the coal-mining region that includes Sydney and Glace Bay. (But the blurb on the book's back cover begins, "Imagine a small company town, in New Brunswick, perhaps . . ." Help me to understand, somebody. Please.) Ian MacDonald, coming to maturity in a Scots Catholic family several decades ago (the exact date is unclear), has just returned home from a stint in the air force in London, Ontario. He witnesses or participates in various rites of passage: he visits an old girlfriend, he pursues his father, off on a binge; he comforts the widow of his cousin, killed in a mine accident

The characters in *The Company Store* have intrinsic appeal; their stories are affecting or funny. And Currie documents intelligently the effects of poverty and economic oppression on aspirations and dreams. But the book has a number of flaws, most of which could have been corrected, or at least masked, by firmer editorial control.

For one thing, the flashback structure is somewhat creaky: its underpinnings show. Point-of-view wanders away from Ian, disconcertingly, a couple of times. The dialogue is often overstuffed, and a few of Currie's observations about nature and Bii Issues are rather trite. There are problems with punctuation, to": the author, or his editor, needs a surer grip on the comma. The prose in general is slow-moving, with too many sentences that limp along like this one: "After he said a few prayers he saw there was no convenient place to go in die room, which was small and there were people out in the middle of the floor as well as in front of the chairs at the wall, so he stayed on the bench in front of the coffin and joined in the prayers, led by the priest." Enough. Oberon has done better in the past with this sort of novel (*The Story of Bobby O'Malley, Come From Away*); they should keep their standards up.

In *Winter Tulips* (Double-day, 275 pages, \$22.95 cloth), Joseph Kertes tells a serio-comic tale of young love in Toronto in the 1970s. Benjamin Beck leaves his Montreal family to study music, rents a" apartment above a downtown Greek restaurant, falls for his landlord's daughter Dianne. Discursively, anecdotally, Kertes follows the course of intercultural love and cooks up a delightful stew from a shelf full of Jewish-Canadian and Greek-Canadian ingredients. There's also a fairly contrived sub-plot, hating to do with a nasty piece of small-business chicanery, that balances the domestic comedy-drama.

The writing is occasionally a bit slack, but never when Kertes is exhibiting his fine sense of humour and his gift for manic storytelling. All families are funny, viewed in the proper light; Kertes has an amusing perspective on a whole crowd of bizarre characters and crazy events. There are some serious matters here, too, and they aren't glossed over. But on the whole, *Winter Tulips* succeeds as well as it does because it's

simply fun, enjoyable reading if a trifle insubstantial. I thought I'd laughed myself out on the score of ethnic family humour, but I chuckled all the way through this version of the deadly game.

Mona's Dance, by Ann Diamond (Quarry, 214 pages, \$10.95 paper), is comedy with a message, to": but its pleasures are rather more specialized. In the three parts of the novel, set in Montreal, Anne Miller, Diamond's narrator and an aspiring writer herself, attempts to give sense and shape to the life of Mona, a mildly loony cause-obsessed stripper and occasional prostitute who through her art wishes "to launch the Golden Age of Post-Feminism and Post-Womanism" (whatever that may mean). The book assembles some shards of radical feminism into an interesting, sometimes bewildering mosaic of ideas about contemporary art, sexuality, and politics; the ruling mode of the action is surrealism laced with farce, and death is a central theme. "Love is a disease," Anne comes to learn, "and we will all die of it, unless our civilization can come up with a cure."

There's an interesting double focus to the novel: the story of Mona, the story of Anne. Diamond writes capably, in places strongly, and weaves her way through a considerable amount of intellectual and political material with fair skill. She creates plausible characters, even" though the elements of their lives are from time to time fantastic or absurd. *Mona's Dance* is certainly inventive and fictionally ambitious, and there is much to admire in the way Diamond goes about her business. For my money, the book goes on to" long, spins itself too thin: it's entertaining in fits and starts, with some funny lines, but on the whole a bit self-indulgent, a basic comic situation elaborated to the point of tedium. Other readers may be more sympathetic.

Beware novels, the Old Reviewer used to say, that start off with either a genealogy or a glossary. *Sebastian's Pride*, by Susan Wilkinson (Penguin, 403 pages, \$22.95 cloth) has both, up front. Regarding this romantic saga of a" English landowning family in late 19th- and early 20th-century Argentina, full of history and heavy breathing, dosed liberally with period-tic tion clichés, costumes and speechifying, I'd prefer to say no more. □

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:

Among Crochets, by Donia Blumenfeld Clemen, Flowerfield & Littleman.
 The Banglok Collection, by Jason Schumover, S.A.
 Billy Elphinstone: Canadian Hero, by Dan McCaffrey, Lanouet.
 Bringing Baby Home: A New Parents' Guide to the First Months of Life, by Marlene Martin and William James, Random House.
 Canada: Among Nations: A World of Conflict, 1987, dated by Maurice Appel Molot and Brian W. Tomlin, James Lorimer.
 Canada: A Natural History, photographs by Tim Fitzharris, text by John Livingston, Viking Studio Books.
 Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education, edited by G. A. Roschke, McGill-Queen's.
 The Canadian Children's Treasury, foreword by Leo Lunn, Key Porter.
 Canadian Living: Glorious Christmas Crafts, by Anna Hobbs, Random House/Madinon Inc.
 Cossy Webber, the Great, by Hazel Hutchins, Amick.
 The Cassandra Complex: Living with Disbelief, by Laura Lavton Schapiro, Inner City Books.
 Careers of the Wilderness, by Peter C. Newman, Penguin.
 Circus Days, by Roger Pace, Amick.
 The Coast Wars: A Portrait of the English on the Lower North Shore of the St. Lawrence, by Louis Abbott, McGill-Queen's.
 Code Red at the Supermall, by Eric Wilson, Collins.
 The Collins Dictionary of Canadian History: 1867 to the Present, by David J. Bercuson and J.L. Granatstein, Collins.
 Contemporary Canadian Architecture, by Ruth Cantor and William Bernstein, Fitzhenry & White Inc.
 Could You Stop Josephine?, by Stephen Poulin, Dundas.
 The Dakotas of the Canadian Northwest: Lessons for Survival, by Peter Douglas Ellis, U of Manitoba Press.
 Dare to Dream: The Story of the Famous People Players, by Diane Duguay, Key Porter.
 The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Barron, Volume 1: 1768-1773, edited by Lara E. Trillo, McGill-Queen's.
 An Economic Analysis of Canada's Ground Transportation Sector, by John P. Palmer, The Fraser Institute.
 Education in Canada: An Analysis of Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Schooling, by Stephen T. Lorton, The Fraser Institute.
 Exploring the Sky by Day, by Terence Dickinson, Firefly.
 Finances Cut in Sacred Ground: Illuminated in the Double Hook, by Angela Bowering, Newer Press.
 Fire's Path: A Biography of Cairine Wilson, Canada's First Woman Senator, by Valerie Knowles, Dundurn Press.
 For the Love of Murder: Interviews with Ulla Colbjørnsen, Oxford.
 Getting Married in Buffalo Jump, by Susan Haber, Peter Jacks.
 Getting Pregnant and Staying Pregnant, by Diana Rob, Simon Publishing.
 Grand Slam: More Recipes From The Best of Brides, The Best of Bridge Publishing Ltd.
 Granny is a Darling, by Kady MacDonald Denton, Key Porter.
 The Green Peace Book of Antarctica: A New View of the Seventh Continent, by John May, Macmillan.

Half of Man Is Woman, by Zhong Xianliang, translated by Martha Avery, Lester & Orpen Dennys.
 Heat Waves, by Derk Wynand, Oolichen Books.
 Historic Halifax, by Elizabeth Pacey, photographer, by Alvin Comiter, Hounslow Press.
 Honduras: The Molding of a Banana Republic, by Alison Acker, Between the Lines.
 The Hypnotiser, by Michael Kosca, illustrated by Andrew Tiffen, Collins.
 I Dream in Good English Too, by Donia Blumenfeld Clemen, Flowerfield & Littleman.
 Icarus, by Frederick Biro, Doubleday.
 In the Skin of a Lion, by Michael Ondaatje, Penguin.
 Jingle Bells: An Adaptation of the Traditional Song, by Maryann Kovalick, Kid's Can Press.
 The Last Story, the First Story, by Richard Thompson, Amick.
 Little Key, by Robin Muller, North Winds Press.
 Living the Part: John Drabine and the Dilemma of Canadian Stardom, by Bronwyn Drabine, Macmillan.
 Lucy Waverman's Cooking School Cookbook, Collins.
 Malcolm's Runaway Soap, by Jo Ellen Bogart and Linda Hendry, North Winds Press.
 The Market for Employment, Personnel and Security: A Service Sector Analysis, by Dennis Mudd, The Fraser Institute.
 The Market for Hospitality: An Economic Analysis of the Accommodation, Food and Beverage Industries, by Brian L. Scarfe and Murray Krantz, The Fraser Institute.
 Middletons: The Beloved Judge, by John D. Armp, McClelland & Stewart.
 Mob Mistress: How a Canadian Housewife Became a Mafia Playgirl, by James Dubro, Macmillan.
 Mushroom and the Marvel, by Ted Staunton, Kid's Can Press.
 My Father's House: A Memoir of Incest and Healing, by Sylvia Fraser, Collins.
 The Nephews: The Making of a Mafia Hitman, by Real Simard and Michel Vastel, Prentice-Hall.
 The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939, by Veronica Strong-Dong, Copp Clark (cloth), Penguin (paper).
 Not Vanishing, by Chrystos, Press Gang.
 Notes from the Rainforest, by George Faludy, Hounslow Press.
 Platinum Blues, by William Deverell, M & S.
 The Psychology of Anomalous Experience, by Graham Reed, Prometheus Books.
 Puddleman, by Ted Staunton, Kids Can Press.
 A Question of Courage, by Irene Morck, Western Producer Prairie Books.
 A Question of Murder, by Eric Wright, Collins.
 The Russian Album, by Michael Ignatieff, Penguin.
 Sexual Assault: The Dilemma of Disclosure, The Question of Conviction, by Rita Gunn and Candice Minch, U of Manitoba Press.
 Sexuality: An Education Resource Book, by Judith Campbell and Jill Golick, Globe/Modern Curriculum Press.
 Studies of Justice: Seven Nova Scotia Murder Cases, by Dean Job, Nimbus.
 A Short History of Quebec: A Socio-Economic Perspective, by Brian Young and John A. Hickson, Copp Clark Pinnac.
 Shrink Resistant: The Struggle Against Psychiatry in Canada, edited by Bonnie Burston & Don Weitz, New Star.
 So Many Miracles, by Saul Rubinek, Viking.
 The Supreme Court of Canada Decision on Abortion, edited by Shelagh Day and Stan Persky, New Star.
 Tears of the Moon, by Gary Ross, Viking.
 Telecommunications in Canada: An Analysis of Outlook and Trends, by Steven Globerman, The Fraser Institute.
 True Confessions, Or How My Family Arranged My Marriage, by Sondra Gollieb, Penguin.
 Undercover Agent, by Leonard Mitchell and Peter Rehak, McClelland & Stewart.
 Understanding AIDS, by David Spurgeon, Key Porter.
 A Victim Must be Found, by Howard Engel, Viking.
 The Violent Lavender Beast, by Ernest Hekkanen, This-side-down.
 Virunga: The Passion of Dian Fossey, by Farley Mowat, Bantam-Seal.
 White Lions in the Afternoon, by Elise Yates St. George, Coteau.
 The Wildlife ABC: A Nature Alphabet, by Jim Thornhill, Greedy de Pencier.
 Winning the Radar War, by Jack Nissen and A. W. Cuckerrill, Collins.
 Women of Influence, by Bonnie Burnard, Coteau.
 The Wonderful Pigs of Jillian Jiggs, by Phoebe Gilman, North Winds Press.
 The Zucchini Warriors, by Gordon Kurman, Scholastic.

CLASSIFIED

Classified rates: \$8 per line (approx. 30 characters to the line).
 Deadline: first of the month for issues dated following month.
 Address: Books in Canada Classified, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 3X9. Phone: (416) 363-5426.

ANY PERSONS having specific knowledge of corruption or prejudice in the awarding of Canada Council grants are invited to send details (anonymously if you wish) to: P.O. Box 281, Str. S, Toronto, Ont. M5M 4L7

AUTHOR PHOTOS: You've finally completed your manuscript and delivered it to your publishers. Now all you need is an "author photo." Yikes! For a winning, relatively painless, photo finish, call Sally Gibson in Toronto at 925-7736. No intimidating studio visits are required. I'll come to you and capture you in your favourite habitat. My photos have appeared in *Quill & Quire*, *Camera Canada*, *Toronto Life*, *Globe and Mail*, *the Toronto Star* and other (more or less) reputable publications.

BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS. Hundreds of titles on all subjects: hardcover, paperback, and childrens. Up to 85% off original published price. FREE CATALOGUE. Book Publishers' Clearance Co., 75 Milliken Blvd., Unit 7A, Scarborough, Ont. M1V 2R3.

EDITOR AVAILABLE: Non-fiction, technical articles, books. Will revise, polish, critique. Mac Mackay, 303-915 Tranquille, Kamloops B.C. V2B 3J6; (604) 376-0788.

SEEKING INFORMATION about Frank L. Packard, Canadian writer, born in Lachine, Quebec, 1877 and died there in 1942. D.R. Weston, 225 Olivier Ave., #209, Westmount, Que. H3Z 2C7 (514) 937-6693

TYPING, IBM Selectric, neat, fast, \$1 per page, Ruth: 967-3792.

WE NEED AUTHORS to write innovative romances and action adventures. Send s.a.e. plus return postage coupons for guidelines, to: G & K, Ste. 211, 5050 Dufferin Street, Downsview, Ont. M3H 5T5.



The Glenbow Shop

1988 Christmas Catalogue

Please send me
 The Glenbow Shop
 1988 Christmas Catalogue
 filled with colourful and distinctive
 gift ideas, jewelry, novelty items,
 books for art lovers and children,
 video and audio cassettes,
 plus much more!

I have enclosed \$1.00 for mailing.

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____

Phone No. _____

130-9th Avenue S.E., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2G 0P3
 Open daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. • (403)264-8300



BOOK NEWS

AN ADVERTISING FEATURE

Derk Wynand

HEAT WAVES

Poems of stunning clarity, thought and imagination.

\$7.95
72 pp.,
softcover

In *Heat Waves* Derk Wynand uses his travels through Portugal one summer as the basis for a sequence of poems that examines his personal relationships within his family and neighbourhood as well as within the larger human community.

oolichan books

SHAW STREET PRESS

NORA BY THE SEA
a story by Cary Fagan

'A very, very fine short-story writer'
-Timothy Findley, *CBLT*

A limited edition of 150 copies, hand-sewn into paper covers. Signed and numbered.

\$15.00 prepaid. Order from Shaw Street Press, 684 Shaw St., Toronto, Ontario M6G 3L7.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Don't forget that Books in Canada sweatshirts make ideal Christmas gifts for literary friends and relatives...

One size (extra large) fits all.
\$25 plus \$3 shipping and handling. To order, send cheque payable to Canadian Review of Books Ltd., 366 Adelaide Street East, Suite 432, Toronto, Ontario M5A 3X9.

Don't forget to put name and full mailing address with postal code of where you want the sweatshirt(s) sent.

And let us be first to wish you a Merry Christmas!



LETTERS

ONCE MORE WITH FEELING

MS. J. K. KEEFER is to be commended for her skilful overview of the latest Robertson Davies trilogy, sod for her willingness to call a spade a bloody shovel (not too often the case when one reviews the work of an "establishment" figure). *The Lyre of Orpheus* is, no doubt, particularly disappointing to those who overvalue Davies's other works. I, for one, would not be so quick to call *What's Bred in the Bone*, the "real right thing" (nor, do I suspect, would Henry James). All that "grammar of ingenuity" hardly justifies the repetitious, pretentious talk that goes on and on. One suspects that Davies is really losing control when he has characters reiterating what others have said before them, with-

out any real sense to the point being made. It may be one thing for Roth Nibsmith to treat Fran- & to a prewar feminist bitch-up of so old saw: 'It's a wise child that knows his father, hot it's the one in a million who knows his mother*' (page 373, Penguin edition), but when dear old Dr. Joseph Ambrosius Jerome says exactly the same thing to him about a decade later: "They say it's a wise child that knows its own father, but it's a damn sight wiser child that knows ik own mother" (page 456), we have a right to wonder about memory lapses on the part of the author. There are other examples, too, but Ms. Keefer was certainly right to point out how even this "high point" book of the trilogy faded away in the last stretch.

Gerald McCaughey
Edmonton

CanWit no. 133

By Barry Baldwin

BRITISH and European critics often demolish books sod films with laconic savagery. Thus, one critic received Françoise Sagan's *Aimez-vous Brahms?* with the comment, 'Brahms. Ouil' whilst another described the movie *Seventeen* as 'Twice as bad as 8 1/2'. Competitors are invited (limit, six entries) to assassinate Canadian novels and movies in the same style (e.g., *The Doctor's Wife* — "Incurable").

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 131

THE REQUEST for misleading information for tourists in Canada produced very few entries (all in English). Perhaps would-be competitors were all themselves lost thanks to being misled on their own holidays. And the point was not to invent (e.g.) beaches in Saskatchewan but to misrepresent Canadian realities in a logical but dangerous way. The winner (despite his addressing it to *Saturday Night* — tot, tut!) is Edward Franchuk of Saint-Jean-Sur-Richelieu, Quebec:

In common with other former British colonies, Canada has left-hand drive. Provincial Sales Tax is already included in the marked price.

Honourable Mentions

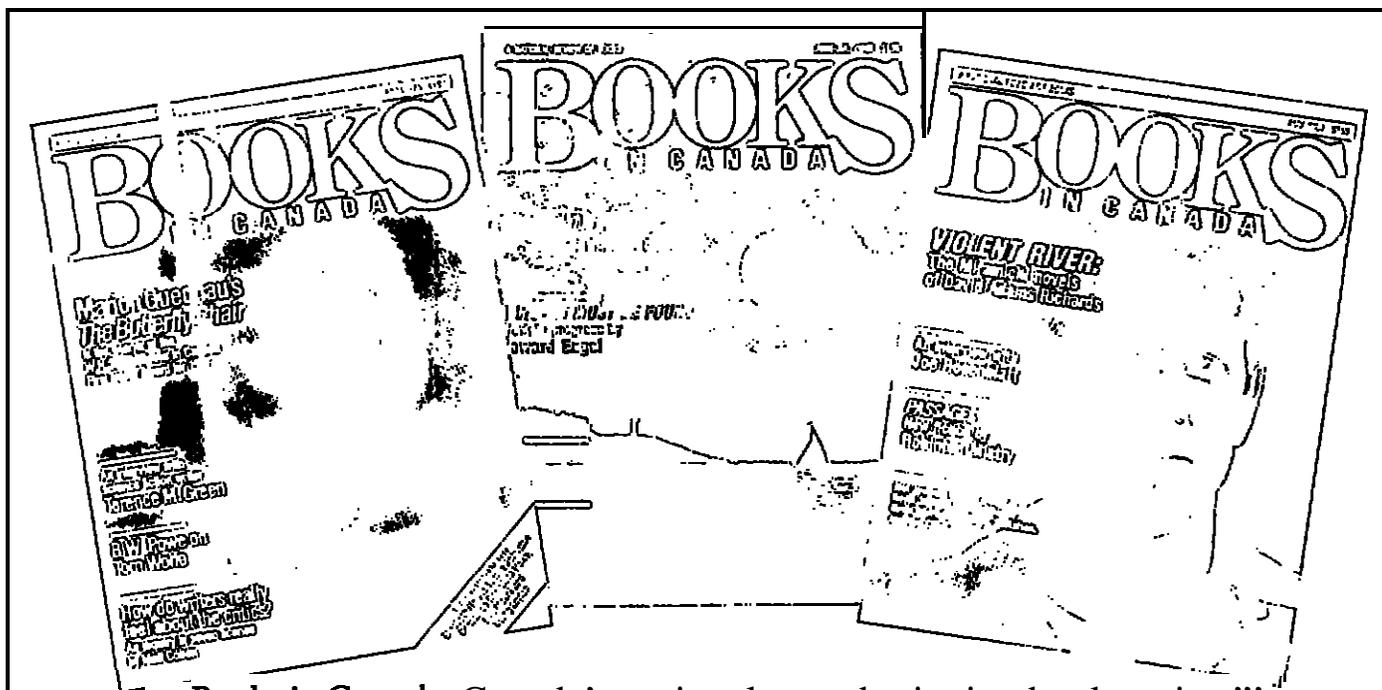
Don't miss the ferry boat ride to Toronto Islands where nude bathing is allowed on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

— Jean Dodd, Willowdale, Ontario

Flanked by a green forest of helpful road signs, and travelled leisurely by courteously yielding drivers, Montreal's Boulevard Métropolitain offers a memorable crosstown experience for the unfamiliar motorist.

-Alec McEwen, Ottawa

SUBSCRIBE NOW!



Books in Canada, Canada's national award-winning book review magazine comes to you nine times a year. Each issue is crammed with book reviews, author profiles, interviews, columns, and interesting features on the world of books in Canada.

Subscribe now and **SAVE 15%** on the newsstand price.

A year's subscription to *Books in Canada* costs \$15.00 and guarantees that each and every issue will be delivered to your door.

Fill in the coupon below, send it to us and we'll rush the next issue of *Books in Canada* to you.

YES

Start my subscription to *Books in Canada* immediately.

Name _____

Address _____

- Cheque enclosed
 Bill me

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Individuals \$15
Institutions \$20

OUTSIDE CANADA:

Individuals \$18
Institutions \$23

366 Adelaide St. East, Suite 432
Toronto, Ont. M5A 1X4

YES

Start my subscription to *Books in Canada* immediately.

Name _____

Address _____

- Cheque enclosed
 Bill me

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Individuals \$15
Institutions \$20

OUTSIDE CANADA:

Individuals \$18
Institutions \$23

366 Adelaide St. East, Suite 432
Toronto, Ont. M5A 1X4



The latest work by
NOAM CHOMSKY

Judged in terms of the power, range, novelty and influence of his thought, Noam Chomsky is arguably the most important intellectual alive.

New York Times Book Review

What lies behind the Iran-Contra scandals? What are the forces that determine U.S. foreign policy? And how does the media comply by obscuring the facts of this "culture of terrorism"?

In this indispensable companion to *Turning the Tide*, Noam Chomsky examines these and other questions, providing a detailed critique of U.S. political culture.

Noam Chomsky is the United States' leading dissident. A towering intellect... one of the most penetrating analysts of U.S. foreign policy... infused with the anger of a truly moral man. It is powerful, always provocative stuff.

Manchester Guardian Weekly

ISBN: 0-921689-28-4 \$16.95

Hear Noam Chomsky deliver the 1988 Massey Lectures thk month on CBC Radio



TURNING THE TIDE
 The U.S. and Latin America

A new chapter on the Iran arms deal and contra scandal concludes this analysis of the broader aims and impact of U.S. policy in Central America. *Second revised edition.*

ISBN: 0-920057-05-5 \$16.95

ON POWER & IDEOLOGY

In these lectures, delivered to the people of Nicaragua, Chomsky makes a convincing case for the inhumanity of American involvement in Central America.

ISBN: 0-921689-04-7 \$14.95



PIRATES & EMPERORS

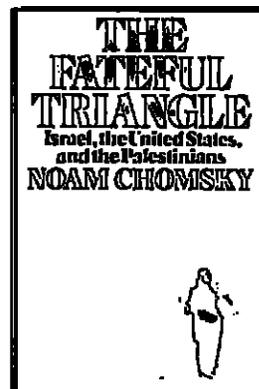
This well documented look behind the rhetoric of terrorism in the Middle East criticizes U.S. foreign policy and the media.

ISBN: 0-920057-93-4 \$14.95

RADICAL PRIORITIES

A collection of Chomsky's political writings containing some of his most astute reflections.

ISBN: 0-920057-17-9 \$16.95



THE FATEFUL TRIANGLE
 Israel, the United States, and the Palestinians

Must reading for anyone following the mess that is today's Middle East. Financial Post

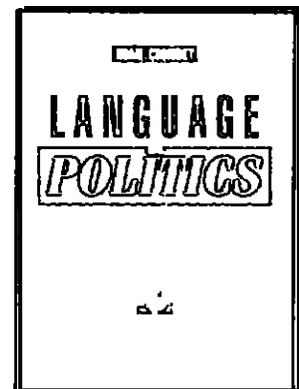
ISBN: 0-920057-21-7 \$14.95

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF HUMAN RIGHTS
 Vol. 1: The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism
 Vol. 2: After the Cataclysm: Postwar Indochina and the Reconstruction of Imperial Ideology

A brilliant and devastating work. Maclean's

Vol.1 ISBN: 0-921618-88-X \$12.95

Vol.2 ISBN: 0-919618-91-X \$9.95



LANGUAGE & POLITICS

A collection of Chomsky's personal and intellectual development and his analysis of the latest political events.

ISBN: 0-921689-34-9 \$16.95

BLACKROSE BOOKS 3981 Boul. St-Laurent Suite 444 Montréal Québec H2W 1Y5 (514) 844-4076

BLACK ROSE BOOKS